

Spot Press



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Inside this issue:

Club News	1-9
AGM & Members' Day	2
Annual Report	3-4
Pig Workshop	5
Show & Sale	6
Std of Excellence	7
Club Shop	9
What Not to Feed	10
Starting in Pigs Pt 2	11-12
Starting in Pigs Pt 3	12-13
In Praise of GOS Produce	14
Advertisements	15

Demand Outstrips Supply

The scenario last seen in the mid-1990s where, for no apparent reason, demand for breeding and fattening stock has rocketed among rare breeds of pigs, but especially GOS, has a number of implications.

Firstly, be aware that IT WILL NOT LAST FOREVER. There has been, throughout modern times, a thing called the Pig Cycle which, whilst it is much less pronounced nowadays with supermarkets shopping all over the world for stock, still occurs. Basically it worked on a cycle of high prices, causing more producers to jump on the bandwagon, followed by over-production and a rapid exit by a number of those producers.

As I said, the fact that supermarkets will ignore price pressures in the UK by switching to importing to get the cheapest deal, has reduced the occurrence of this phenomenon but we do still see quite rapid 'bubbles' of demand which last for a little while and then collapse. We seem to be living through just such a bubble at the moment.

This one seems to be driven by a number of ordinary people suddenly wanting to keep a pig or two in their garden to produce their own pork. It appears to be borne of the recession and as a result of an accumulation of food- and farming-related programmes on the telly. There is no single one that has been responsible for it but something in the cumulative effect has triggered it and may those of you with pigs enjoy the fruits of that while you can.



Your Responsibilities

Selling most of your youngstock for people to fatten is a good thing—it is the best place for it. As a breed, we need to be much more selective in choosing which pigs to breed from or the qualities of the GOS will deteriorate.

However, it is not just for fattening that there is a demand. People see a strong demand and good prices being paid for GOS meat in the niche market end of the trade and want to get in on the act. And so there is an increased demand for breeding stock.

Please, for the good of the breed and in order not to repeat the mistakes of the 1920s, be rigorous in selection and do not sell anything for pedigree breeding that does not meet the Standards of Excellence in full.

It can be very tempting when someone is knocking on your door to say, 'Yes, OK, I'll sell you six gilts and register them' when you'd previously (correctly) decided that they weren't good enough and would go for fattening. You have responsibilities as a pedigree breeder beyond just your own wallet.

Royal Show Dilemma

The reported demise of the most important agricultural show in history was a severe blow to traditionalists. This year's will be the last Royal Show in any recognisable form. To give you an idea as to its importance, the Club is planning to publish a history of the GOS during its centenary celebrations in 2013. Part of the publication will be to include details and a photograph of every Royal Show Breed Champion since GOS were first admitted. You could not substitute those from another show such as Three Counties, The Bath & West or the Great Yorkshire. It just would not be seen as being the same thing.

There is also a dilemma for the Club's Committee to determine what is to happen to the Champion of Champions competition for the Elwes Memorial Cup the finals of which have always been held at Stoneleigh Park in July. Ironically, it will be at this year's event that the Committee meets to consider the options available.

Committee Contacts

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Club News

The Club's AGM & Members' Day

Sun 5th April at Daylesford Farm Organics

The foray from a formal meeting at Stoneleigh into a day's event including lunch and a tour of one of the most impressive Organic farms in the country was both a success and a disappointment.

It was a success in that everyone who attended enjoyed an excellent day and were royally looked after by the staff at Daylesford Farm Organics and it clearly demonstrates that this is a policy that the Club must pursue as it gives the members the opportunity to derive so much more from their membership.

It was a disappointment, however, in that from a membership of between 300 and 400, only around 20 attended. If you strip out the officers and committee members, there were still only a handful of 'ordinary' members there.

The AGM ran smoothly with helpful and constructive suggestions from the floor.

This was followed by a truly delicious buffet lunch of Daylesford produce which will be difficult to surpass at any venue in the future.



Club Chairman, Andrew Robinson, enjoys a joke during the farm tour.



President, Judith Sims, (left), presents the award for GOS Pig of the Year to Peggy Darvill from Beaminster, Dorset whose gilt, Toller Muriel 540 added the prize to the many achieved in 2008.

However, the highlight was the tour of the farm with Farm Manager, Richard Smith. Richard had come in specially from a rare bout of sick leave and impressed everyone with his depth of knowledge of every aspect of the farm and his enthusiasm for the challenges laid before him. Whether it was the cereal crops, the market gardens, the crops of lavender to produce organic lavender oil which makes gold sound cheapskate, the (truly) free range laying flocks or the livestock, Richard explained policies and reasons and could not be challenged on any of his decisions—except perhaps that GOS pigs are limited at present to just a handful!

Highlights were the herd of proper British Friesians, (as opposed to Holsteins), that he had identified and built up as being much more suited to an organic environment. Real Friesians are very rare in the UK today and to see a healthy herd of animals that were not simply bags of bones' milking machines with all their attendant problems, was a joy to behold. Similarly, the burgeoning herd of Gloucesters being milked daily to produce high quality, organic Single & Double Gloucester Cheeses, (being eagerly bought by discerning shoppers at top-end prices), showed the practical, value-added use for these rare breeds.

They have an impressive herd of Aberdeen Angus producing quality beef and a large, balanced organic farm which surpasses every other that I, at least, have visited. Lady Bamford and her dedicated team are to be congratulated on showing how an organic enterprise should be run and made profitable. Those of you who missed this opportunity—if you belong to any other group which has the good fortune to visit there, don't make the mistake of missing out again for this is better entertainment and education than you will find anywhere.

