

Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities

Pig Squeal

Production Manual



Alabama 4-H
Alabama Cooperative Extension System



www.alabama4H.com

What Is the Pig Squeal Project?

The 4-H Pig Squeal Project teaches young people recommended management practices for growing and raising swine. Participants

- develop swine management skills
- learn to produce healthy pigs
- develop awareness of business management
- develop record-keeping skills (income and expenses)
- realize the pride of accomplishment

Who Can Participate?

Any young person age 9 through 18 as of January 1 of the project year can participate. You do not have to be a current 4-H member; however, you will need to complete a 4-H enrollment form if you are not a member.

How the Pig Squeal Project Works

As a participant in the Pig Squeal Project, you will receive two feeder pigs that are approximately 60 days old and approximately 50 pounds. All pigs will come from a reputable nursery and be properly vaccinated. You will care for these pigs for approximately 120 days.

At the end of this time, you will bring one of the hogs to the Pig Squeal Project Show and Auction where it will be presented and sold. You will receive any prize money awarded along with a portion of the auction proceeds.

Bidders will have the option of taking possession of the live hogs or sending them to a local processor. If hogs are sent for processing, the bidder will be responsible for making pickup arrangements of the pork.

Participation in the Pig Squeal Project

Prior to getting your pigs, you and a parent will attend a mandatory training session. At this meeting, you will receive valuable information to assist you in preparing for and raising your pigs. You also will be given the designated pickup site and date for acquiring your two feeder pigs. Pigs

will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. At this point, you will take them home and begin caring for them.

You will receive a letter notifying you of the date, location, and other important information related to the Pig Squeal Project Show and Auction. Included with the letter will be three flyers inviting folks to come to the auction. You will be required to post the flyers at various locations in your community. The more buyers who are there, the more money your hog will bring.

You must bring one hog to the show and auction; the remaining hog will be yours to keep, sell, or process. You may bring the second hog to the auction to be sold.

Most Important Part of the Project

There are many great life lessons that can be learned by participating in the 4-H Pig Squeal Project. Soak them all up! If you encounter a bump in the road along the way, just smooth it out and keep on going. We want you to have fun as you learn how to raise, show, and market your hogs.

Let's Get Started!

Preparing your animal for the show and auction will require a tremendous amount of dedication, hard work, and persistence. But it will be worth it! You can gain vast amounts of knowledge about the swine industry as you learn how to produce a safe, healthy, and wholesome product.

Several crucial aspects of swine production are addressed in this manual. To raise a champion hog, you must do the following:

- provide an adequate facility
- develop a nutritionally sound feeding program
- develop a health care program
- maintain current records on all stages of production
- learn how to show your animal
- learn showmanship
- understand hog marketing

Each of these actions is extremely important. Overlooking any one of them can keep you and your animal from being in the winner's circle and, ultimately, from bringing home premiums for your hog.

Pig Arrival

The pigs have arrived! Now what? By this point in the project, you should be ready to take home your two pigs. Your facility should be completed, your feeding and health plans developed, and your record-keeping book in place.

At the designated pickup location, you will choose two feeder pigs from those available. Remember, pigs will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. Once you have selected your pigs, you will need to decide which one you want to take to the auction.

All of the pigs will be barrows or gilts. A barrow is a castrated male pig, and a gilt is a female pig under the age of 1 year old. All of the pigs will have a common genetic profile, breed type, age, weight, nutrition and health plan, and nursery site. This will ensure that everyone in the Pig Squeal Project starts off on the same playing field. How well your animal develops will be up to you.

The rest of the manual will explain each of the swine production aspects in detail. This does not mean that you have to stick to the manual 100 percent. There are definitely many ways to develop market hogs. We are just trying to give



you some guidance and let you take the steering wheel to drive your project to the champion pen.

Hauling of Pigs

Low-stress handling is highly recommended when moving your pigs. Handle your pigs quietly during the loading process to avoid getting them overly excited. If possible, haul the pigs in a covered truck or trailer to shield them from the cold weather. Bedding the truck or trailer with a dry material will help keep the pigs warm during their transportation. This does not mean an open truck bed with a tarp. Your pigs need some type of confinement such as a large animal carrier, dog box, or animal wire cage.

