

Stanislaus County 4-H

# PIGS & MORE



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Waterford 4-H: Swine  
Emerald Star Project- 2014

# Table of Contents

- I. General Identifications
  - a. Swine Breeds and Basic Vocabulary
  - b. Body Parts
  - c. Feed Identification
  - d. Equipment
  - e. Ear Notches

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- II. Your Project
  - a. How to pick your hog
  - b. Training
  - c. What to take to the fair

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- III. In The Show Ring
  - a. Tips for showing your pig

Note: This is a learning aid for new and beginning swine members. It can be used for preparation for the Livestock Proficiency Day and for your project up into the end of fair. However it should not be considered all-inclusive.

## Trivia: True or False?

- a. Scours is a skin condition.
- b. Pigs can run up to 7 mph.
- c. Pigs cannot make up missed meals; it is important to have food and water available at all times.



a. False b. True c. True

# General Identification

## a. Pig Breeds and Basic Vocabulary

These are the eight most common swine breeds to know

**Yorkshire:** are typically good mothers, have large litters, are **white** in color (susceptible to sunburn), have a big frame, and **erect ears**



**Chester White:** are typically good mothers, have large litters, are **white** in color, the boars can be aggressive and have **droopy ears**.

**Berkshire:** typically make good sires (boars), are **black** in color with **white points** on all four legs, tail and snout, **dished snout** and **erect short ears**.



**Hampshire:** have lean and meaty carcasses, **black** in color with a **white belt** from one front leg, over the shoulder and down the other front leg.

**Duroc:** typically need less feed per pound of muscle than any other breed, fast growth, feed efficient, can vary in color from **light gold or yellow** to **dark red or brown** and also have **droopy ears**.



**Poland China:** have meaty carcasses, typically **black** in color with **white points** on all four legs, tail and snout, varieties can also be spotted, good feeders and growers.



**Landrace:** are typically good mothers, are **white** in color, have a **long body**, **less pronounced arch in the back**, 16 pairs of ribs and **large droopy ears**.

**Spot:** produce pigs with high growth rates, feed efficient, gentle, durable, **white in color with black spots**



**Barrow-** Castrated male pig.

**Boar-** Non-castrated male pig.

**Breed-** A group of swine that look alike, share certain characteristics and pass those characteristics to their young. Common breeds include Yorkshire, Hampshire, Duroc, and Landrace.

**Crossbred-** Offspring produced from the mating of two or more breeds.

**Gilt-** Young female that has not yet produced her first litter of piglets.

**Market hog-** Swine approximately 5- ½ to about 6 months of age and weighing 230- 280 pounds. They're "harvested" to generate pork products.

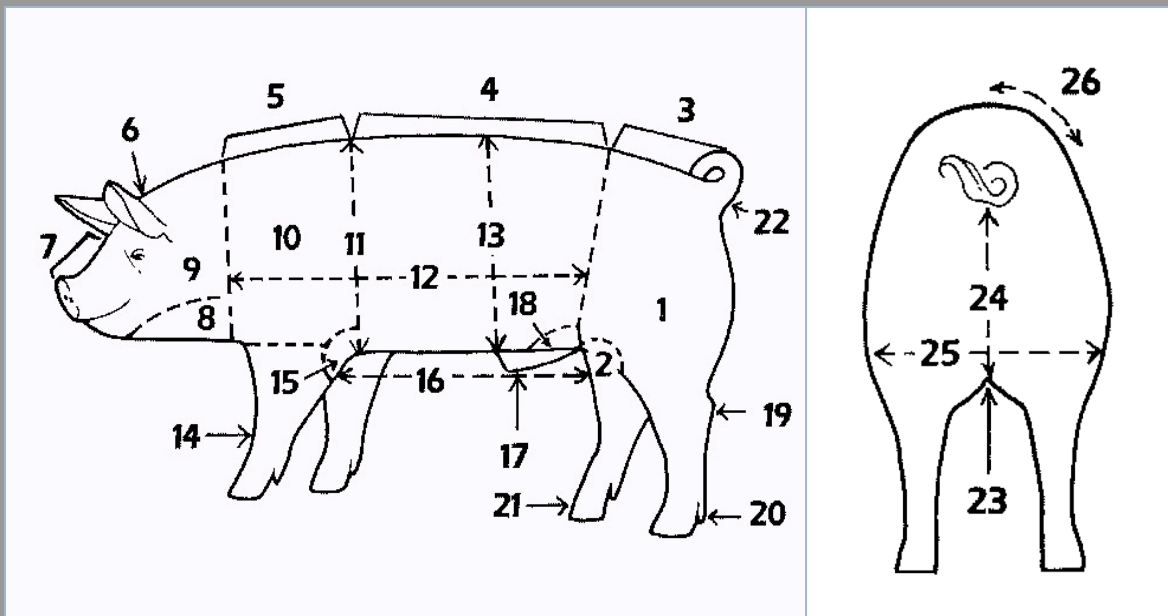
**Piglet-** Baby pig.

