

Livestock Judging Guide



By

Neal Smith

Extension Area Specialist – 4-H

Module 4: Swine



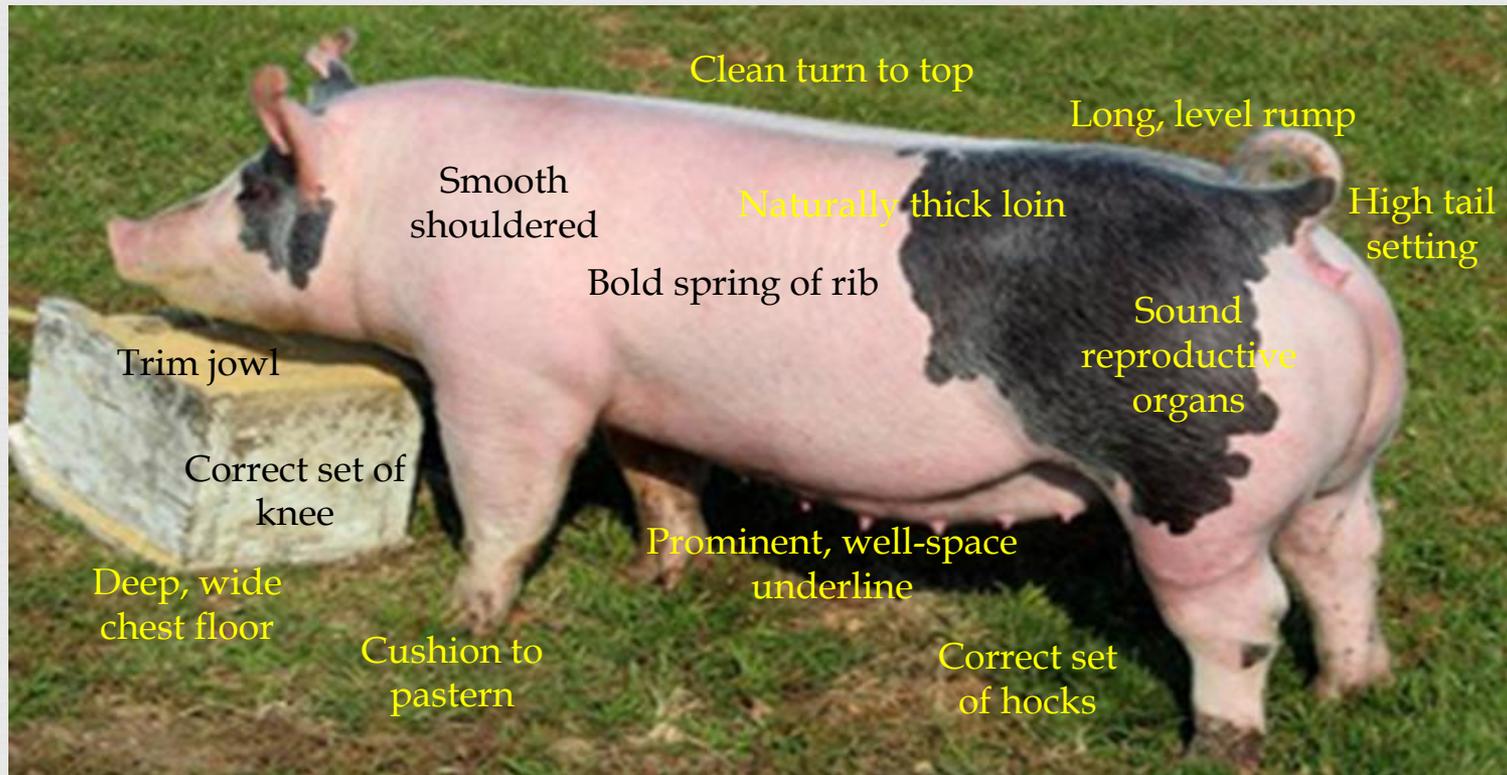
Judging Breeding Gilts

Judging Breeding Gilts



- ❧ Ideal breeding gilt has:
 - ❧ Trimness
 - ❧ Moderate development in high-priced areas
 - ❧ Adequate size for age
 - ❧ Large body capacity or volume
 - ❧ Correct underpinning
 - ❧ Superior mammary system

