



Election News

This is the time of year that we prepare for the RWHA elections. Your board helps to guide the RWHA into the future for Red Wattles and the membership. Each elected board member must be willing to dedicate time for the propagation, protection, health and betterment of Red Wattles as a whole and to devote time to the membership at large thru research and education. Board members must be able to weigh all circumstances with an open mind and 100% dedication to the breed and its success, putting aside all personal preferences or beliefs.

President, Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer all hold 3 year positions with terms ending in alternating years. This keeps 2 members with experience on the board at all times. The 2 Board Members at Large positions are elected each year.

This year the term for President is open along with the 2 Board Member at Large positions. New officers will take their positions on November 1, 2015. If you're interested in holding office you'll need to write a brief history about yourself, your experience with hogs but more importantly with Red Wattles, how you feel you can contribute to the breed and the RWHA, and what you see for the future of Red Wattles and why. Please forward your statement either by email or snail mail to: redwattles@hotmail.com or Kathy Bottorff, 41 Jones Rd., Horse Cave, KY. 42749. Your statement must be received by Sept. 21st, 2015. Statements received after that date will not be considered.



DNA Updates

The RWHA has partnered with UC Davis for discounts on DNA testing. But wait! It gets even better. The charge at UC Davis is \$30.00 rather than \$40.00 if the affiliation code is used. The RWHA will reimburse you half that cost. That means you'll pay \$15.00 for a \$40.00 test. Go to the UC Davis site. Put in My VGL or My Account. You may need to set up an account with them. Put in the affiliation code **redwattlehog**, and then put in the rest of the information asked for. You'll need to provide the name and registration number of the hog, along with your contact information. There is no need to DNA a feeder/meat hog and there is no way to track that information. It's important to put in the affiliation code before you do anything else or you won't get the discount. You can pay online or send payment with the hair samples. Print the copy to attach your samples. You pay \$30.00 up front to UC Davis.

It takes 1 to 2 weeks for the results. UC Davis will notify you and the RWHA. Once confirmation has been received from UC Davis the RWHA will immediately mail you a check for half the \$30.00 cost of each sample submitted. DNA information will be permanently placed in the hog's file on the RWHA website as well as being held on file at UC Davis.

You'll need around 30 to 40 hairs pulled from the hog. DNA is held in the root bulb so pulling is necessary and they need to have enough good ones to profile the DNA. Write the hogs name and registration number on a paper envelope. Use wire pliers or something with grip to pull. If the hogs are distracted such as while eating and hairs pulled from the rear, the hogs barely notice. Try to get groups of hairs not one by one, and pull quickly. Place the hairs in the envelope, seal, attach to the form and mail to UC Davis along with payment if you didn't pay on line. If you need assistance any RWHA board member will be happy to help.

DNA will protect you and your hogs in many ways. Sometime in the future it will also unlock the mysteries of our hog such as the wattles or where RW's come from, or what gene gives them the great mothering abilities or gentle personalities, or broad frame or strong straight legs. That information can be used in the future for breeding by identifying hogs with the traits you may need in improving your herd. In the future it may also identify genetic problems and by doing so it will also help us to solve them.

Another point of thought in obtaining DNA is for your protection. The Red Wattle bred has become popular with more and more small farms raising them. Many of them are not RWHA members but take advantage of the popularity of the breed and your hard work. With DNA on file that confirms your breeding you will protect your investment and the public will know without a doubt that you have the best of the best. You can breed and market them with confidence for yourself and your customers. DNA is where the future is and at some point having it on record will be what identifies and defines your hogs as true red wattles and you as a dedicated and knowledgeable breeder. It can be one of the best marketing tools you'll ever have.