We have formally offered to do everything we can to help Daylesford develop a larger herd of pedigree GOS as and when they are ready to do so and look forward to working with Richard to this end.



Real Free Range hens at Daylesford.

We thank Lady Bamford for kindly letting us attend and Richard Smith and his assistant plus Angela Hadfield and Daphne Hildrup who all gave up their Sunday to treat us so royally.

Photos by Richard Lutwyche



The Gloucester cows producing organic speciality cheeses.

GOSPBC Annual Report

The Annual Report has grown out of what was traditionally, the Chairman's Report, and was adopted at the AGM. It was felt that it was in the members' best interests to have access to this straight away instead of waiting until next spring.

GOSPBC Annual Report for 2007-8

The Club has been so active this year that it was felt that it was time to produce a printed Annual Report to form part of the AGM.

The 2007 AGM had seen major changes and developments in the Club's structure. The 2008 AGM was altogether more settled but outside events were just leading to the probably most active period in the Club's history.

Waitrose

On the 26th January 2008 we were alerted by Club Member, Sarah Thatcher from Devon, that the Waitrose supermarket near her was selling packs of bacon purporting to be Gloucestershire Old Spots from a farm near Salisbury. So started what turned out to be a long and sometimes arduous battle to better regulate the labelling of food products in relation to the use of breed names.

Much of that has been reported in earlier editions.

- Much research took place including a meeting with senior Waitrose executives and their pig producers, BQP, and the Club's Chairman and Secretary;
- DNA analysis of samples of Waitrose 'GOS' bacon and semen from Deerpark to determine the parentage of the bacon;
- Efforts to locate the farms where the pigs were produced and then visits to photograph the pigs as evidence of cross-breeding;
- Lobbying MPs and later, LACORS, to change the guidelines for Trading Standards Officers to ensure that breed labelling was accurate. As you will see elsewhere, a major breakthrough was achieved in January 2009. To achieve this, we also garnered support from the RBST and BPA as well as individuals. The research conducted on our behalf by Bristol University for the EU TSG application proved useful in supporting this.
- We publicised the issue widely on the Waitrose website (until it was deleted by Waitrose), our own and those of River Cottage, Country Living, Farmers Weekly, British Saddleback Breeders' Club, British Lop Pig Society, etc. We also got favourable media coverage on BBC Farming Today, The Times, The Daily Mail, Meat Trades Journal, Local Radio and newspapers etc.

For a small organisation with 300-odd members and no full time staff to take on a supermarket chain that is part of John Lewis Group with a turnover of £2.03 billion and a profit of £100,000,000 (Waitrose only), and win, is a remarkable achievement that all members should be proud of.

The resulting changes affect all breeds of all livestock (except cattle) and is a major achievement in helping to conserve all rare breeds as well as the integrity of produce from all breeds.

Bramley Old Spot Pork

It never rains but it pours... In May, while the Waitrose situation was in full swing, we were made aware of a company attempting to register a Trade Mark in the above name to market pork products and name pigs resulting from cross-bred pigs sired by GOS boars. The volumes they claimed meant that they too must be looking to sell via supermarkets. As they had formally applied for the Trade Mark, we retained the services of a specialist firm of patent lawyers to co-ordinate our response and lay formal objections. This situation is ongoing with the latest submission made at the end of January. The LACORS adjudication is a major plus point and we are confident of winning the case but the time frame is long and costs are high. We have submitted a grant application to the RBST but they have asked for more information.

In September, we learnt that the company behind the application were approaching breeders for weaners to be moved off farm at 14 days old to help set up their high health status herd. Having taken advice from the RSPCA, we wrote to all members advising that such early weaning was illegal and that anyone supplying pigs of this age was open to prosecution.

Administration

At the end of the financial year, the Club had a paid-up membership of 324 slightly down on the previous year but not unexpectedly so in view of the crisis in pig farming.

The Club's Committee structure was reinforced with the co-option of three new members; Viki Mills, a former breeder and Council member of both the BPA and RBST; Jonathan Crump, a long-standing breeder from Gloucestershire and Mandy Garbutt who keeps GOS in North Yorkshire. Eric Freeman was elected to fill the vacant post on Committee, having been co-opted the previous year.

Club News

Annual Report Cont.

The Club's website continued to expand reflecting its importance as a tool in educating and informing a wider audience and thus helping to promote the breed to members' advantage. New features during the year include the following:

- Boars at Stud Register
- Artificial Insemination
- Cyclic Breeding System
- Show & Sale
- Historic Photographs Gallery
- Join online using PayPal
- Club Shop

Traditional Speciality Guaranteed

The application to register GOS pork and other meat products in the EU continued at the pace experienced in earlier years. The Club responded via Defra to questions raised by the EU Commission and we await final approval.

Shows

There was a full complement of shows relatively unaffected by weather and without the problems caused by Foot & Mouth Disease. However, GOS were relatively poorly represented with several herds having decided to call it a day or at least cut back and rest on their laurels. We urgently need more breeders to start showing as the agricultural show is a major shop window for the breed and having a good turnout of quality pigs at all the major shows is a significant benefit in aiding the sale of pedigree pigs.

Congratulations to:

Malcolm & Su Hicks for winning the **Champion of Champions** award for **Windmill Patrick 8** as judged by Lewis Barnfield.

Malcolm & Su Hicks again for winning the **Northern Championships** with **Windmill Princess 11** under Vaughan Byrne

Peggy Darvill took the **Southern Championships** as judged by Judith Sims with **Toller Muriel 540**. The same pig took the all breeds **Young Pig of the Year Female Championship** as judged by Stephen Hull.