When you reach your destination, it is important that you have a clean, dry pen equipped with a feeder and waterer ready for them. Try to familiarize your pigs with their new pen so they know where their shelter, feed, and water are located. If using one of the Extension office feeders, you may have to keep the pen open for a day or so to teach them where to eat.

Facility

There are many different facility plans out there, and they all have advantages and disadvantages. There is not one "right" facility for raising pigs. Some of the important factors to consider when planning your facility are the following:

- Is it economically feasible? Is it affordable for your project?
- Will your facility protect your pigs from the weather (in this case, the cold), and are they protected from the north wind?
- How easily cleaned and disinfected is your facility?
- Do your pigs have adequate space?
- Is the flooring adequate?
- Is your fencing strongly enforced and adequate?

When choosing a facility design, keep in mind that you want these animals and yourself to be as comfortable and stress-free as possible. An

animal that is not stressed by its environment grows better and tends to be healthier.

Facilities do not have to empty your savings account. Some materials you need may already be lying around the house or farm.

The pen should be rectangular in shape and open to the south. Pigs do not grow well when they are cold, because they are using the energy needed for growth to stay warm. Therefore, a shelter is advised to help keep the pigs out of extreme weather conditions. Most pens have more than enough space. Six feet wide and twelve feet long should be adequate dimensions for your pen. The size and shape can definitely vary, and that is okay. Some type of bedding should be used (shavings or straw) to help keep the pigs warm as well as clean.

Pigs have some specific space requirements that vary according to their weight. The amount of space required for your pigs is presented in the table below.

Space Requirements of Swine

Swine Weight	Space Required/Swine
30 to 60 pounds	3 to 4 square feet
60 to 125 pounds	6 square feet
125 to 250 pounds	8 square feet

The floor of the pen can be dirt, sand, wood, or concrete. There are certainly advantages and disadvantages to each floor type. Some of the floor types are considerably cheaper than others, which can be a deciding factor.

Dirt and sand, for example, are the least expensive. They are easier on pigs' feet and legs, but pose a problem with trying to keep out microorganisms and with keeping the floor clean.

Concrete is the more expensive route for flooring, yet it may have some advantages that you think offset the initial cost. Concrete is harder on the feet and legs of the pigs, but it is easier to clean and disinfect.

You may want to consider a combination of flooring options. Concrete can be laid in certain areas of the pen such as high-traffic areas around

the feed bunk and the waterer. This can eliminate problem mud-hole areas. Sand can be used to help ease the stress on the pigs' feet and legs. After the animals are removed, the sand will need to be replaced and the concrete disinfected before the next animals arrive.

Wood flooring is a great way to incorporate slatted floors. The slatted flooring allows manure and wastewater to drain through the flooring to a manure collection pit. This helps the pen stay clean and dry.

Again, less expensive housing can be just as effective as the most elaborate housing. Existing barns or sheds may be adapted to make very nice pig housing.

Fencing is important because you certainly do not want to spend your time chasing your pigs through the neighborhood. Strongly reinforced fencing or livestock panels work well for pens. The fencing material can be welded hog fencing panels, woven wire, or wooden board fencing. The important part to remember is that pigs have a natural rooting behavior. To prevent the pigs from rooting out under the fence, the fencing at the ground must be secure and strong.

The covered area of the pen can be a simple three-sided shed open to the south, as illustrated below.





Feeding Program

Developing a nutritionally sound feeding program is essential to growing and finishing hogs. The desired market weight of a hog is 220 to 270 pounds. To achieve that goal, you must know the amount of time and feed needed each day to provide for the pigs. For example: You will feed your pigs for 120 days. If they are 50 pounds when the project starts and you want them to be 250 pounds by show time, you need to do some calculations and know nutrient requirements.

Water is an essential nutrient. Water should always be available, because lack of water can be harmful to the pigs. Carbohydrates are responsible for energy and should make up a large portion of the diet. Carbohydrates help the pigs achieve a proper amount of fat deposition for the desired degree of finish.

Proteins are made up of amino acids that form long chains. There are four amino acids that are the most important to the health of your pigs: lysine, threonine, tryptophan, and methionine. Most diets, however, include grains, such as corn and soybean meal, that contain low amounts of these amino acids.

So how do you obtain all of these nutrients and blend them together in a way that makes a safe feed for your pigs? There are two solutions: purchase a commercially mixed feed or consult a swine nutritionist.

