

## Show Pig Care

### Supplies you need to properly care for your show pig:

- Feed and feeder/pan
  - Clip on plastic feeders hung on the fence work the best
  - Make sure they are hung at the right height where it is not too low and the pig is eating on the ground and not too high where he has to put his front feet in it to reach the feed.
    - Drill holes in the back of the feeder to wire to fence so they can't bump.
- Water with self dispenser
  - Automatic nipple waters are ideal
  - If you use tube waters or barrels with a nipple on them, BE SURE to clean them out weekly and that they are filled up every morning and every night.
  - Be sure water is cool, if you wouldn't drink it...don't ask your pig to
- Medications and administration equipment
  - "Push pull" syringes are the easiest way to give shots of any kind
- Available scales
- Brush(es)
  - Soft, horse hair brush
- Hair care supplies
  - Refer to back pages for suggested products.
- Show whip, pipe
- Positive, Want to Attitude

### Environment and Facilities for show pigs:

- BASIC NEEDS OF PIGS
  - Space → 6' x 10' or larger
  - Nutrition → Fresh supply of water and feed
  - Shelter → Protection from extreme weather conditions (mainly drafts) and sun (to prevent sunburn on white hogs)
  - Temperature Control → Ideal temp 65-75 degrees
- BEDDING OPTIONS
  - Concrete with plenty of shavings
    - Easiest to clean, easiest to get skin & hair right, easiest to maintain
    - Make sure has light broom finish, treat new concrete with Vinegar
  - Dirt pens (prefer sand)



- Good if have structural issues
  - Still good idea to use shavings, rake and level surface often
- Individual pens
  - lessens the likelihood of one getting hurt by another and more importantly, allows you to know EXACTLY how much pig is getting to eat.
- TEMPERATURE
  - Changes through the day, needs to be thought about before heading to school or work or going to bed
  - Comfortable in summer and winter
  - Will not gain correctly, eat right or look the part if too cold or too hot
  - Winter
    - Block wind & draft
    - Heat lamps if 60° or colder- place them where they are at least 12 inches and no more than 18 inches from the top of the pig's back when it is standing up.
    - Add straw to bedding if extremely cold (under 45°)
  - Summer
    - Fans if over 80°
    - Mistlers or rinse several times a day if over 90°
- CLEANING & DISINFECTING
  - ESSENTIAL to clean and disinfect your pens between each season of pigs.
  - Power wash and disinfect each pen before bringing in a new set
  - On a daily basis,
    - Keep the shavings as dry and clean as possible
    - Wet, dirty shavings are a breeding ground for disease and infection
    - Helps control the amount of flies that are around to bother you and your pig!
    - Completely clean and re-bed pen once a week
- WHAT ELSE?
  - Practice show ring that they can use to train or practice in.
  - Holding pens and a placing pen next to and inside the ring to practice penning your pig
  - You can add alley ways and gates just like they have in the holding ring at shows. This will give you and your pig the practice of working through that type of system.

### **Daily schedules with your pig:**

- FEEDING ROUTINE
  - Single most important thing you can do to ensure success with your pig
  - Feed your pig at the same time every morning and every night.
    - Their body learns to expect to get fed at a certain time and they will get hungry and have a better appetite when they are on a routine.
- DAILY
  - Brush and work the skin and hair on your pig.
    - One of the easiest ways for your pig to look “THE PART” in the show ring is to have impeccable skin and hair.
    - Only need to wash your pig (with soap) once a week.
      - Need to wash them enough to keep their feet and legs from getting stained, but over-washing will dry out their skin and they don't need to be washed when it is lower than 65 degrees outside.