Show & Sale

The Club's Show & Sale took place at Cirencester Livestock Market in August with an entry of 23 lots. All sold with some very good prices achieved but there were some poor quality pigs present and the Club's Committee is looking at ways of raising the quality of the breeding stock available.

Milestones

The Club's Committee are planning the Club's twentieth anniversary in 2010 and the breed's centenary in 2013. The first will be relatively low key but the second will be a grander affair to really raise the profile of the breed.

Health of the Breed

The Club's Committee is concerned about the relative stability of the breed in terms of numbers of registered pigs. On the surface, the breed is very healthy with more registered pigs than almost any other breed but this is not reflected in numbers of pigs being birth notified nor in the overall quality of pigs when they are presented to the public by and large. GOS pigs rarely win in interbreed competitions at the major shows (so special congratulations again to Peggy Darvill for bucking the trend (see above)). Based purely on numbers, the RBST tried to reclassify the breed as 'Mainstream' but the Club successfully challenged the decision and got it reversed. For the sake of the breed and of future generations, better 'quality control' needs to be exerted when selecting pigs for registration/breeding. Further, the number of pigs being birth notified needs to be raised but this should be addressed by the LACORS ruling as birth notifying litters is the easiest way of ensuring that you can demonstrate that your pork etc. is from pure-bred, registered GOS.

..... Andrew Robinson, Chairman

..... Richard Lutwyche, Secretary

Club News

Club Workshop

Sat 25th April, Broadoak Farm, Cheshire



Jenny Brett demonstrates what to look for when examining a piglet.



Everybody gets a chance to get close to the pigs when making their own selection.



Andrew Robinson demonstrates tattooing techniques that last. Stephen Booth is in the background. For ease of handling, 14-21 day-old pigs are much less of a struggle!

Sadly, much of what was said about the AGM & Members' Day can be reiterated here. Only a small number of members chose to attend what was an amazing day at Stephen & Steph Booth's farm near Lymm which is a shame. We had some top breeders and judges demonstrating what everyone should be looking for in a breeding or show animal as well as practical demonstrations on ear tattooing, training pigs for showing and much more. Stephen's daughter Mandy did much of the demonstration work and everyone enjoyed a great day out among a fine selection of Spots, Saddlebacks and Mandy's newly established Large Black herd.

Guest speakers were Jenny Brett, Andrew Robinson and Judith Sims, all long-standing breeders and BPA-approved judges (as is Stephen himself), so there was no shortage of expertise (and even variations in opinion when it came to judging the pigs themselves!).

Thanks to those of you who did come along and we hope you benefited from the day. At least one delegate is committed to showing her pigs this year as a consequence which can only be good for the breed.



Mandy Booth shows how to wash a pig...



.... and how a boar can be safely controlled.

The Club would like to thank Stephen, Steph, Mandy and Graeme Booth for organising a most successful and enjoyable workshop, Andrew, Jenny and Judith for their contributions and those members who did attend. The next time such an event is staged by the Club, we hope to get a better response from the membership. [Photos by Richard Lutwyche].

Club News

Show & Sale

Sat 1st August, Cirencester Livestock Market

The Club's Show & Sale will again take place this year as part of the Breeds of Gloucestershire event. Several differences will be noted however. Firstly, the event is organized by the auctioneers, Voyce Pullin, and it is they to whom you should apply for a schedule and send your entries, **which are cheaper this year as a result.**

Secondly, to help to enlarge the event and make it more profitable, all rare breeds and even crosses between rare breeds are able to be entered although that part of the sale will take place after the GOS. Therefore, if you have other breeds of pigs or other rare breeds of sheep and cattle, then you can enter these too, perhaps making it more worthwhile for you. And of course, there is also the sale of poultry.

So, the 2009 event is improved in several ways and we hope that you will enter pedigree GOS breeding stock as well as anything else that fits the bill.

The Club will organize showing classes for the GOS in the usual way and will card grade all GOS forward.

Good prices have been achieved in previous years and the event generally attracts a good selection of buyers. It is centrally located adjacent to the A419/417 just south of Cirencester. The road is a main road connecting the M4 at Swindon and the M5 at Gloucester which makes Cirencester one of the most accessible markets in the country.

If you go to the website and click on the Show & Sale tab, there is a link to allow you to download schedules and entry forms. If you don't have internet access, contact Voyce Pullin Markets Ltd on 01291 680068 and ask for them to be sent to you.

Maps and directions to the market also appear on the same section of our website.



Poster to Promote GOS Pork & Bacon

If you are selling pure bred GOS Pork & Bacon direct through a farm shop or Farmers Market, then you'll want to get your hands on a copy of our poster promoting GOS produce.

In full colour A3 and encapsulated for long life and easy cleaning, the poster illustrates and promotes quality produce from GOS pigs.

Members can buy the poster **to promote their own produce** for just £5.00 + £2.00 p&p. Send your cheque made payable to 'GOSPBC' to the club and allow 10 days for delivery. Use the order form enclosed and ensure that you sign the undertaking about usage or despatch will be delayed.

Thank You to Retiring Committee Members

Two Committee members, Viv Coates and Simon Mounteney, decided not to seek re-election at the last AGM and the officials of the Club would like to express thanks to both for their input and enthusiasm in the past. Both are still involved in keeping GOS pigs and we look forward to seeing them at shows and other events.

Mandy Garbutt was elected to the Committee (having previously been co-opted) and Viki Mills and Jonathan Crump were both co-opted.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE OLD SPOTS
The finest pork money can buy...




Gloucestershire Old Spots are the oldest pedigree spotted pig breed in the world. Originally kept on small farms around the banks of the River Severn in Gloucestershire, they have now spread all around the United Kingdom. Traditionally, they were found on the small dairy farms in that part of the South West where they would be fed on the waste from the dairy. In the autumn, they were turned out in the cider and perry pear orchards to graze on the windfall fruit and folklore has it that the spots were bruises from falling apples.