Ideal Breeding Gilt



Deep, long
muscled
ham

Heavy,
rugged
bone

Judging Breeding Gilts



- ❧ Steps to Judging Swine
 - ❧ First view from the ground and work up
 - ❧ Next evaluate from rear to front
 - ❧ Rank class on traits of importance
 - ❧ Evaluate most important traits first
 - ❧ Eliminate easy placings
 - ❧ Place the remainder based on the volume of important traits

Judging Breeding Gilts



☞ Ranking of Traits for Maternal Lines

☞ Structure and soundness

☞ Growth

☞ Underline quality

☞ Capacity or volume

☞ Degree of muscling

☞ Degree of leanness

☞ Maternal lines:

☞ Female offspring kept for breeding purposes

Judging Breeding Gilts



☞ Ranking of Traits for Terminal Lines

☞ Structure and soundness

☞ Degree of muscling

☞ Growth

☞ Capacity or volume

☞ Degree of leanness

☞ Underline quality

☞ Terminal lines of gilts:

☞ Offspring sold to slaughter

Judging Breeding Gilts



œ Evaluating Structure & Soundness

œ Best viewed beginning at the ground and working upward

œ Give attention to:

œ Feet & pasterns

œ Hocks

œ Knees

œ Rump

œ Shoulders



Judging Breeding Gilts



Feet & Pasterns

Feet

- Big, with even toes
- Squarely set forward

Pasterns

- Set at 45 degree angle to ground
- Maximum cushion & flexibility



Good feet, squarely set & pasterns with correct angle

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Poor Structure



Dewclaws touching the ground, too much set to pasterns

Poor Structure



Feet turned outward, restricts flexibility, additional joint stress

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- ☞ Hocks should be constructed of:
 - ☞ Flat, clean bone
 - ☞ Approximately 20 degrees of set

Correct set and curvature
to the hocks



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Post-legged



Hocks too straight, round bone design, lacks flexibility

Unsoundness



Swollen or "puffy joints from hocks being too straight

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☞ Knees should:

☞ Be straight or slightly set backward

☞ Provide cushion & flex to front end

Correct set to the knees.
Note the slight backward
set or curvature.



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Calf-kneed



Knees have too much set or curvature

Buck-kneed



Inadequate length between the foot and knee

Judging Breeding Gilts



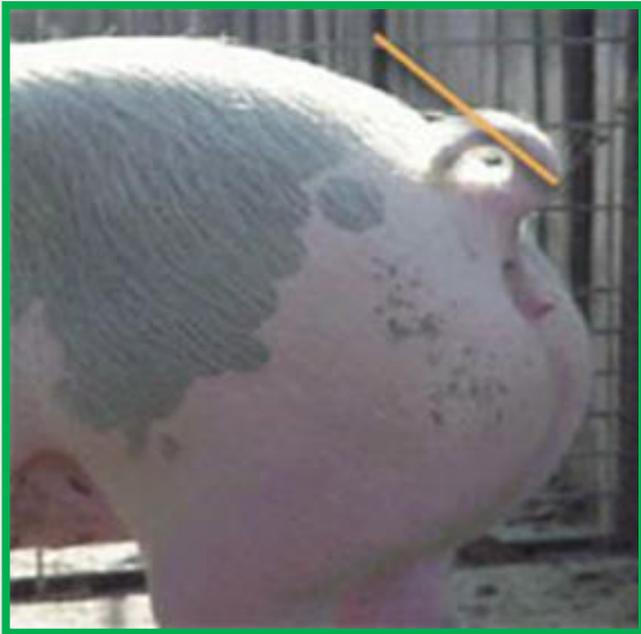
- ❧ Rump structure should be:
 - ❧ Average or above average in length
 - ❧ Level to slightly sloping from front to back
- ❧ This type rump allows for:
 - ❧ Maximum power & strength
 - ❧ Additional flexibility
 - ❧ Good length of stride



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Rump too steep



Rump extremely too steep



Rumps too short & steep restrict movement and cause extra stress on other joints.

Judging Breeding Gilts



- Shoulders should have:
 - Adequate set to allow front leg to extend at a correct angle
- Shoulder set is directly related to length of stride

Correct slope and set
to the shoulder



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Shoulder too straight



Gives appearance of shoulder being forced forward into the neck, resulting in short strides off front end

Extremely straight



Severely limits flexibility through front end, puts tremendous pressure on the knee and pastern joints

Judging Breeding Gilts



☞ Evaluating Growth

- ☞ Hogs are sold by the pound
- ☞ Important that pigs have good growth rate
- ☞ Pigs should reach market weight at an early age
- ☞ Assume all animals in a class are the same age
- ☞ Heaviest pig is the fastest growing
- ☞ Lightest pig is the slowest growing

Judging Breeding Gilts



❧ Evaluating Underline Quality

❧ Good underlines are needed to raise large litters

❧ Consider:

- ❧ Teat accessibility
- ❧ Teat number
- ❧ Teat size
- ❧ Teat placement



Judging Breeding Gilts



- ❧ Teat accessibility
 - ❧ Both rows should point directly downward
 - ❧ Should not point outward
- ❧ Teat number
 - ❧ Good underline will have 6 to 7 teats per side
- ❧ Teat size
 - ❧ About the size of a pencil eraser
 - ❧ Will fit into piglet's mouth
- ❧ Teat placement
 - ❧ Teats spaced 2.5 to 3.0 inches apart
 - ❧ Enough space for piglet's to nurse



Judging Breeding Gilts



Very Good Underline



Poor Underline



Uneven teat size,
uneven spacing, only
two functional teats

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☞ Evaluating External Genitalia

☞ Should be well-developed

☞ Proper size and shape

☞ Beware of:

☞ Too small vulva

☞ Tipped or upturned vulva

Gilt has a well-developed vulva with good size and shape



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Small vulva could be a problem with natural mating

Small, slightly tipped vulva, problems with natural mating and farrowing

Small, tipped vulva, difficult natural mating

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☞ Evaluating Capacity or Volume

☞ Hogs with good capacity or volume will be able:

☞ To consume feed necessary for growth

☞ To perform well in terms of reproduction

☞ Capacity or volume is determined by:

☞ Body width

☞ Body depth

☞ Body length

☞ Balance (how well these three factors fit together)

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∞ Width:

- ∞ Best evaluated starting at the ground and working up
- ∞ Pigs with good width will:
 - ∞ Walk and stand wide both in front and rear
 - ∞ Have good width through the chest
- ∞ Top width (top 1/3) and base width (lower 1/3) should be equal
- ∞ Middle 1/3 of the animal should be the widest

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Too Narrow



Narrow tracking at the walk

Good Width



Good chest width equates to good capacity or volume

Good Width



Wide based in the standing position

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∞ Depth of Body:

- ∞ Important for capacity for feeding and reproduction
- ∞ Should be uniform from fore flank to rear flank
- ∞ Be careful –
 - ∞ Excessively deep appearing hog could indicate a fat problem
- ∞ Lack of depth, or shallow body, will:
 - ∞ Take away from overall balance
 - ∞ Hurt pig's placing due to lack of a production look