- Once you have your pig calmed down where you can approach him/her in the pen and brush them, then they are ready to take out of the pen and start training to show.
  - If you take them out before you have them calmed down to this point, they will only be scared of you and will run away.
- See checklist at end of this handout for things to check for daily

### Nutrition and Feeding:

- Feed your pig at the same time every morning and every night.
- Train them to eat
  - Once they are adjusted and on feed good, give them 20 minutes to eat, then pull their pan
- Feed pigs separately
- Every pig, like every person, does not look the same in terms of muscle and fat cover.
  - These are the two main things that you can work to change with feed.
  - The amount of protein that you feed your pig depends on what stage of their life they are in and how much muscle he/she has and needs.
  - Lowering or increasing protein DOES NOT necessarily affect how much weight they gain.
  - Protein mainly affects how much and what type of muscle they develop.
  - Fat cover is another main area that you can change with feed or supplements. Some pigs get fatter easier than others and some pigs have to be fed a lot of fat to look right.
- Beyond what your pig looks like, what they weigh and the number of days left until the show can affect what type of feed ration your pig needs to be eating.
  - Weigh your pig once week, or if that is not possible at least once every other week so that you can calculate how much they are gaining on a daily basis.

Here is an example of how you calculate average daily gain:

Fred weighed his pig on Saturday, August 1<sup>st</sup> at 5 pm (before he fed that night) and it weighed 180 pounds. He weighed it the exact same time of day (5 pm) the next Saturday (7 days from the previous weight) and it weighed 194 pounds. Then he calculated his pig's average daily gain (ADG):

$194 - 180 = 14$  pounds       $14 \text{ pounds} / 7 \text{ days} = 2$  pounds a day

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Fred's pig, on average, gained 2 pounds a day. If there are 54 days left until he weighs his pig in at the show, then he can estimate that his pig could weigh in at:

$54 \text{ days} \times 2 \text{ pounds per day} = 108$  pounds       $194 + 108 = 302$  pounds

Obviously, Fred needs to back his pig down some on how much weight he is gaining a day because 302 pounds is over the weight limit at the show that he is going to. Since he caught this early, he can make the appropriate adjustment to his pig's ration and have him only gain 1.5 pounds a day, which will make him weigh 275 pounds on the day of the weigh in. This is much easier to manage than the 302 pound mark that he was headed to make before.

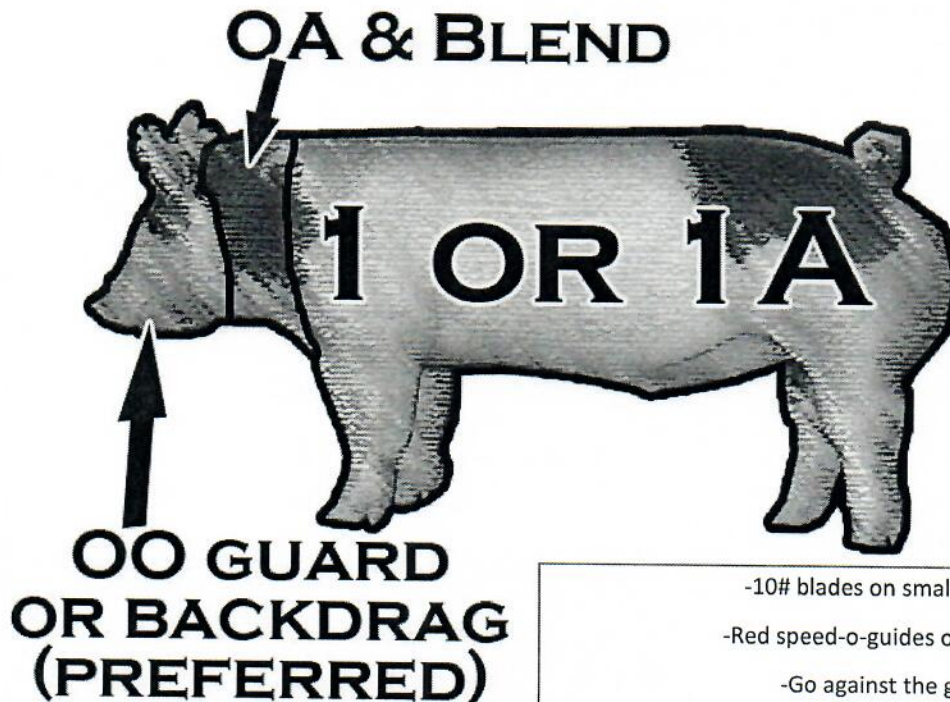
- Pick one day of the week to weigh, no matter what day you pick, always weigh your pig on the same day each week.