Only 50 years ago they were one of our rarest breeds. An initiative to promote and market their old-fashioned eating qualities has ensured that numbers have increased in the meantime and while they can still only be counted in hundreds, not thousands, they are far safer today than they were.


Why does the meat taste better? Well, they're much slower growing than commercial pigs and that gives the pork and bacon more flavour. There is a little more fat too and that gives the meat succulence and tenderness. The meat is marbled - a sign of high quality. Independent, scientific research carried out at Bristol University confirms the exceptional eating quality and special taste characteristics.

"Once you try Gloucestershire Old Spots pork, you'll turn your back on the tasteless dried up intensively reared pork forever." Derek Cooper on the BBC Radio 4 Food Programme.

The success in conserving this breed has largely been down to small-scale farmers and smallholders selling their pure-bred produce through specialist rare breeds butchers, farm shops and Farmers' Markets. Some of the supermarkets now claim to sell 'Gloucester Old Spot' bacon and sausages **but beware**—close scrutiny of the packaging shows it to be merely a margined product which will not save the name. **Insist on the best—buy only pure-bred GOS produce and support local farmers.**

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Club News

Change to the Standard of Excellence

The BPA have agreed to a small change in the Breed Standard effective from 1st July 2009. The change comes under the heading 'COAT' and the new section states: "**Black should not predominate**". This is not retrospective and applies only to pigs born on or after 1st July. Examples of pigs with such colouration are shown below.

The BPA Standards of Excellence

The GOS is a large breed, white in colour with a minimum of one distinct black spot. It has lop ears which will almost cover the face of a mature pig.

Head: Medium length.

Nose: Medium length and slightly dished.

Ears: Well set apart, dropping forward to nose, not at the sides, nor thick nor coarse, not longer than nose.

Neck: Medium length with jowl little pronounced.

Shoulders: Fine but not raised.

Back: Long and level; should not drop behind shoulders.

Ribs: Deep, well sprung.

Loin: Very broad.

Sides: Deep, presenting straight bottom line. Belly and flank, full thick. Well-filled line from ribs to hams.

Quarters: Long and wide with thick tail set well up.

Hams: Large and well filled to hocks.

Legs: Straight and strong.

Skin: Must not show coarseness or wrinkles.

Coat: Silky and not curly. No mane bristles. Not less than one clean decisive spot of black hair on black skin. Black should not predominate.

OBJECTIONS

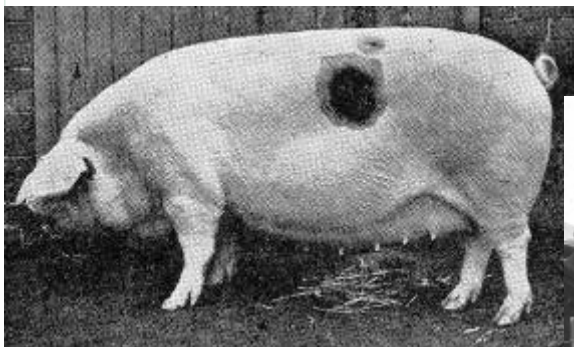
Ears: Short, thick and elevated.

Coat: A rose disqualifies. A line of mane bristles is objectionable. Sandy colour may disqualify.

Skin: Serious wrinkles. Blue undertone not associated with a spot.

Legs: Crooked.

Neck: Heavy jowl objectionable.



Cecil Painter's Quenington Jill 34 at the NPBA Show & Sale 1963.

Vic Withers judging at an unknown show. If anyone has an idea which show or which year or the identities of anybody else, please inform the Secretary.

Some Pigs From The Past



Club News

New Club Tie Available

The Club's distinctive new tie is available to post out to members on receipt of order. If you're showing you ought to wear one to fly the flag; if you just want a smart tie that promotes your interest in GOS pigs then you should have one. Treat yourself! Mandy Booth did and we snapped her as our model to show how good the tie looks.

To order one or more ties, either use the enclosed order form and send it to us (you don't even need a stamp), with your cheque or go online and order using PayPal.

Soon, you too can look as good as Mandy.

GOS Breed Advisors

There was a suggestion made at the AGM that the Club should appoint regionally-based Breed Advisors who would be on call to assist members. Where these are not BPA-listed judges, they would advise on husbandry/welfare issues such as feeding, housing, fencing, breeding etc. Those that were BPA Judges could also advise on a pig's suitability for breeding/showing etc.

Such Advisors as appointed by the Club Committee would be available for consultation by phone or email but steps would need to be taken to establishing a charging system if the service was abused by any member with frequent calls to one individual.

By being regional, the advisors could call at a member's premises by arrangement to inspect the pigs in which case we feel it not unreasonable to pay a fee for the service of £25/visit plus £0.30/mile for travel both ways.

This proposal is subject to further discussion by the Committee but we would welcome feedback from Members as to whether or not they see a need for such a service. Please contact the Secretary with your thoughts.



Pigs With Character

Let's Have Your Stories Please!

Pigs are undoubtedly great characters and GOS, although very laid back by comparison with some, are no exception. So, for the Autumn edition, please send by email or post, your stories of strange happenings, funny situations or incidents that have arisen with your pigs. If you have a photo to accompany the story, so much the better. Aim for 150-500 words (we won't penalise those who fail to hit the mark), and get your entries in to the Secretary for 1st September. The best will be published in **Spot Press**.



Merchandise - Support GOS - Wear the Logo!