**Sire-** Male parent (boar) of a specific pig.

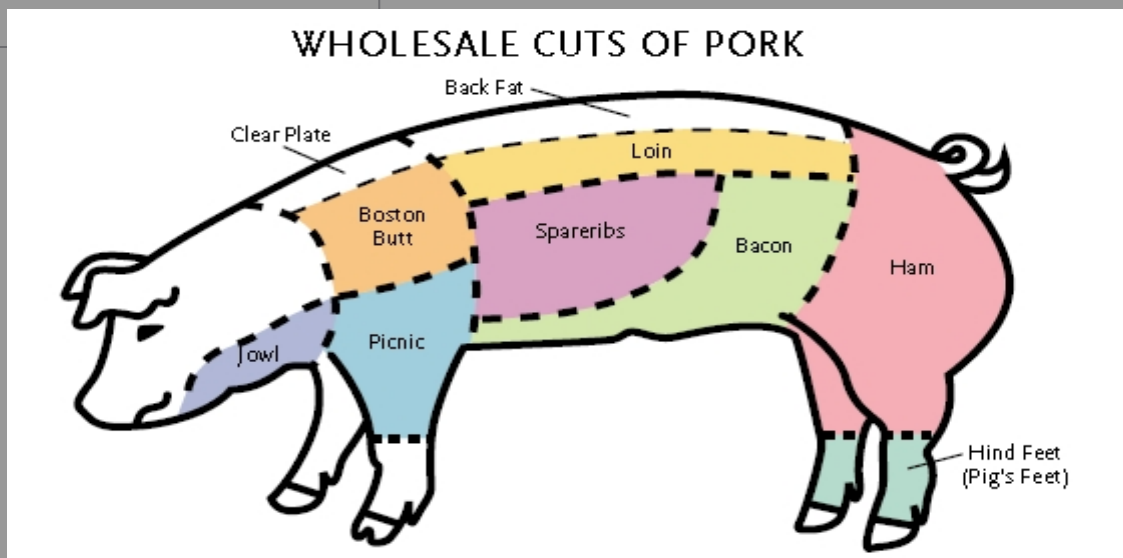
**Sow-** Female hog that has produced one or more litters of pigs.

**Did you know...** Pigs do not have any sweat glands in their body. Therefore, they need water or mud to keep their body heat at a comfortable temperature. Extreme weather, hot or cold, is stressful to a pig's body.

## b. Body Parts



- |                         |                    |                             |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Ham                  | 10. Shoulder       | 19. Hock                    |
| 2. Stifle region of ham | 11. Heartgirth     | 20. Dew claw                |
| 3. Rump                 | 12. Length of side | 21. Pastern                 |
| 4. Loin                 | 13. Depth of side  | 22. Tail setting            |
| 5. Shoulders            | 14. Knee           | 23. Seam or crotch          |
| 6. Poll                 | 15. Elbow          | 24. Depth of seam or crotch |
| 7. Face                 | 16. Underline      | 25. Width of stifle         |
| 8. Jowl                 | 17. Sheath         | 26. Turn over loin edge     |
| 9. Neck                 | 18. Rear Flank     |                             |



## c. Feed Identifications

Alfalfa Pellets



Almond Hulls



Alfalfa Hay



Beet Pulp



Canola Meal



Cotton Seed Meal



C-O-B(Corn,  
Oats, Barley)



Cracked Corn



Grass Hay



Molasses



Ground Alfalfa



Oat Hay



Oats



Rolled Barley



Rice Bran



Rolled Corn



Safflower



Soy Bean Meal



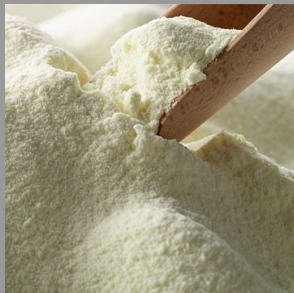
Wheat Mill Run



Salt



Whey



Whole Corn



Whole Cotton Seed



Whole Barley



**Why are these important??**

It is important to know what you are putting into your hog. If you wouldn't eat it, why should they? These foods are all sources (feeds found in the brand and type of your chosen show hog feed) or substitutes for your pigs diet regarding the status of their weight and muscle gain as well as food intake. The feed you choose for your hog should be based on the status of their body in its process of growing to keep it happy and healthy.

**Tip: Livestock Proficiency Day...**

If you are studying these feeds for the Stanislaus County or surrounding Livestock Proficiency Day, it is suggested that you go to your local feed store and ask if they have samples for your club to study and have hands on experience with.

**Fun Fact!**

Pigs can't make up missed meals. Its is essential to have food available for the hog either 2- 3 times a day or on free feed until the hog is about 100 pounds. Hogs need fresh water available at all times.

Try to avoid extended periods of time in direct sunlight because a hog's skin will burn and turn red. It is suggested you apply sunscreen to the pig to help their skin stay healthy.

# d. Equipment

Automatic Feeder



Automatic Syringe



Baby Pig Waterer



Conditioner



Creep Feeder



Disposable Coveralls



Disposable Syringe



Hanging Feed Scale



Emasculator



Ear Notching Pliers



Electrical Tail Docker



Ear Tag



Feed Scoop



Heat Lamp



Heat Pad



Hog Board



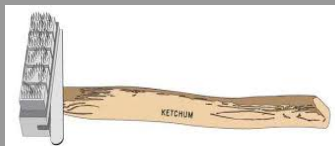
Hog Holder (Snare)



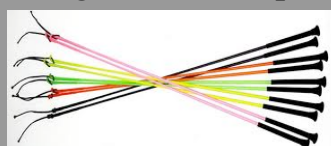
Hog Show Cane



Hog Carcass Tattoo



Hog Show Whip



Hose



Hose Nozzle





Hog Feeding Pan



Livestock Scale



Marking Chalk



Needle Teeth Clippers



Paint Brand



Plastic Poly Boots



Pocket Brush



Rice Root Brush



Swine Back Fat Probe



Spray Bottle



Rubber Boots



Scalpel



Water Pressure Needle



Water Bowl Drinker



Wire



Tagging Pliers



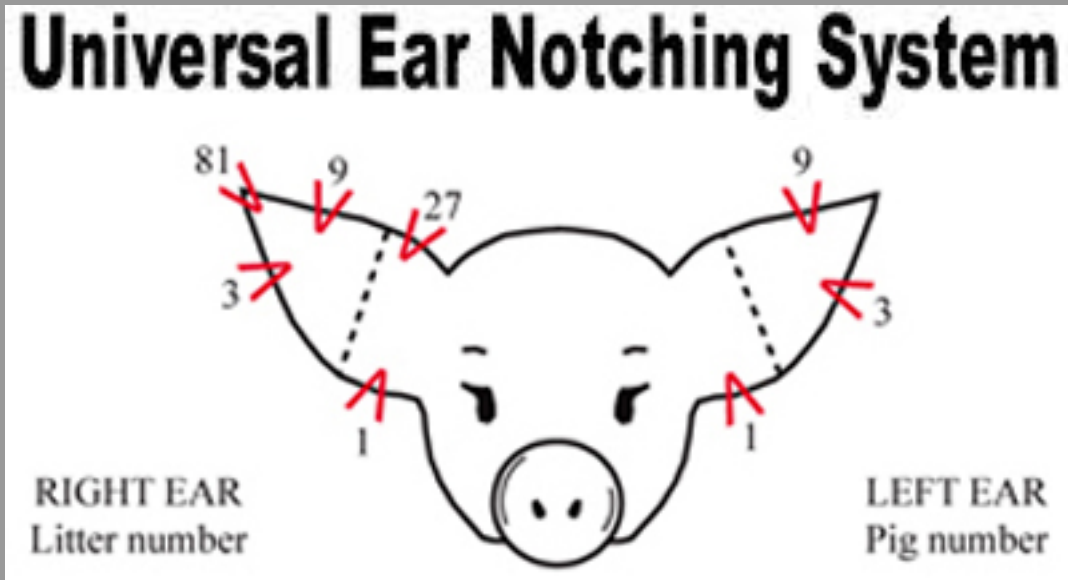
Wire Cutter



## Tip:

These items are essential to know because each are used at some point in your project. Many are used in your everyday activities with your hog.

## e. Ear Notches



Lets say that the only sow a breeder has, has 6 piglets. The ear notches of the 4<sup>th</sup> piglet in the litter would be:

- on the left ear (individual number) a “3” and “1” notch
- on the right ear (litter number) a “1” notch

### **Fun Fact!**

A female pig prior to giving birth is called a gilt, whereas after giving birth she is referred to as a sow. The gestation of a sow (time period the pig is pregnant) is 3 months, 3 weeks, and 3 days long. On average, one sow can have 2 litters of piglets per year (about 4 months pregnant, 1 month nursing, and a final month come back into the heat cycle).

# Your Project

## a. How to Pick Your Hog

Note: Everyone should recognize that each livestock judge has their own respective opinion on the current ideal market hog. Through the years, the trends for the ideal market swine change. On the other hand, there are some basic guidelines that stay consistent regardless to the market trends.

First, you must consider before selecting your hog the date of your county fair. Typically, a pig finishes out around 6 to 7 month of age. For example, if you are planning on attending the Stanislaus County Fair in the middle of July, you would want to select a hog that was born in January to early February.

Lets start with the basics:

**Structural Correctness-** When you begin looking at hogs, you first should look at the pig's bone structure and movement. The ideal pig is big boned, so it will be able to carry itself when it weighs around 280 lbs. Next look at the pig's hooves. You are looking to see that the pig is not down on its pasterns. You want a pig that is up on its pasterns because it is another indicator that it will have a better time carrying more weight as your project progresses. Along with a good pasterns and a big bone structure, you want to look for a pig that is wide at the shoulders and chest as well as have a wide stifle. You also need to assess the hogs gait and look for a nice fluid movement as the hog moves around the pen. Reference body parts ID on pg. 5, if needed for terminology clarification.

**Body Shape/Muscle-** Once you have found a structurally sound hog, next you must look at the muscle tone of the hog. This part of the hog

can be manipulated with feed and conditioning, but you must be able to ask yourself, “Will this body structure be able to support and hold evenly toned muscles?” Generally you want to look for a nice full ham and balanced muscle tone.

If you want to look deeper into structural correctness and selection talk your group’s swine leader and go to [http://thejudgingconnection.com/pdfs/674\\_Selecting%20H%20Pigs.pdf](http://thejudgingconnection.com/pdfs/674_Selecting%20H%20Pigs.pdf)

## b. Training

### **General Steps for training your pig:**

These are common steps for training your pig. The techniques that are listed below are ones we have found to be effective throughout our years within the swine project. Every pig is different and has different likes such as a dog would. Pigs also reflect their owners; by treating your hog with care and spending time with it, your hog will behave better and be more willing to work with you. Training starts on day 1 of your project.

1. Become acquainted with your pig. Spend some time with your project and make it comfortable in the presence of people.
2. You can entice them to walk with you first by sticking a treat in front of them to get them to move along with you. This treat varies from pig to pig. Try marshmallows or other sugary snacks to get them to walk around with you.
3. Begin to introduce them to being trained and maneuvered with a whip, cane, crop, stick or other various hog tools (each pig has their own preference on what tool they like the best and it will take time to find how they will respond to it). Lightly tap them only on the neck to get the pig to move left or right. You can also lightly tap them on the side to instruct the pig to move forward.
4. PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE. It will take time for the pig to get used to being maneuvered, but with practice it will learn to work with you.

## c. What to take to fair

Here is a checklist of some basic items you will need to have at fair:

- Show box (a large storage box that is portable, capable of holding all of your supplies and can be locked to secure the safety of your possessions.)
- Feed for your pig (you can either bring the whole bag of feed or bring exact proportions of feed on the per day basis). You need enough feed for your hog for two meals a day at least.
- Feed bowls or pans.
- Waterer that can be attached inside the pen and easily refilled, so your hog can have clean fresh water 24/7.
- Show whip, cane, crop, stick or other various hog tool.
- Water hose
- Shampoo (hog shampoo or kind of your liking)
- Rice Root Brush (or other similar brush to use for bathing the hog).
- Pocket brush
- Hog board
- Spray bottle

Here is a checklist of items that are suggested to have, but are not essential:

- Skin conditioners
- Glossy spray
- Baby oil and Q- tips to clean ears and around eyes
- Spatula for mixing feed
- Water pail
- Rubber boots
- Gatorade or electrolyte powder (to help refresh the hog when stressed from traveling or irregular bowel movements).
- Bananas (also helpful for irregular bowel movements)

Don't forget to your 4-H uniform! You will need a white button up shirt, white pants, a belt, boots and your 4-h hat and scarf.

**Fun Fact!** Pigs are scientifically proven to be the smartest barnyard animal. They are curious and cunning. They show this through their everyday activities. If you were to mix up food where they would see it, they could easily go back and find the source days later.

# In the Show Ring

## a. Tips for showing your Pig

By the time you get to fair, you have put hours into working with your pig. You have mastered walking with your pig and directing it through different maneuvers and obstacles. At fair, now it is time for you to show off all your hard work in the show ring. Here are some quick tips for the show ring.

- Keep eye contact with the judge at ALL times. With practice at home you can become good at driving your hog as well as watching the judge. Use a parent, sibling or friend as a judge and practice keeping eye contact and showing your pig.
- Come into the show ring prepared. Having a pocket brush or rag will give you the ability to keep your pig clean if they dirty themselves (dirt, shavings, or poop).
- Show the judge all four sides of your hog (front, back, and each side).
- DO NOT WALK/SHOW ALONG FENCE (try to keep your hog from being “barn sour” before you arrive at the fair).
- Do not come between your hog and the judges view
- Stay in a range of about 5-8 feet away from the judge
- Go opposite of the traffic. If the majority of the other hogs are going in one direction, turn your hog in the opposite direction to stand out.
- Avoid excessive use of your whip, cane, crop, stick or other various showing device.
- Do not run after your pig.
- Remember: YOU ARE SHOWING UNTIL YOU LEAVE THE RING. This includes when you get penned or when you are on your way in or out of the show ring.

- When penned remember that you are still showing and could be pulled back out if you are not respectful. Do not:
  - Lean on the fence
  - Allow your hog to lay down
  - Talk to people put of the ring
  - Stop eye contact or attend to your hog if they relieve themselves
- Don't make sharp and fast maneuvers with your pig.
- Shake the judges hand prior to exiting the show ring.
- Although it does not always occur, be knowledgeable about your project and the specie. The judge may ask you questions about the birthdate, breed, ear notching, information about the feed you use, grooming and clipping, body parts, and other general facts about swine.
- HAVE FUN!! You are out there to enjoy yourself and create great memories. Don't be afraid to smile, the judge always enjoys that.

The information provided in this learning aid are a gathering of information from various sources and our first hand experience. We are not claiming authorship for the information provided. Since the bibliography would be extensive, we encourage you to continue to do research on your own to build upon these basics.