- Also need to weigh him at the same time every week.
- It is also much better to weigh them BEFORE you feed. This can GREATLY influence how much your pig weighs.

### CHECKLIST TO MAXIMIZE THE POTENTIAL OF YOUR SHOWPIG

<u>DAILY:</u>	<u>WEEKLY:</u>	<u>EVERY TWO WEEKS:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Cough</li> <li>✓ Loose Stools</li> <li>✓ Thrifty, feeling well</li> <li>✓ Eat everything AM &amp; PM</li> <li>✓ Any joint swelling</li> <li>✓ Walking, not limping</li> <li>✓ Water working</li> <li>✓ Skin (red bumps or irritation?)</li> <li>✓ Temperature in barn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Weigh (same time &amp; day each time)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Worm (alternate with Ivermectin for external and internal parasites and a product that will treat whip worms)</li> </ul>

#### Clipping Instructions:



- OA = 5/16
- 1 = 7/16
- 1A = 9/16

- 10# blades on small clipper
- Red speed-o-guides on clippers
- Go against the grain
- DO NOT clip legs (OA on insides if needed)
- Tail with O or OA
- Clip tight on belly and under jowl, but DON'T come up on sides
- Take your time and try not to make any noticeable lines



## Showmanship Questions

### *Feed Category*

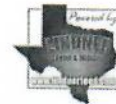
- Are pigs monogastric or ruminant? What does that mean?
- What do you feed the pig?
  - Not necessarily brand of feed, but protein & fat levels, Grower/Finisher ration, Pellet vs Meal.
- What are the two most abundant ingredients in the majority of pig diets?
- How much protein level is normally in pig feed?
- What's a good fat level for your pig feed?
- What is lysine?
- How much weight per day do pigs typically gain or is your pig gaining?
- How many pounds of feed does it take to get one pound of gain?
- How many pounds of feed do you feed your pig per day, do you feed once or twice per day?
- What supplement(s) are you feeding? Why?
- What percent of body weight do they eat per day?

### *Market & Carcass Category*

- What's a typical market weight range?
- What does your pig weigh? What should it weigh at market weight?
- What is the meat product called that pigs produce?
- What are the four lean cuts of a market hog?
- What is one of the most important cuts of pork? Why? Where on the body does it come from?
- Where do pork chops come from?
- Where does ham come from?
- What is an acceptable fat thickness range for pigs?
- What is the ideal fat thickness?
- What is a good loin eye area for market hogs?
- Where do they break the carcass? Where do they measure loin eye thickness?
- What is the fat called in the loin eye?
- What does PSE stand for?
- What is the dressing percentage of pigs?
- Why is the dressing percentage of pigs higher than other livestock species?

### *General Questions*

- What is one problem do you see facing the show pig industry? And what do you think a potential solution is?
- What does a producer generally do to "process" a baby pig when it is born?
- What is the gestation period of a sow?
- How often do gilts or sows come into estrus?



- What is drug withdrawal?
  - Might ask if you have given your pig any medication and then what is the withdrawal on that drug?
- What breed is your pig?
- What is that breed known for?
  - York
  - Hampshire
  - Duroc –
  - Berkshire –
  - Chester
  - Spot
  - Poland
  - For cross breeds – know what they are crossed with
- What is the breed association that handles the records and shows of Hampshires, Yorkshires, Landraces, and Durocs?
- What group takes care of Chesters, Polands, and Spots.
- Be able to read a pedigree
  - Check NSR site, and find the 4-H Swine handbook – good resource for showmanship questions
- What did you do to train the pig for the show?
- What do you do daily to take care of your pig?
- What products do you use for skin and coat?
- What is your favorite part of showing pigs?
- Who helps you with you pig at home?
- How did you clip the pig and prepare it for the show?
- What's good about your pig, what's bad about your pig?
- Know the show rules – clipping hair length, etc.
- What is the ear notch of your pig (know how to read other's pigs ear notches also)
- When was your pig born?
- Why do pig breeders dock tails?

When answering questions, leave your pig. Answer question, then go back to your pig.