Now is the time to order your GOS bespoke clothing. You can order using the enclosed order form or via the website where you have the added advantage of being able to pay by Credit or Debit card using *PayPal*. The bespoke range with the Club logo embroidered on every item is high quality clothing that should last and last so go for it!

Bespoke Range All Including The Club Logo Embroidered Onto the Garment

Photos Show Garments Without the Logo.
All Garments Suitable for Both Sexes.

ADULTS PREMIUM FULL ZIP FLEECE

Sizes Available: XS 36" / S 38" / M 40" / L 42-44" / XL 46" / 2XL 48" / 3XL 50-52" / 4XL 54"

Colours Available: BLACK / NAVY / ROYAL / RED / BOTTLE GREEN / CHARCOAL / MAROON

Members' Price: £30.50 each



PREMIUM SWEATSHIRT

Sizes Available: XS 36" / S 38" / M 40" / L 42-44" / XL 46" / 2XL 48" / 3XL 50-52" / 4XL 54"

Colours Available: BLACK / NAVY / ROYAL / RED / BOTTLE GREEN / HEATHER GREY / MAROON

Members' Price: £18.85 each

PREMIUM PIQUE POLO SHIRT

Sizes Available: XS 36" / S 38" / M 40" / L 42-44" / XL 46" / 2XL 48" / 3XL 50-52" / 4XL 54"

Colours Available: BLACK / NAVY / ROYAL / RED / BOTTLE GREEN / HEATHER GREY / MAROON / WHITE / SKY BLUE / YELLOW

Members' Price: £16.50 each



CLASSIC PIQUE POLO SHIRT

Sizes Available: XS 36" / S 38" / M 40" / L 42-44" / XL 46" / 2XL 48" / 3XL 50-52" / 4XL 54"

Colours Available: BLACK / NAVY / ROYAL / RED / BOTTLE GREEN / HEATHER GREY / MAROON / WHITE / SKY BLUE / YELLOW / KELLY GREEN / ORANGE / PURPLE / CHARCOAL

Members' Price: £13.99 each

Availability on all above items: Normally 14-28 days from order. . Note P&P charges applicable on order form.

POLYESTER CLUB TIES

The ALL NEW Club Tie available in April. Order now and be among the smart set for 2009!

Members' Price: £12.75 each

Check out our online Shop where there are further items including SALE lines offering great value for money.



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What Not To Feed Your Pig by Richard Lutwyche

Recently I have been horrified by some of the comments on some smallholder chat rooms as to what can or can't be fed to pigs. With comments such as 'The rules don't apply if the pigs are just for your own consumption' and implications that 'It is common sense to feed waste from the kitchen', one wonders how soon it will be before FMD rears its head again and can even sympathise with the commercial pig farms who claim that some smallholders are simply irresponsible. Therefore, I reiterate here what is banned from being fed to pigs, (and other livestock), both as a reminder but mainly so that you can instruct new pig keepers buying from you.

It is illegal to feed any pig any catering waste (including used cooking oil), from restaurants, kitchens (both household and central), and other catering facilities even if those establishments cater solely for vegetarians.

Current legislation also imposes strict controls banning the feeding of other materials of animal origin containing them to farmed animals. There are however a small number of exceptions to this, and the following materials may be fed to pigs:

- *Liquid milk or colostrums may be fed to pigs kept on the same holding as that on which the milk or colostrum originated.*
- *Former foodstuffs other than catering waste food from kitchens etc. (see above) containing rennet, melted fat, milk or eggs but where these materials are not the main ingredient.*
- *Fishmeal, (animal derived) di-or-tri-calcium phosphate, or blood products if suitably processed (see TSE Regulations www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/bse/controls-eradication/feed-ban.htm); and*
- *Milk, milk products and white water when suitably treated.*

Please note that anyone obtaining waste milk, milk products or white water to feed to their pigs would need to register with Defra for this purpose, although, in the case of milk products, this would only be necessary if they contained more than 80% milk. Details on how to register are available from either the Defra helpline (08459 335577) or the internet (www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/by-prods/guidance/register.htm).

It is permissible to source certain types of former foodstuffs (see above), as well as fruit and vegetables, from non-catering premises for feeding to pigs., but this can only be done from those premises that either do not handle materials banned from being fed to pigs, or that have (HACCP) procedures in place to ensure complete separation from prohibited materials, and these procedures have been agreed with the local authority¹.

If you are uncertain about what can and cannot be fed to your pigs please contact your local Animal Health Office for further advice.

Waste Food Originating In...	... Catering Establishments	... Premises Other Than Catering Establishments
	Incl. domestic kitchens	
Meat and products containing meat	No	No
Fish and products containing fish	No	No
Eggs and egg-based products (except as defined above)	No	No
Animal fats (eg lard)	No	No
Milk and other milk-based products	No	No, except as defined above ¹
Finished foods containing eggs, rennet or melted fat but where these are not the main ingredient— i.e. biscuits, bread, cakes, chocolate, pastry, sweets etc.	No	No, except as defined above ¹
Finished foods containing eggs where these are	No	No
Sweets, jelly and other gelatine-based products	No	No, except as defined above ¹
Used cooking oil	No	No
Vegetable waste, cereals and other materials not containing products of animal origin	No	No, except as defined above ¹

Information from Defra publications.

Are You ready to Start Keeping Pigs? by Mandy Garbutt

Part 2 Land & Housing—Getting Prepared for Your Piglets' Arrival

So you've taken the plunge, chosen your piglets, got your CPH and herd number from the appropriate authorities so its time to get ready for their arrival.