Pedigrees

Many of you have noticed the flags on some of the pedigrees on our website. By clicking on the flags you'll also see explanations. The flags are placed on the descendants of None Such PJ who we know was a cross bred hog and registered in error. Because this boar had many descendants at the time of discovery and because many owners and breeders would be greatly harmed, no hogs have been removed from the registry. The flags identify the descendants so that each owner, breeder or prospective buyer will know the background. The flags will remain on all descendants of this hog until the 6th generation of correct breeding at which time the flag will be dropped however the predecessors will still retain the flags. Per the breed-up program used by the RWHA, the 6th generation of correct breeding should assure the undesirable traits of another breed would not appear in the descendants. If further explanation is needed you may contact any board member or review the flagged pedigrees on the website.



Population

We are striving to have the Red Wattle population as correct as possible. The population is always based on the animals registered and producing. Please go to the RWHA website, redwattleproject.org and sign in. You must sign in in order to do this. Once signed in then go to the animals tab and put in your name as breeder or owner. You'll see a list of your hogs. Click on the small blue "i" to the left of each hog. Review under DOB. If that hog is no longer in production for whatever reason, deceased, retired, sold without papers, injured or whatever, please make sure we know about it if it's not listed as such. You can email me at: redwattles@hotmail.com and we'll update the record. This does not remove the hog from the registry but it allows us to track the current registered producing population. Registered hogs will always remain in the registry to keep our pedigrees correct. The Livestock Conservancy also uses this information for their records and for any assistance we may need. They are the ones who determine whether our bred is critically endangered, endangered or on a watch list. This is an important part of being a responsible breeder just like keeping your own herd records up to date so by helping out you're also helping yourself and the breed.



Registration Applications

When registering any hog the information on the application is critical for you and for the RWHA. Please fill the forms out completely, honestly, and attach another sheet if additional space is needed. This is a permanent record of that hog. It will help you with your record keeping and can also be viewed by the public. These records can help track good breeding hogs and/or pairs by litter size and breed conformity among other things. None of us like filling out paperwork but please remember these are important and necessary forms that will help you, the RWHA and the breed.



Try Going Green

If you would prefer to have your newsletters emailed to you, please contact me to be put on the list. We must have your permission. This can save time and money for the RWHA and can also be a little more “green” or eco-friendly which is what we all try to do. Each newsletter emailed will be blind copied to protect personal email addresses.



RWHA Scholarship

There were no applicants for the annual RWHA Scholarship this year. The scholarship is funded by the purchase of our RWHA badges that can be sewn on caps, shirts, pants, jackets or whatever. If additional funds are needed, the RWHA contributes up to \$250.00. Scholarships are awarded to members or immediate family members to help in furthering education related to any farm or agriculture related field. For complete rules and explanation please go to our website.



Suggestions?

We all want to have a great association. A strong association makes a strong hog in every way. If you have any suggestions, questions or concerns toward improvement please let your board know. What would you suggest the RWHA do to help you become a stronger or better breeder, or that would improve the RWHA overall? We all build upon each other and become better.



Memberships

The RWHA has 3 memberships. First is the RWHA. The form can be found on our website under the RWHA tab. This is membership to the association. Another membership is to the RWHA website. The site is open to the public however some areas are restricted to site members only. You do not have to be a RWHA member to be a member on the website and it's free. Third is the RWHA face book. Go to Google and type in Red Wattle Hog Association face book. It will take you there. This is the official face book site for the RWHA but is also not restricted to RWHA members. It's monitored by Jenifer Kraus and Kathy Bottorff. Membership must be requested. Many people go there to ask questions, show pictures, learn, buy and sell, or just get to know other RW breeders. Membership to all three is required in order to keep spammers down who could easily wreck our sites.



We Need Pictures!

We have the breed standards and card grading system, but like the saying goes, "A picture is worth a thousand words". We've tried for years now to develop an educational folder to help our members better understand and learn both the good and bad that will show up in all hogs. It's not enough to say good, strong, straight legs or tail set at the bottom of the back arch, when you don't know what a good Red Wattle leg or tail set is. All breeds are different and all have different body structures unique to their breed so other breeds can't be used to compare. We can't develop this educational tool without your help. Please send us your pictures. Nothing needs to identify the hog. If you have great legs or crooked legs, zoom in on them and just take the legs, or crop the picture. Pictures don't need to come from your registered hogs. Often your feeder hogs are there for a reason and we need those pictures to help educate too. All pictures and anyone submitting them will be held confidential, and there will not be any judges or critics. They will become the property of the RWHA to use only and strictly for educational purposes. We only want the pictures. We all think some of our hogs are terrific but we also know some of them just don't cut it and some others are down-right ugly. Some are born with birth defects, some get injured or ill. We need those pictures for everyone to share and learn. Our goal is to make this an ongoing project that will grow and change over time as more pictures are received. Please help us to help you. You can send your pictures either by snail mail or email to me. My contact information is listed above under Election News.

This article is a good beginning guideline to help breeders in evaluating their hogs.

How to pick a pig

by Marjorie Bender

The following article by Marjorie Bender was originally printed in The American Livestock Breeds Conservancy News July-August 2009. It appears there with permission of the author and the ALBC. The article is the result of an interview with then RWHB President: Josh Wendland on his farm in Kansas. Josh Wendland is designated a Master Breeder thru The Livestock Conservancy.

The following are criteria that Josh uses when evaluating which of his hogs should become breeding stock.

Head: Wide forehead. Animals with wide foreheads will usually have wide backs and chests. **Ears:** Ears set on top corners of the head. Avoid ears set on the side of the head. Tips of the ears tipped over. Avoid ears that rollup along the side. **Eyes:** should be bright and intelligent. Avoid overly short and upturned **snouts**. The **head** should be of medium length-neither too long or too short. The head should have good depth. A longer shallower head correlates with a more wild-type body conformation that generally carries less meat. **Temperament:** Well-tempered. Cull mean and aggressive animals. **Boars:** Masculine in appearance, an active breeder without being temperamentally aggressive. **Scrotum** should be large and well set back, indicating large testicles. **Gait:** Fluid and functional. These pigs used to walk miles to market. Select for this ability. **Wattles:** Well-attached, substantial. Avoid stringy, poorly attached wattles. **Feet:** Feet and toes must be sound, allowing the pig to move easily and comfortably. **Toes** should not twist, grow overly long or in any other way impair the animal's ability to carry its weight, breed or move. Sound feet are important for the animal's ability to have a long productive life and provide the producer with an economic return. **Legs:** The legs should be well set on the four corners of the pig's body. Avoid 'post-legged' front legs. Avoid stiff hips and stifles. **Back:** medium to long in length. The back must not be so long that the sow/gilt cannot support the weight of the boar when breeding. Excessively long backs are weak and will shorten the productive life of the hog by one to two litters. **Tail:** A tightly curled tail is an indicator of good health. Limp tails suggest that something is amiss. The tail should be attached as the hip falls off from the back. Avoid attachment that is too high (short backed) or too low. **Flank:** the lower edge of the flank should be shaped like an inverted V. Experienced breeders say this is an indicator of good milking ability. A boar with this flank conformation will produce female offspring with good milking ability. **Hams:** Should be large and solid, not flabby. Avoid exaggerated hams which can result in birthing problems. **Body:** The body should be shaped like a block or brick. The body should have good depth from back to belly, indicating good capacity for organs. Long-backed, deep bodied animals carry larger quantities of high quality loin cuts. Balance length with functionality. Seek good balance front to back, well-developed shoulders and well-developed hams. The animals should be symmetrical from front to back. **Color:** Red Wattle hogs can range in color from light red that is nearly golden to a deep mahogany that is nearly black. Different strains have different characteristics. **Hair coat:** Straight and coarse or soft and curly. Different strains have different characteristics. **Nipples:** there should be at least 6 pairs. It's not uncommon for Red Wattles to have litters of 10, and each piglet has its own nipple, so sows need to have a nipple for each piglet. Cull all pigs with an odd number of nipples. **Growth-rate:** Pigs should grow to 250-350 pounds in 6-8 months when they should be marketed if not being kept as breeders. Select pigs that mature earlier.