Judging Breeding Gilts



Lacks Adequate Depth



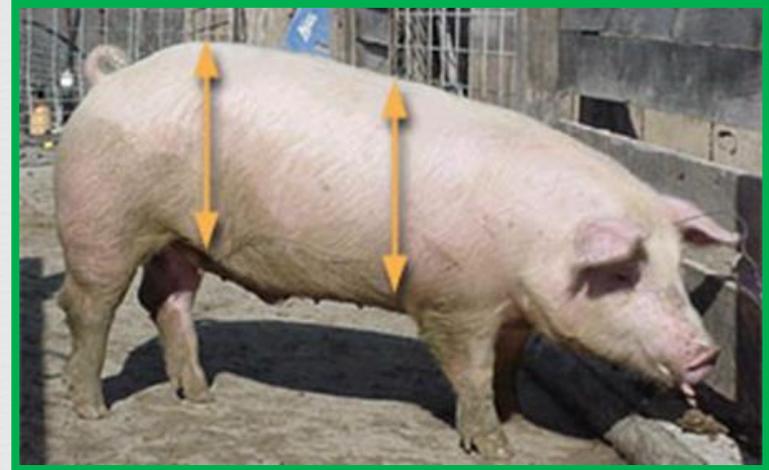
Shallow in the rear flank

Unbalanced



Too deep in rear flank

Uniform Body Depth



Beginning to show
excessive body depth
due to fat

Judging Breeding Gilts



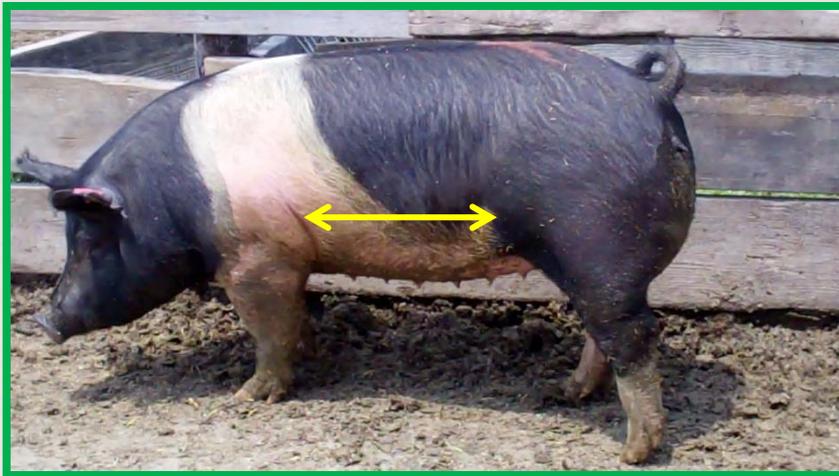
∞ Length of Body

- ∞ Increased importance due to heavier market weights
- ∞ Measured visually from flank to flank
- ∞ Hogs typical growth curve:
 - ∞ Grows frame > Deposits muscle > Deposits fat
- ∞ Longer bodied & bigger framed hogs mature later
- ∞ Later maturity delays fat being deposited
- ∞ Higher weights before fat deposited
 - ∞ 260 lbs. versus 220 lbs.

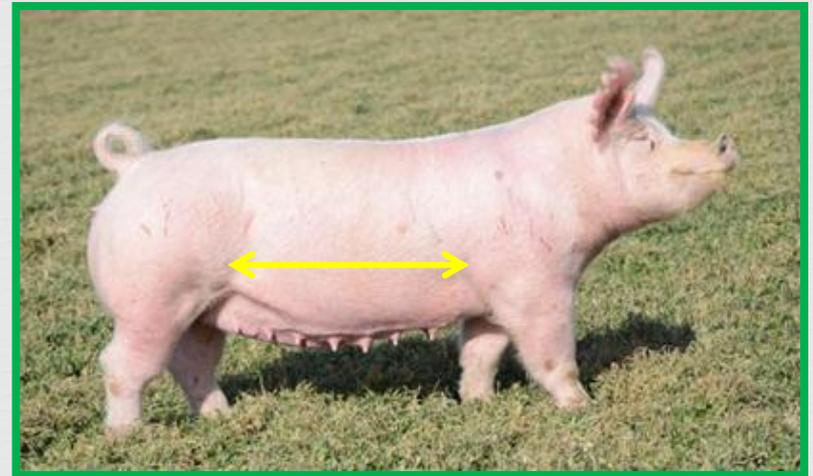
Judging Breeding Gilts



Short Body Length



Good Body Length



Judging Breeding Gilts



∞ Evaluating Degree of Muscling

∞ Lower priority trait with maternal lines

∞ Higher priority trait with terminal lines

∞ Indicators of degree of muscling:

∞ First - thickness through center of ham

∞ Second - width at the ground between feet
(standing & walking)

∞ Base width and width of pigs top should be equal

∞ Red flag - Top width exceeds base width

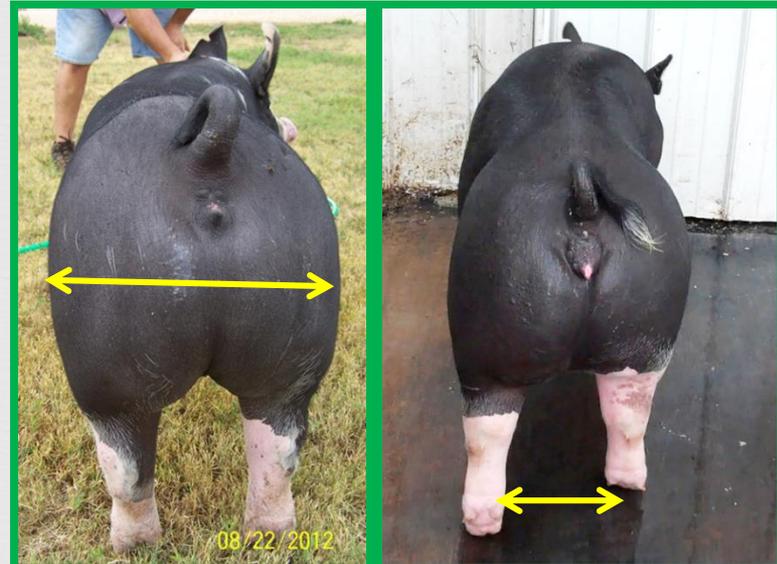
Judging Breeding Gilts



Narrow Width



Good Width



Judging Breeding Gilts



❧ Evaluating Degree of Muscling

❧ Indicators of degree of muscling:

- ❧ Third - shape over the top (or loin)
 - ❧ Muscular top should be “butterfly” shape
 - ❧ Indicates leanness
 - ❧ Loins on both sides of backbone extending higher than center
 - ❧ “Flat” top indicates fat

Butterfly top



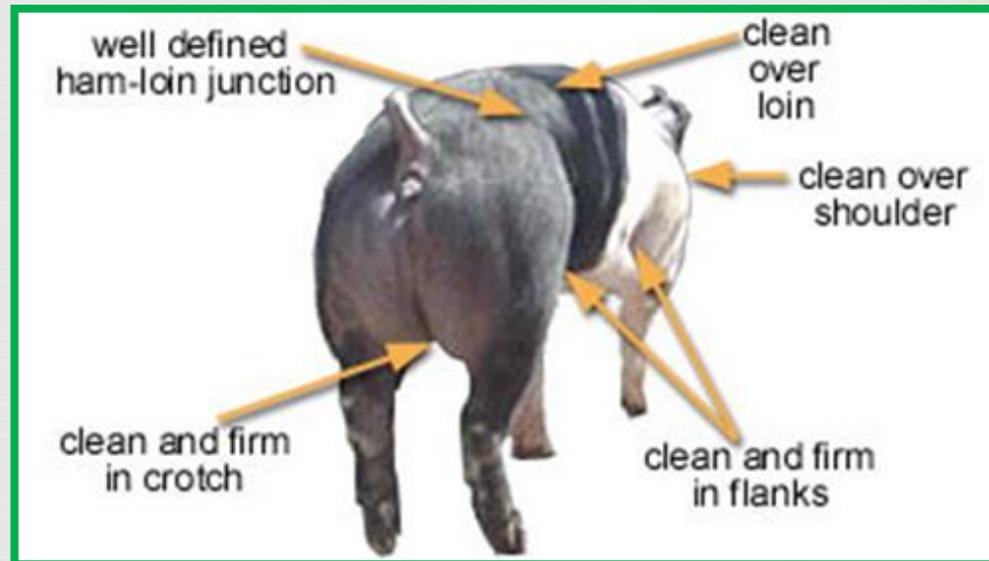
Judging Breeding Gilts



∞ Evaluating Degree of Leanness

∞ Degree of leanness is influenced by:

- ∞ Degree of muscling
- ∞ Frame size
- ∞ Sex of animal
- ∞ Age
- ∞ Weight



Judging Breeding Gilts



- ❧ Evaluating Degree of Leanness
 - ❧ Evaluate leanness only after degree of muscling is determined
 - ❧ Heavy muscled hogs will be lean
 - ❧ Light muscled hogs will be fat
 - ❧ Gilts mature at a later age (or heavier weight) than barrows
 - ❧ At same age or weight, gilts will be leaner than barrows

Judging Breeding Gilts



∞ Evaluating Degree of Leanness

∞ Fat will be deposited from:

- ∞ Front to rear
- ∞ First in cheeks and jowl
- ∞ Then behind and over shoulders
- ∞ Then in the flanks
- ∞ Finally around tailhead

∞ Evaluate leanness by looking:

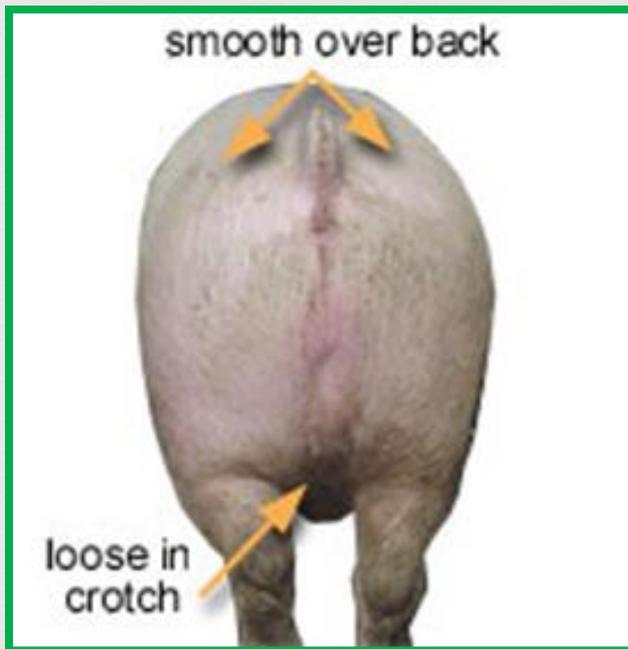
- ∞ For indentions over & behind shoulders
- ∞ At ham-loin junction
- ∞ For presence of a dimple just in front of tailhead



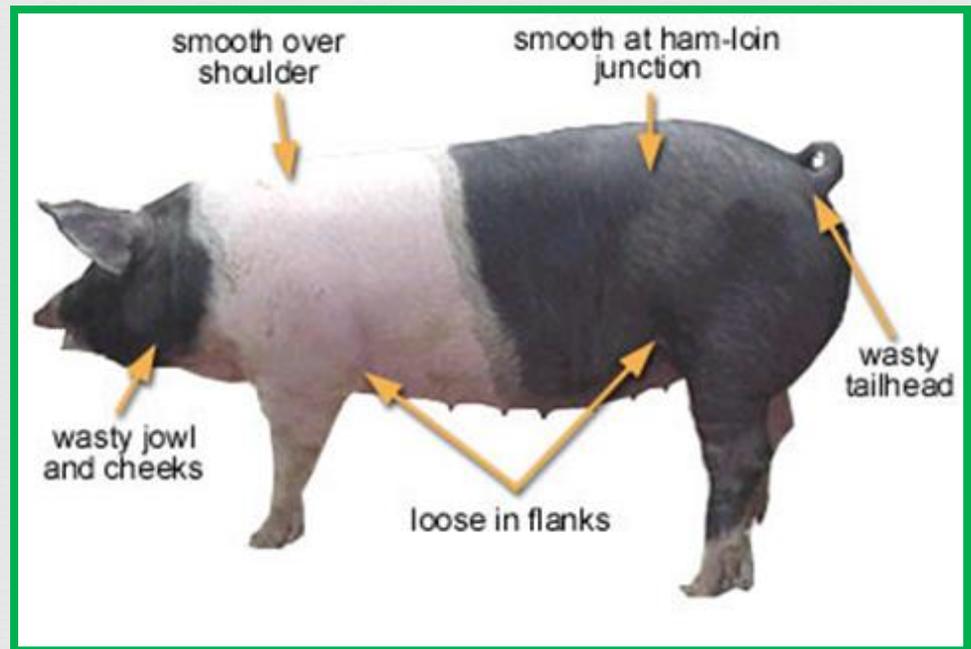
Judging Breeding Gilts



Too Fat



Too fat



Notice pig is wider over the top than at the base

Judging Breeding Gilts



Extremely Lean



Smooth, tight jowl and underline, indentation at ham-loin junction, dimple above tailhead

Lean Gilt



Clean and firm in flanks, well defined ham-loin junction, clean & trim in crotch

Test Your Skills



Place this class of breeding gilts.



Official Placing



Official Placing: 3 - 1 - 4 - 2

Cuts: 5 - 3 - 6

1st



2nd



3rd



4th