First of all where are you going to put them? There are a number of issues to consider in making your decision where to locate your pigs. We're assuming you're going to keep them free range outdoors. Ideally they should be on good, suitable free-draining ground away from close human neighbours who might be offended by piggy squeals and smells. Also think about access for both yourself and vehicles, you need to visit twice a day and take your pigs to and fro. Where is your nearest water? Where will you keep your feed and straw and don't forget to have an emergency plan for when your land is flooded or winter weather takes a turn for the worst.

Now you've decided where they're going to live our best advice is to divide your plot into separate smaller paddocks, a few weaners don't need a large area so doing this enables you to move them around your land and give parts of it a rest.

We have a piece of land 18 x 36 metres approx and have divided it into three equal-ish paddocks which we use through the year weather permitting. We use wire pig netting, posts and barbed wire but you could divide the area with electric fence if you wanted something less permanent or more movable, this depends on your land and finances. Some people use a mixture of both. When putting your fencing up you need to remember that pigs are incredibly strong animals even at eight weeks old and are extraordinary escape artists so your fencing needs to be robust and piggy proof. We run a length of barbed wire along the base of the fencing to discourage tunnelling under it. Fencing with posts and wire can be expensive but with good maintenance it will last a good many years.

After each batch of pigs, paddocks are cleared of any muck, the straw is removed from the housing and composted. The ground is sub-soiled, left for a week or so to drain and air, then rotavated, rolled and seeded.



It's then left to grow and rest. We try to do all the paddocks in the autumn so they have all winter to rest. In winter we vacate the paddocks to let them recover. This summer's project is to improve the drainage and concrete the winter runs as the pigs have taken great pride in digging out the hardcore bases we put in! Whilst the paddocks are unavailable to us we make temporary paddocks with security fencing on the vegetable garden, or, as in this last winter on the patio and front lawn as all our ground had turned into a clay slurry!

Now you've got your area fenced off, let's think about where your pigs are going to sleep. There are lots of different arks made from wood, plastic and tin and a wide range of suppliers can be found by googling 'pig arks' (or 'pig arcs' as some suppliers seem to spell them). If this is your first venture into pigs and you're not sure it's for you, a temporary house made of straw bales, posts, pallets and a tin sheet roof could be used. See 'Starting with Pigs' by Andy Case for ideas. We prefer wooden arks with floors, warm in winter and cool in summer. We make our own arks out of 8'x6' exterior ply and they have lasted about five years before requiring attention (we refurbished two of our oldest arks last weekend with roof felt left over from one of ever sufferings' building projects,

once melted on with a gas gun the felt will make them last another four or five years). In the pictures you can see one ark which straddles two paddocks, each end has a removable wooden door so that when the paddock on the left is in use the right end can be closed off and when it's time to move the pigs we just shoo them through the house and then close off the opposite end. This way they move paddocks but don't change their house.



We also have an old hen house which we use for a couple of fatteners up to about 24 weeks old. We use sacking or old carpet as a door covering. We lift all our arks into place with our loader and strong straps, not advisable on a windy day! We also have sun shelters for the summer; one is an old garage door nailed to the top of four fence posts. In winter or in an emergency you could consider moving your pigs into a gated/fenced off area of a barn or large building, with a smaller shelter within. Remember it needs to be fairly sizeable so your pigs can still get some exercise. An area like this filled with straw would be piggy heaven in the cold winter months allowing your grassland to rest and the pig keeper to thaw out occasionally!

We fill our arks with wheat straw though some people prefer barley either of which must be dry and not mouldy. Pigs don't as a rule soil their living area so straw can be removed and topped up as the weather dictates. We compost or burn waste bedding depending on how much we have.

Next on the agenda before your piglets arrive you need to think about how you're going to get water to your pigs. Pigs cannot be without water at any time so it is a serious issue to consider. As we have access to mains water we dug in a water pipe to a tap stand near the paddocks and we



Are You ready to Start Keeping Pigs? Part 2 cont.

attach a hosepipe to fill the Belfast sinks we use as water troughs. It does freeze up in winter so we end up lugging watering cans and buckets from the house which is jolly hard work. It worth bearing in mind the location of your tap when you realise you need to water your pigs at least twice a day and more often in hot weather and in winter to go check for icing over. If you don't have mains water then a bowser or large plastic container could be used to store water but be careful it doesn't get stale in hot weather and it will freeze in very cold temperatures. Pigs drink a lot of water, finishers over 6 litres a day and a sow with piglets will consume well over 30 litres a day so be prepared and don't forget you'll need water for a wallow in summer.

There are also a number of self-filling troughs and nipple drinkers available to consider if you have access to mains water.

You'll also need to order some pig food, (we'll cover feeding and storage in our next article in more depth), find out what they feed their pigs on at the place your piglets are coming from and ask the breeder for a carrier bag full to come home with then you can gradually mix it in with your own preferred brand. We always send any piglets we sell with their first meal in a carrier bag and a sack of straw from their house which can be put in the doorway of their new residence to help them settle in.

Also in the next article we'll cover transporting your piglets home. A cardboard box on the backseat of your car is not a good idea.

Hopefully we've given you some ideas on how to set up your piggy enterprise. Please post any questions you might have on the GOS Forum. We want to hear any good ideas, discoveries or experiences you have had as these might help new pig keepers in their setting up. Everyone has different ideas so tell us what has and hasn't worked for you.

Happy pig keeping.



Part 3 Bringing Home The Bacon (Well, Piglets For Now and Feeding Them)

So you've made your preparations and the great day has arrived, it's time to go to collect your weaners.



Eight week old piglets are very boisterous, noisy and can be smelly when excited or stressed so it's not advisable or allowed to collect them in a cardboard box on the back seat of your car! Ideally they should be collected using a trailer attached to your vehicle. Make sure the trailer is well lined with straw and if it's the larger type make a smaller compartment within by using dividers or a couple of straw bales so your piglets don't rattle around. Either you or your breeder will lift the piglets into the trailer and don't forget to drive considerately with your passengers on board. If you don't have access to a trailer (though you will need one to take them to the abattoir later) and your breeder cannot deliver, an alternative if you have a 4x4 is to lay down a waterproof liner in the rear compartment and fill with straw. A couple of weaners could be transported a short distance this way i.e. less than half an hour's journey. Do not do this on a hot or sunny day. Remember whatever vehicle you use it will need to be thoroughly disinfected afterwards.

The breeder will also make out an AML2 movement licence which you will need to complete and send to your local trading standards office within three days of the journey. You can also ask him if they have been wormed and for a little of their current food to mix in with your own

when you get home. Note your piglets should have already been taken away from their mum (weaned) when you collect them; this way they've stopped having milk and are fully used to hard food and water and are ready to move on. My advice would be to not take piglets that have not yet been weaned properly. When we first started keeping pigs we knew no better and we ended up with bringing home piglets literally taken straight from the sow's teat that needed milk or wet food for two or three weeks more and they suffered tummy upsets and lost on average two weeks' growth just because they had not been weaned properly.

Another pearl of wisdom is do try to collect your piglets in the morning which gives them all day to settle into their new surroundings, explore their sleeping quarters and get used to you - try sitting quietly in their pen and their natural curiosity will make them come and investigate you! - before darkness descends. For the first night we advise shutting the piglets in their house otherwise they might try to sleep outside and catch a chill. As mentioned in previous articles, you need to tend to your pigs at least twice a day so once you have your piglets home, make sure they can reach their water, (we use breeze blocks as



Continued opposite.../13

Are You ready to Start Keeping Pigs? Part 3 cont.

steps to reach and bricks in deep troughs so if they fall in they can get out again and won't drown), so probably their first meal will be in the evening. We have found that pigs are creatures of habit and pretty much like to be fed at a similar time every day - if I'm 5 minutes late, gates take a battering! - and we feed at 7am and 5pm as this fits in with our household routine but you'll soon work out a pattern that works for you and your pigs.



As a small scale pig keeper the best option for feeding your pigs will be to buy formulated food in the form of nuts or pencils in 20kg or 25kg bags depending on your preferred brand, prices per bag range widely from approx £6 up to £11 for organic. Unless you are already on an organic holding and have to, we advise to go for the best natural, non-organic, non GM, drug-free feed you can afford. Ask around and find out what other pig keepers use and their reasons why. Remember your pork will only be as good as the food you feed! Most sow/weaner nuts are 16% protein but some people feed their pigs on grower rations which are higher 18 - 20%, this certainly gives them a kick start but we have found that GOS have a tendency to put down fat and the 16% suits them better allowing them to grow slower and make muscle rather than fat.

We have always worked on the rate of 1.1lb/500g per month of age so your weaners will need 2.2lb/1kg per day split into two feeds. We continue with this regime until they get to 2.5kg a day

and continue at this level until they reach the desired weight for slaughter. We feed from troughs, rubber horse trugs or plastic washing-up bowls as we have found ground feeding wasteful in muddy weather and by feeding our way we can see what each pig is eating and if anyone is falling behind or getting ahead.

Our pigs' diets are supplemented all year round with fruit and vegetables from our land, in summer we have an abundance of courgettes, lettuce, tomatoes, beans, sweetcorn etc.; in autumn there are orchard fruits, pumpkins and squashes as well as sloes, haws and damsons from the hedges; in winter there is sugar beet, stored apples and pony carrots from the local agricultural merchant; spring is the hardest time for home grown produce but we normally manage - weather and rabbits permitting - to have some turnips and spring greens growing.



It is very important that you remember you cannot feed your pigs any food that has come from your domestic kitchen or from any catering premises, even a vegetarian restaurant. They cannot have any food that has been in contact with meat or meat products. For more guidance on feeding do's and don'ts

check out Defra's website. http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/id-move/pigs/pdf/new_owner_guide.pdf and <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/by-prods/pdf/swill-leaflet.pdf>

We assume your pigs are living free range and will have the freedom to root and dig in the ground to source valuable minerals and vitamins; their activities will help them put on muscle instead of fat and grow leaner and stronger. We had a local farmer who took a couple of piglets off us and some months later he remarked he was having no more because they were too fatty. I found out he had kept them locked in a shed, fed on the cheapest nastiest brand of pig meal and rammed it at them like commercial pigs - no wonder they'd tasted awful and fatty. Needless to say I will not be letting him have any more weaners! GOS and all traditional breeds need to work and grow slowly; this is what gives their meat its unique texture and flavour.

Feed and care for your piglets well and they should grow nicely and in about 22 - 26 weeks they'll be ready to be turned into delicious pork, a few more weeks growing and they'll make great bacon too.

In our next article we'll be deciding when your pigs are ready to go and how to book them into the abattoir and how to find a butcher. If you have any questions or have experiences of your own to relate please get in touch through the Forum.

Encourage everyone new to pigs that you deal with to go online and read these articles. It is a free resource exclusive to the Gloucestershire Old Spots Pig Breeders' Club



In Praise of GOS Produce

Flavour Transforms Bacon Sandwich Into a Thing of Beauty

By Fergus Henderson, Chef Proprietor of St John Restaurant, Clerkenwell, London

“You know you are really eating a pig when you sit down to some Gloucester Old Spot.

It is what I call a happy pink in colour, not too bright, and it has such flavour. One of the favourite dishes on our menu is a Gloucester Old Spot smoked bacon chop. They are a joy to eat. We just serve it with potatoes but we use the breed in other dishes.