## Packing your Showbox and Trailer for the Show:

### Washing

- Short hose
- Sprayer
- Shampoo
- Waterless Shampoo
- Couple large towels
- Couple smaller towels

### Paperwork

- Entry verification from Ag teacher
- Copy of validation form with ear notch and tag
- Texas Bred Certificates
- Breeding gilts- original registration papers
- Health papers (if required)
- Copy of premium book
- Copy of weight breaks

### Skin and Hair

- Skin conditioner you have been using at home
- 2 Brushes (no oil brush and one used for oil)
- Baby oil
- Spray Bottle

### Showing

- Whip or Pipe
- Safety pins or Belt clip

### Feeding

- Feed
- Measuring cup
- \*\*\*All the supplements you were feeding at the house
- Feeder
- Tube water
- Beet pulp & oats (even if not being fed at home)
- Water bucket

### Misc

- Sole paint
- Hoof & Heal
- Wire
- Pliers
- Sliding panel with gate
- Aspirin Free
- Probiotic paste
- Electrolytes
- Heat lamp (if allowed)
- Extension cords
- Plenty of shavings
- Straw (if cold and allowed)
- Scissors
- Razor combs
- Rubbing Alcohol





## Feeding Show Pigs

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It is important to realize several things before discussing nutrition and feed programs related to your swine project. First and foremost, always remember that **nutrition, care** and **genetics** play equal roles in the performance and development of a pig's muscle and lean makeup. Your project will not reach its full genetic potential without proper care and nutrition. Likewise, if your pig reaches his potential because of your care but his genetic potential is low, this may not be enough to reach your goals. The bottom line is you need to start with a pig with great potential and give him the daily care and nutrition required to reach that potential.

### What are the requirements of a show pig?

**Water** is the most essential nutrient required by a pig. Without water a pig can not survive and by limiting a pig's water you will also limit his intake of other necessary nutrients. Be sure to always have fresh, clean water for your pigs. This means that you will need to break ice and make sure nipples are working when it's cold. A good practice is to haul warm water to pigs when it's cold and make sure they come out of their house and drink in the morning.

Your water source needs to be quality also. For instance, at the ag farm we use barrels to water our pigs, this water will get stale and cause scouring if not watched closely. By adding chlorine to eliminate bacteria in the water we can eliminate this problem.

**Carbohydrates** are a pig's main source for energy. Such things as Corn, Sorghum and other grains are great sources of carbohydrates. On average, carbohydrates make up about 75 - 80% of what a pig will consume. Energy is required by all animals in order to grow and survive. Without carbohydrates, a pig could not produce the energy needed to eat, sleep, breathe and do their everyday functions. These carbohydrates are stored in plants as starches and are very digestible and utilized by pigs.

Other energy sources include **Lipids** such as fats and oils. A pig will either convert these to energy or store them as body fat. These lipids provide a high amount of energy. Fats and oils are found naturally in plants or can be added to the diet in the pure form. Fat is a very important part of the diet and can be used to make a pig fatter by adding fat or reducing the fat when a pig gets over finished.

**Protein** is the essential nutrient required for muscle development. A lack of adequate protein or amino acids in the diet will reduce performance and development. The most limiting amino acid in a pig's diet is lysine. By limiting essential amino acids, you limit protein and cause a shortage in the development of muscle and mass.

Swine require the presence of 10 essential amino acids. This is more important than the amount of protein required or available. Complete rations are balanced with this in mind and provide the amino acids required for development.

A pig starting on feed requires approximately 18% protein to meet his needs. When he reaches approximately 75 lbs. his requirements for protein decrease to about 16%. At about 150 lbs. he will only need about 12-14% protein to reach his full requirements of protein.

### How does this effect my show pig?



Today, show pig judges are selecting pigs that are heavy muscled with adequate condition but not too much fat. We need to develop as much muscle as our pig can genetically produce and what his frame and structure can withstand. We need pigs to be lean but not too lean. They must be fresh and full in their appearance during the show.

You must also understand that a pigs metabolism changes from 170 to 190 lbs.. This means his body produces less lean and more fat. During this period, the pigs requirements for protein declines.

All this translates into why and how you should feed your pig!!!!

– Since your pig is growing and developing muscle mass up to 170 lbs., you should make sure the protein (amino acid) content meets his requirements. This also means that you should leave your pig on full feed during this period. Limit feeding pigs at lower weights will restrict their development of muscle.

– Clean, Fresh Water is a must and should never be limited except at the show

– Fat and oil content requirements decrease with the decrease in muscle development because the body is producing more fat for energy.

### **What about limit feeding my pig?**

When pigs reach the point in their development that they begin to produce fat at a faster rate than muscle, one option is to limit feed the pigs. Hand feeding pigs is a perfect way to keep your pig from putting on excess fat. The first thing you must do is determine which show to target with your pig and what his ideal weight should be at the show. Use the attached form to graph your pigs development and feed him to the desired weight for that particular show.

After you have determined how much your pig needs to gain per week, you can begin the hand feeding process. For example, if your pig weighs 150 lbs. on November 13 and your goal is to make him a heavy weight at county, you can use the graph to determine what to do. (Example attached). Your pig will need to gain 2 lbs. / day to be a heavy weight at county. You will need to limit his intake enough to just gain 14 lbs. in a week. This will take about 6 lbs. of feed.

Lets say this same pig is targeted as a heavy weight for San Antonio. We will feed this pig up to the 170 - 190 range and then limit his feed where he grows about 1.3 lbs. / day for the last 77 days to San Antonio. You will feed about 4 lbs. of feed to achieve this goal. (Example Attached)

When I limit a pigs feed, I will increase his protein content and increase his fat intake. The protein is to maintain leanness and the fat is to provide energy for the pig. We will also provide the pig with a mineral or vitamin supplement such as ShowBloom or Winners Edge, etc. because he is being limited on these also. Eggs, Ensure, etc. are also good sources of energy and protein. This also helps with the maintenance of hair and skin.

We never feed less than 4 lbs. of feed per day. If we have to gain at a slow rate, we use groats or hold em in the diet as filler.

### **What about holding a pig?**

I don't like to ever just sit on a pig and gain nothing. Always keep a pig growing, even if it's a 1/4 pound per day. The reason for this is that we need pigs fresh and full when we show and we also need them to look youthful. It is hard to do this when we hold for a very long period of time. If you have to hold a pig do it with high protein and fat as mentioned above and us something with bulk in your diet like groats, beet pulp or hold em. NEVER feed less than 4 lbs. of feed per day. Good planning will help you avoid having to be in this position.

### **How does Paylean effect this program?**

Paylean is made to add muscle and maintain leanness. If your pig needs more muscle or is too fat, paylean is an option. Remember, if your pig is lean and heavy muscled, don't use paylean. It will cause more problems than it is worth. We never feed paylean for more than 3-4 weeks. The benefits of paylean are achieved in this time span and if you feed it longer we begin to see sore pads, tightness and joint problems.

The other thing to realize is that paylean will make a pig gain weight at a faster rate. Feeding 5 lbs. of feed with 18 grams of Paylean will result in your pig growing at a rate of 2.5 to 3 lbs. per day. If you plan to use Paylean, you should plan on this gain at the end. (Example Attached)

Paylean is a tool that can be used to help develop your project but is most often abused and causes more problems than good.

### **What is the best feed?**

There are several feeds that work well and I would encourage you to find the feed that you are comfortable in using. The biggest difference you will find in feeds is the cost. Feed costs will range from 10-20 dollars per bag. If you are feeding 1 pig you probably will never notice the difference. If you are feeding 6 pigs, it can make a big difference.

The feeds that I have had personal experience with feeding are; Sunglo, Mormans, Lickliders, Muscle Pig, Suthers, Acco, Hi Pro, Farmland and Lindners. I personally like the Lindners and Mormans feed and have had good experience with Sunglo and Suthers in the past. Acco and Hi Pro have new feeds out that should be comparable to the others. Lickliders, Muscle Pig and Farmland are not locally available.

Pick a feed and learn how to feed it. Remember that the importance of the type of feeds is over rated and the requirements of the pig can be met with almost any of the above.

If you remember anything from this presentation, remember that nutrition along with genetics and care give you a chance for success. One without the other will leave you short of your goals.