Commercially mixed rations should be balanced to give an animal what it needs for the stage

of growth it is in. The diet should provide adequate amounts of energy, protein, vitamins, and minerals. These feeds are referred to as complete feeds. If buying individual ingredients and blending feed is desired, consult a swine nutritionist to ensure proper mixing.

If you are feeding your pigs medicated feed, make sure to pull them off of it for the recommended withdrawal time prior to the show and auction. Remember, these pigs are entering the food supply chain.

There are two common types of feeding practices: **hand-feeding** and **full-feeding**. Hand-feeding requires you to feed the pigs by hand each day according to each pig's appetite. If one pig dominates the feed trough, two separate troughs may be required. Full-feeding is when the pigs have access to self-feeders that allow them to feed all of the time. It is important that the feeders are checked daily to ensure that the





feeder contains feed and that the feed is fresh. You may not want to put more than 2 or 3 days' worth of feed (40 to 50 pounds) at a time in the self-feeder.

There are many different types of feeders available. You may even decide to make your own. Just remember the eating behavior of pigs when deciding on what type of feeder or trough you are going to purchase or make.

Pigs are notorious for rooting with their noses. They may even move their trough or feeder to



the opposite side of the pen. Fastening your trough or feeder may help keep it in place and keep the pigs from wasting any of their feed. Designing or purchasing a heavy feeder can also provide stabilization.

Scales are encouraged for weighing your feed so you will know the exact amounts of feed and can make notes in your record book. With hand-feeding, you can divide the feedings into two or three times a day. It is important to be consistent with feeding times. Whatever method of feeding you choose, remember that clean water is always a must.

Health Program

Starting your project with healthy pigs is very important. All of the pigs in the project receive the proper vaccinations prior to distribution; no additional vaccinations are needed on your part.

Healthy pigs have bright, clear eyes and should move about the pen freely and quickly. Healthy pigs have an aggressive feeding behavior.

Unhealthy pigs will appear sluggish and will not consume feed like normal, healthy pigs. They may have dark tear stains along the inside of their eyes, and they may sneeze and cough. These are all signs of respiratory disease.

Your pigs may also have abnormal stools. Pigs with watery or bloody fecal stains below the anus are showing signs of diarrhea associated with





gastrointestinal disease. Noticing these signs early can help you get your pigs back on the right track. If you notice any of these signs, consult your local veterinarian.

Preventing internal and external parasites is very important to the pigs' growth and health. Swine are host to a wide variety of internal and external parasites. Internal parasites affect different swine organs, such as the small intestines, large intestines, stomach, kidneys, and lungs.

The primary internal parasite of concern is the roundworm. Infestations of roundworms reduce growth and prevent pigs from growing. Dewormers can be administered by subcutaneous injection or by a feed and water additive.

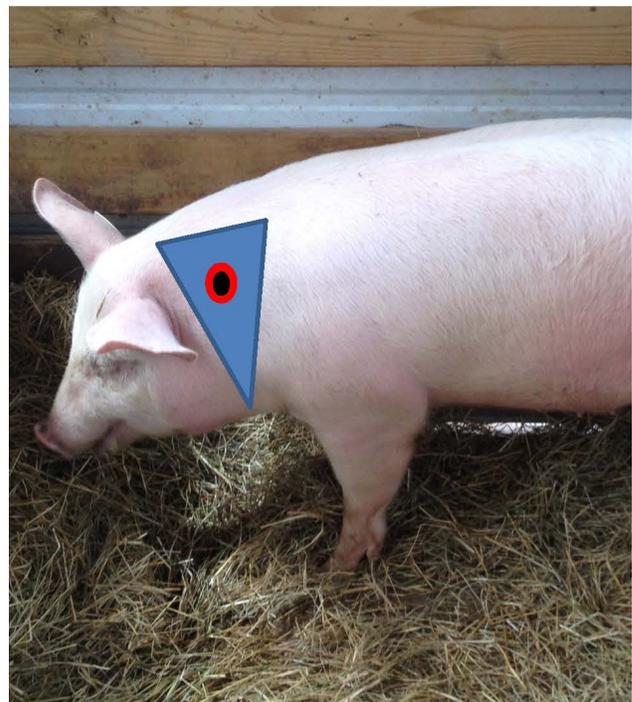
Remember to follow pork quality guidelines when administering any medicine or dewormer by injection. Consult your veterinarian for advice on which drug is most effective and for the proper dosage of dewormer.

The primary external parasites are lice and mange mites. Lice in adult stages are approximately one-quarter-inch long, and they cling to the skin and hair of the pigs. Lice irritate the skin by chewing into it and feeding on blood and body fluids. There are several species of lice, but the lice on hogs have not been noted for affecting other kinds of animals. Treatment is fairly easy because the lice are on the surface of the skin. A variety of insecticide dusts, sprays, dips, or pour-ons are labeled for control of lice.

Mange mites are much smaller than lice and cannot be detected by the naked eye. Mange mites burrow into the skin of the pig. Symptoms include severe scratching and, in severe cases, scabbing of the skin. Mites can be controlled with insecticides labeled for mange mites. There are also injectable drugs (Ivermectin or Doramectin) that are labeled for prevention of external parasites as well as internal parasites. Consult your veterinarian for proper dosage.

Always remember to use safe handling practices when administering drugs. Some products may be purchased over-the-counter without veterinary prescription. In these cases, the proper use of the drugs is up to the pig producers.

Always look for the mandatory preslaughter withdrawal period. This is the required period of time from when the pig was last treated with the product until it can be marketed for slaughter or processing. Following drug label instructions and keeping accurate treatment records are a very important part of the project.



Proper injection site when administering injectable medication.

Preparing Your Hog for the Show

Preparing your hog for the show takes place several weeks in advance. Even though hog exhibitions look like a bunch of pigs running around in a ring, this is not exactly what is happening.

Hogs are actually very receptive to training with a cane or show-pig whip. To start the hog moving, tap it on the side. To turn right, tap the hog on the left side of the head. To turn left, tap it on the right side of the head. To stop, place the show whip or cane on the hog's snout. Applying pressure at the jaw of the hog will assist in starting the movement of the hog.

Exhibiting hogs involves driving your hog into a show ring to display its best qualities to a judge. When preparing your hog for the show, you may want to start by practicing in the pen that is familiar to the hog. Have someone else stand in the pen and pose as the judge. Practice presenting your hog to the judge. When your hog has mastered its pen, you can move to another pen or yard area to practice. This will help simulate the show ring.

Show Ring Procedures

You must enter the show ring promptly when your class is called by the announcer. It is extremely

important that you maintain control of your hog. You must know where your hog and the judge are at all times. You almost have to keep one eye on the judge and one eye on your hog. That sounds hard to do, but with practice you will perfect the exhibition of your hog to its best advantage.

When driving your hog, have your cane, stick, or show whip in one hand and keep your other hand free. A small brush may be used to remove any debris that may have stuck to your hog while entering or moving about the show ring. This brush should remain in your pocket, not in your free hand, when not being used. When driving your hog, never strike the hog across the back or on the rump; this can cause bruising to valuable cuts of meat.

When showing your hog, be cautious of joining large groups in the show ring. Keeping your hog where the judge can see it can give you an advantage in most cases. Maintain your hog at a slow walk. Always be courteous to the judge and try to do as he or she asks. Remember that the hogs can potentially fight in the show ring. If this happens, stay calm and try using the hook end of your cane or show whip to separate the hogs. There will be ring men available to help when large fights break out.



Frequently Asked Questions



Q: My hog is covered in mud and stains and there is no way I can get him completely clean. What can I do?

A: Start washing your hog a couple of weeks before the show to help eliminate some of the severe stains. Your hog does not have to be perfectly clean; you can do some touch-up at the show. For hogs kept on dirt, it may take two or three good washings to remove all of the dirt and manure.

Loading your hogs on a trailer the night before the show may be a good method of bathing; this will allow for a clean space. Use mild detergent, warm water, and a nonabrasive type of brush to bath your hog. You may want to bring some type of bedding to the show barn to make sure you have a clean, dry place for your hog to loaf.

Q: What equipment should I bring to the show?

A: You may bring as much or as little to the show as you desire. This is a personal choice. However, you should plan to bring the following items. They are not mandatory for the show, but they can make your life a little easier on show day:

- feed
- a feed pan
- water
- a water pan or bucket
- bedding

- washing supplies
- a shovel or scoop to remove manure
- clothes for bathing the hog
- show clothes
- a cane, stick, or show whip
- a small brush for the show ring
- a box or tote of choice to carry and help organize your show-day equipment

Q: How should my pig look on show day?