People may not think there is any difference, but when you eat a rare breed, especially this one, it has such a fine texture and taste. We buy our Gloucester Old Spot from a farm in Gloucestershire and even when you see the meat you know immediately that it is a thing of beauty. Supermarket bacon is usually pink, wobbly and plastic looking, and it is anonymous, but when you go for a breed you know you are buying a name and getting real flavour.



The meat tends to have more fat on it, but that is where the flavour comes from. There is certainly no white stuff from saline water swimming off this bacon when it's cooking. It also crisps well and the meat has integrity. As it is cured, it will be salty, but pleurably so. The flesh on the rashers has a fine skin quality, is not dimply and is just what you'd expect from a pig that has lived its life outdoors. More people should try it.

I like it in a bacon sandwich and also with egg. The taste is just so rewarding and each week the smoked flavour is slightly different. It is such an adventure to eat Gloucester Old Spot.”

Extract From the Arkansas Times



Ragan Sutterfield is already convinced. After apprenticing at Petit Jean Farm under Ed Martsof — a co-founder of Heartland Arkansas Slow Food and host of the apple-butter-making party — he struck out on his own, founding Adama Farms three years ago. Sutterfield raises chickens, sheep, cows and a rare breed of pig called Gloucester Old Spot. Though his farm isn't certified organic, Sutterfield's livestock are free-range, hormone-free and humanely treated. He sells his products through Hardin's basket program, through a similar program run by the Arkansas Sustainability Network, and directly to a few Little Rock restaurants.

Like Hardin, he's working on organizing small farmers to sell their produce cooperatively. Those pigs? Originally bred for their lard, there are only about 2,000 left in the United States. Part of the challenge for direct-market farmers, Sutterfield said, is that unlike supermarkets, they can't just sell pork chops all day long. In order to make a profit, they need to sell everything: the hocks, the roast, even the innards.

A good portion of Sutterfield's pigs wind up in front of guests at the newly reopened Capital Hotel. Executive chef Lee Richardson, a New Orleans native, is a Slow Food devotee who has committed to using seasonal, locally grown products whenever possible at the Capital's two restaurants. Why the Gloucester Old Spots? Because mass-produced pork, bred to be leaner because of health concerns, “doesn't taste like pigs anymore.”

Richardson buys the pigs whole from Sutterfield. He renders lard, makes breakfast sausage, even fries cracklins. “They can be put in a guest room with a bottle of champagne,” he said. “It's a fabulous combination.”

Members' Advertisements

FOR SALE

We have had a dose of common sense and decided to reduce our-pig herd to one more suitably sized for our smallholding budget and available time. We therefore have the following pigs for sale: Registered sows:

Alsa Princess 423 5 year old £150

Alsa Princess 424 5 year old £150

Meadowfield Princess 44 3 year old £200

Two registered Princess gilts at 14 weeks old £70 each

07770 996223

steve.huntleyjones@btopenworld.com

Steve Huntley-Jones, Diss, Norfolk

Well marked piglets for sale. 2 gilts 2 boars born beginning May. Will be weaned shortly and ready to go from 29th June. Feeding well at present, birth notified so ready for registration if required. Great little characters. Please call me on 0777 44 33 33 2 or email wilyvixen@btinternet.com. Our Post Code RG26 in middle of triangle between Reading, Newbury & Basingstoke. Jane Fox

Two four month old Patrick boars (dam Bluebell line) for sale. We are situated between Newquay and Wadebridge in North Cornwall. Please phone John Kingdon on 07795 168151

Due to a cancellation we have for sale the following— registered Princess Freda gilt - 4 months old. Lovely nature, easy to handle and ready to go to a new home. Must have company

FOR SALE

of other pigs and live free range please. Julie Dronfield, Cornwall, 01840 250261 gospigs@yahoo.co.uk

We currently have a good selection of:

9 month old breeding gilts - Star Antoinette & Bluebell & Princess - for sale.

9 month old Patrick boars for sale

and various aged weaners

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Adrian & Clare Ballard.

Tel: 01726 882 861

Email: sales@ballardsfield.com

WANTED

2-3 in-pig gilts John Cairns, Glenboig, Glasgow

assuredtech@btinternet.com

01236 873280

2-3 10 week old weaners for fattening Patrick, Trowbridge, Wilts. pg007@blueyonder.co.uk

2-3 10 week old weaner gilts for breeding Judith Layfield, Durham, 07919 394563

judith.layfield@bacoll.ac.uk

WANTED

2-3 gilts ready for the boar, Amy Craddock, Bath, Som. amber.cradock@yahoo.co.uk

Young registered boar for our maiden gilts (Foston sire/P. Ann dam) John Carpenter, Lancs. john_carpenter@tiscali.co.uk

2-3 maiden gilts 6 months John Lisle, N Devon jlisle@devon.sch.uk

2-3 10 week old weaners for fattening, Keith Kilvington, York cathkilvington@hotmail.co.uk

2-3 10 week old weaners for fattening, Paul, Worcs. pmerch@hotmail.co.uk

An in pig gilt to add to our herd. We already have Josephine and Princess sows so would like a different family line if poss. Based near Ipswich and will travel up to an hour away. If anyone has anything suitable please email GeorginaMatthews@oakhousefarm.freeserve.co.uk

or telephone 01473 730 877



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GOSPBC FIGHTING FUND

In our effort to maintain the integrity of genuine pork from pedigree Gloucestershire Old Spots, we are undertaking considerable work to protect the real thing for the benefit of breeders everywhere. In response to this appeal please send **any donation** to GOSPBC c/o Mr S Booth, Broadoak Farm, Chapel Lane, