



Hansford County
23 Northwest Court
Spearman, TX 79081
806-659-4130 Fax:806-659-4133



Swine Project Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

September 17, 2015

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Swine Time!

It's time to start thinking about the 2016 showing season!

There are plenty to do to get ready for a new pig projects. It is best if you clean pens, set up like you want them set up, and make any repairs that are needed. This way when it comes time for you to buy your pig, it's feed, water and bedding are ready.

If you need help with designing your pens, please call me to help.



Pork Facts

- A pig can run a seven minute mile
- Hogs have between 34-44 teeth
- Over 40 pharmaceutical products come from hogs
- Pigs are found on every continent except Antartica
- Pork tenderloin cuts are almost as lean as skinless chicken breast
- A pig's squeal can reach 110-115 decibels; the same as the sound of a jet
- From breeding, it takes 3 months, 3 weeks and 3 days for piglets to be born



For more information regarding 4-H Livestock programs, please contact

Andrew Sprague, CEA

Cell: 806-202-6417

Andrew.sprague@ag.tamu.edu

Selecting Your Show Pig



Selecting the right pig for yourself is very important and learning how to evaluate your future pig project based on its physical appearance. With proper planning, trips to sales and farms can be fun!

The first thing I ask families when I am about to go buy a swine project for them is, what shows do you plan to attend and what kind of budget do you have. You need to have an idea of where you would like to show so you can buy age proper animal. You don't need to max out your budget and account for feed, medicine, and bedding cost. After you have a plan in mind, you factor in certain judges, certain shows, personal preference, facilities, and feeding program of what breed you want to show. If you do not have a well shaded pen you would not want to buy a Yorkshire or Chester White. You need to keep in mind if you plan on attending San Angelo Stock show those are Texas Bred pigs only.



With that in mind lets move to the physical and genetic portion of evaluating swine projects. Learning about the breeding behind these pigs will help you have an idea of how the pig will feed out and mature.

The toughest part of buying pigs is determining potential. We can guess based on how they look and knowing their breeding, but in the end they are still animals and can change any time. When I go look the very first thing I look at is their feet and legs. Pigs at 6 weeks of age, have issues with their structure, because that could turn into a major disaster once they put on 200 pounds or more. I need the rear legs to be showy, but not too straight to where they are up on their toes. I like to look for toe size and set to pasterns be comfortable appearing. Pigs that are bowed out as you view them from the front and that are relaxed on their pasterns, I stay away from. You need to understand that most pigs are born and weaned onto a nursery deck, so if you see them early and put them on the ground they may walk funny. If they have been on the ground a while and still walk funny they have structural issues. Swollen and enlarged hocks are difficult to see at an early age, especially if you are looking for plenty of substance of



bone. I would be safe and stay away from them as well. I look at the pigs that have the most level hip as you view in from the hooks to pins (from 4" in front of the tail to a location even with the tail).

From feet to legs, I look for potential in terms of muscle from the rear, in the ham region, and between the shoulders. I want a bloom or thickness of muscle at an early age. I want pigs that have a wide chest, deep body, clean, pretty front jowl and a neat, wide skull. These things combined are very basic and couple them with what you learn about the pig genetics could get you on the right track.

Characteristics can start you with a good pig project and how you do with that pig come show time is completely up to you. What you do each day with your project will determine your success during show time.

Health—Buy healthy pigs from a healthy herd if possible.

Worming—Feed wormer—mainly Safeguard

Injection—Ivomic, Dectomax, Safeguard—Keep needles out of hams. Use the neck.

Antibiotics—only if sick—check withdrawal times.

Preventive—Circovirus vaccination should be done by breeder at 3 weeks

Water—Plenty of clean fresh water

Feed—Feed a fresh high protein high fat feed to start baby pigs. Pigs do not like old stale feed. Normally 50 lbs.—80 lbs pigs need at least 20% protein with 4% to 7% fat. Protein may be reduced as pigs start to finish to obtain a softer look. Keep the fat content high. Check withdrawal periods on feed tags. Feeds with Tylan in the feed can normally be fed up to slaughter. Antibiotics such as Carbadox have earlier withdrawals. Paylean 9 grams for 18 days is the label.

Swine Breeds

Berkshire—Black and white with erect ears exhibiting, must have white on face and tail unless tail is docked, three of the four legs must be white, no solid white or solid black face from ears forward, no solid black nose, white allowed on ears but neither ear can be entirely white, one occasional splash of white may be on body.

Chester White—Chester White breed characteristics, down medium sized ears, solid white, no color on skin larger than a silver dollar, no colored hair.

Duroc—red in color, down medium ears, no white hair, no black hair, maximum of 3 black spots on the skin and none can be larger than 2” diameter, no shading or indication of belt.

Hampshire—Black with white belt starting on front leg, belt may partially or totally encircle body, Hamp breed character, erect ears not rounded, no white hair or streaking on forehead, no red hair.

Landrace—Landrace breed character, down large sized ears, solid white, no colored hair, no color on skin larger than silver dollar.

Poland China—Black with white face and switched unless tail is docked, three of four legs must be white, many have occasional splash of white on body, maximum of one black leg, ears down, no evidence of belt formations, no red or sandy hair or pigment.

Spotted—Black and white in color, ears cannot be erect, no red tinted or sandy brown spots, no solid black head from ears forward, no distinct white belt (hair or skin) encircling and extending down on each shoulder.

Yorkshire—White in color and possesses York breed character, ears must be erect, no hair color other than white, no colored skin larger than silver dollar, no masking above eyes larger than silver dollar.

Dark Crossbred—Black and/or red pigmentation, not sandy, rusty, orange, roan, gray, or blue making up 20% of total body area, can be black or red belted, black/red patched, or spotted.

Light Crossbred—Any coloration pattern or pigmentation



2016 Show Schedules and Information

Top O' Texas Stock Show—Pampa

Saturday, January 2nd

Hansford County Stock Show—Gruver

January 22 & 23

Pigs weigh in after Lamb show—22nd

Show 23rd at 8AM

Fort Worth Stock Show

Arrival: 3PM Monday, Feb 1 to Feb. 3rd 9AM. Show
Feb 4 at 8AM & Feb. 4th 8AM

Judge Kane Causemaker, Atkinson, IL

San Angelo Stock Show—Texas Bred Show Only

Feb. 16-18—Entry Limit 2

\$27 a head

Judge TDA

San Antonio Stock Show

Group 1: Feb. 20-22(Berk, Spot, Hamp, Duroc, Poland, Dark Cross)

Group 2: Feb.23-25(Chester, York, Landrace, Cross)

Judges: Andy Rash (Berk, Chester, Duroc, Hamp, York & Dr. Clint Schwab (Cross, Dark Cross, Landrace, Poland, Spot)

Houston Stock Show

March 12 move in placed 11AM -17

Wave 1: March 13—Duroc, Hamp, Poland

March 14—Berk, Spot, Dark Cross

Wave 2 move in March 15 in place 11AM

Wave 2: March 16—York, Chester/OPB, Light Weight other Cross

March 17—Other Cross

Judges: Mike McCloy, OH

Erian Arnold, IN