A: For a market-hog show, you want to exhibit your animal in a natural look. If minor hair clipping is desired, then you may trim stray hairs around the head, flank, tail, ears, etc. Full body clipping is actually discouraged for market hogs. Do not body-clip or shave the hogs. Some exhibitors may choose to use oils, powders, and other substances to make their hogs look better. This is definitely not necessary nor is it encouraged for the show.

Q: As an exhibitor, how should I look on show day?



A: It is very important that you look neat while in the show ring. Hats, gum, tobacco products, inappropriate clothing, or anything else that you think is unprofessional is not tolerated in the show ring. Slacks or clean jeans and a clean shirt are acceptable for both girls and boys. When choosing footwear, look for shoes that clean easily and have a closed toe and hard sole. Remember that your appearance may also help while marketing your hog for auction.

Q: How do I know when I am supposed to enter the show ring?

A: The show will be divided into classes based on hog weight. The classes will be determined before the show and will be posted so you can see which class you are in. If you are not sure when or where you should be somewhere, find someone that is working the show and ask for assistance. Make sure you do this before show time; if you wait until the show has started, you may have waited too late. Classes will be called over the loud speaker. Remember to enter the show ring promptly; this will allow the judge to see your hog longer.

Showmanship

Showmanship is the exhibitor's ability to most effectively present his or her animal in a competitive show-ring environment. In showmanship, the exhibitors are judged on their abilities to control and present their hogs in the show ring and to answer questions about their project. Hogs should be driven so that their phenotypic strengths are seen more than their weaknesses. Showmanship is classed based on the age of the 4-H'er.

When your judge orders you to pen your pig, he or she is expecting you to complete this task on your own. Pen your hog in a timely manner without the assistance of the ring staff. Never go directly to the pen while you leave your pig wandering around the ring. Open your pen's gate only when you have your hog near the designated



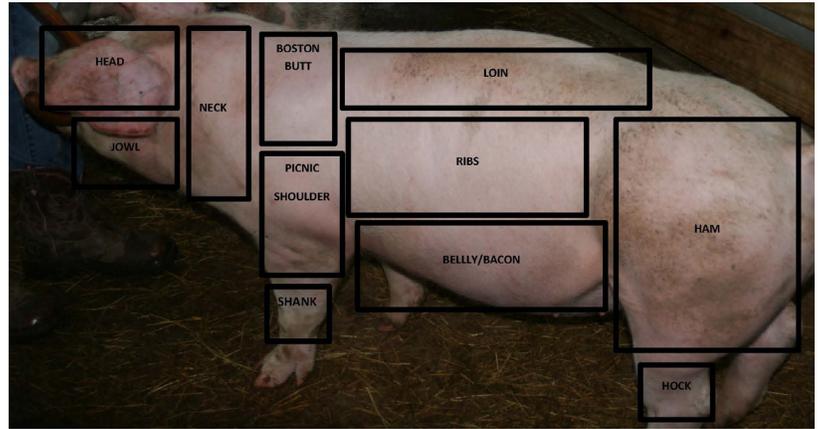
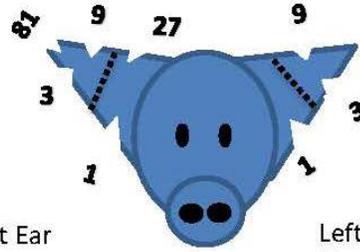
pen. Should your hog move away before you can get him penned, close and latch the opened pen gate before retrieving him.

During the time that you are in the pen, do not take a break. Judges will often watch how well the showman pays attention to the hog while they are together in the pen. Remember, the pens are a part of the competition; you need to stay focused when you have your hog penned.

You want your hog to be positioned parallel to the entry gate of the pen while you are kneeling behind the hog. In this position, the judge gets the best possible view of your hog, plus you are ready to drive your hog out of the pen when the judge asks you to exit.

After you have entered the ring, always keep your hog between you and the judge; you do not want to block the judge's view of your hog. Try to keep





your hog 10 to 20 feet from the judge so it is not under the judge's feet and he or she can view the hog's locomotion. Always be observant of the judge.

It is extremely important that you do not miss an important cue from the judge. Your hog—not you—should be noticed. Keep your eyes on the judge. Being able to answer questions about your project is very important. Questions can pertain to any part of production, your animal, or the swine industry. For market hogs, this could be a number of categories including hog anatomy, identification, production stage, age, weight, feed or nutrition, or records. Being able to answer these questions effectively and promptly is very important.

Always be courteous to show officials, the judge, and to other show exhibitors. Good sportsmanship should always be expressed by exhibitors. Make sure that you learn from your mistakes. You do not have to win first place to be a winner. Learning from your project is the most important part. Have fun!

Hog Identification

Hog identification is different than most other livestock because ear notches are used to identify the pig and litter number.

The right ear is notched to indicate the litter, while the left ear is notched to identify the individual pig. Where the notch is located on the ear determines the number. The numbers are added together to get the litter or individual identification number. There can be two notches in one number area. For example, there may be two notches in the 9 area of the ear and one notch in the 3 area of the ear; this adds up to 21.

This probably sounds extremely confusing! With practice, though, you will be able to read the notches with ease. Examples are provided so that you may practice.

Marketing

Being able to discuss your hog's performance, stage of growth, and carcass quality as well as the current market of hogs is helpful when trying to

PURCHASING PORK

A Consumer Guide To Identifying Retail Pork Cuts.

Left: tenderloin
Right: Canadian-style bacon



TENDERLOIN & CANADIAN-STYLE BACON



CHOPS

CHOPS

Upper row (l-r): sirloin chop, rib chop, loin chop.
Lower row (l-r): boneless rib end chop (Chef's Prime Filet™), boneless center loin chop (America's Cut™, 1 1/4-1 1/2" thickness), butterfly chop.



SHOULDER BUTT

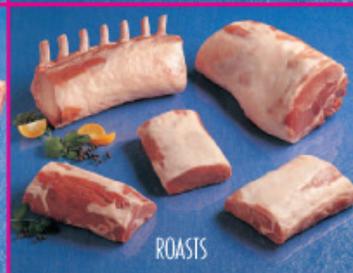
SHOULDER BUTT

Upper row (l-r): bone-in blade roast, boneless blade roast.
Lower row (l-r): ground pork (The Other Burger®), sausage, blade steak.



RIBS

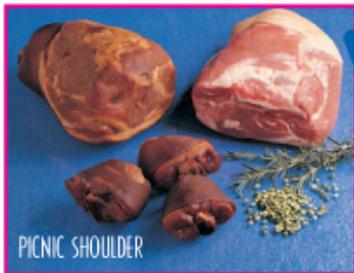
RIBS Left: country-style ribs.
Right: back ribs.



ROASTS

ROASTS

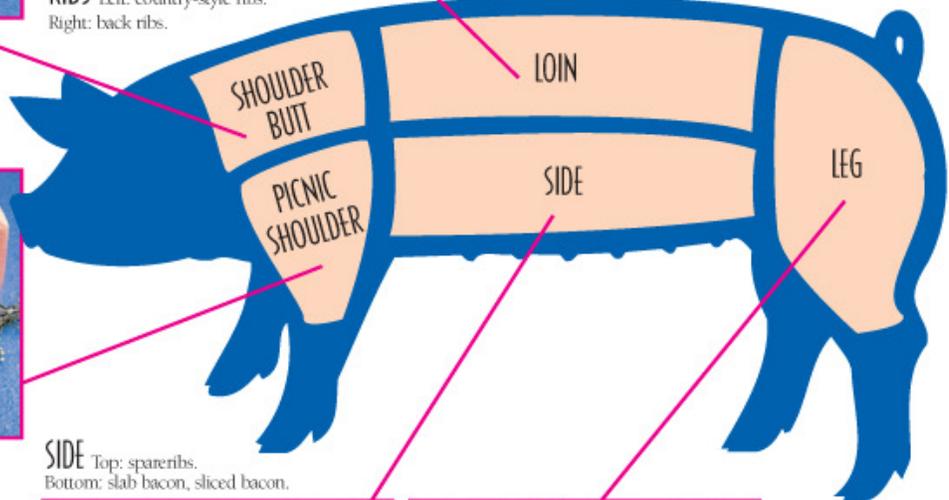
Upper row (l-r): center rib roast (Rack of Pork), bone-in sirloin roast.
Middle: boneless center loin roast.
Lower row (l-r): boneless rib end roast (Chef's Prime™), boneless sirloin roast.



PICNIC SHOULDER

PICNIC SHOULDER

Upper row (l-r): smoked picnic, arm picnic roast.
Lower row: smoked hocks.



SIDE Top: spareribs.
Bottom: slab bacon, sliced bacon.



SIDE



LEG

LEG

Upper row (l-r): bone-in fresh ham, smoked ham.
Lower row (l-r): leg cutlets, fresh boneless ham roast.

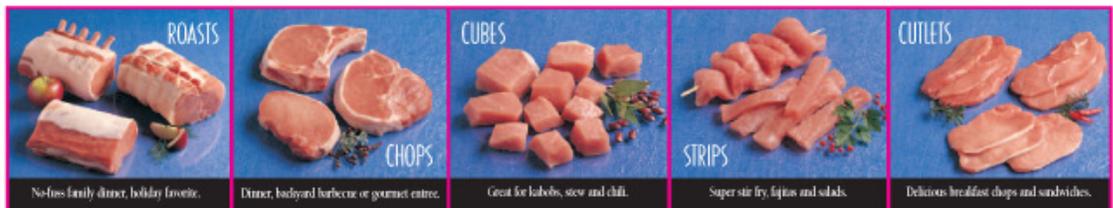


Don't be blah.™

POPCHECKOFF ©1997 NATIONAL PORK BOARD

THE MANY SHAPES OF PORK CUT LOOSE!

When shopping for pork, consider cutting traditional roasts into a variety of different shapes.



No-fuss family dinner, holiday favorite.

Dinner, backyard barbecue or gourmet entree.

Great for kabobs, stew and chili.

Super stir fry, fajitas and salads.

Delicious breakfast chops and sandwiches.

market your product—pork. Consumers of pork desire meaty animals with minimal fat. Growing meaty, lean hogs should be your goal in this project. As such, you should be able to identify body parts on your market hog.

Are there one, two, three, or four hams on a hog? Where does the bacon come from? What if your customer wants sausage? Does the sausage come from the head or does it come from the feet? You need to be able to discuss cuts of meat with your potential customers. A list of cuts is provided later in the manual.

You are marketing your hog at the 4-H Pig Squeal Project Show and Auction. You need to tell as many people as possible about the auction. The more buyers present, the more competition there will be to buy your product. Flyers will be mailed to you to post in your community. Make sure you take advantage of this marketing opportunity.

You can also promote the auction by sending letters to local businesses asking them to bid on your hog. Any way you can increase public knowledge of the auction will help you receive a premium for your hard work. **Remember to tell potential buyers that the processing cost is in addition to the auction cost.**

After your marketing efforts are rewarded by someone buying your hog, make sure you send a thank-you card letting the buyer know that you appreciate his or her buying your product and supporting your efforts. This is important! If your buyer is impressed with your product this year, he or she will return for your product next year.

Congratulations! You have completed your 4-H Pig Squeal Project! Hopefully, you are walking away with much more knowledge of the swine industry, swine showing, showmanship, and marketing.



References

Harper, Allen F. Virginia 4-H Youth Market Hog Project Guide. Virginia Cooperative Extension Publication 414-001. Revised 2003.

Johnson, Lee, Kenneth Geuns. Your 4-H Market Hog Project. 4-H Youth Development. Michigan State University Extension Publication 4-H 1064.

Robinson, Bob, Angela Burkham, Jodi Sterle, Bruce Lawhorn. Texas 4-H Swine Project Guide. Texas Cooperative Extension Publication AS 16-2. July 2002.



4HYD-2043

M. Landon Marks *Regional Extension Agent*; **Danny S. Miller**, *County Extension Coordinator*, Cherokee County; **Amy P. Burgess**, *County Extension Coordinator*, Etowah County

For more information, contact your county Extension office. Visit www.aces.edu/directory.

Trade and brand names used in this publication are given for information purposes only. No guarantee, endorsement, or discrimination among comparable products is intended or implied by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

Published by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University), an equal opportunity educator and employer.

New Oct 2014, 4HYD-2043

© 2014 by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. All rights reserved.
www.aces.edu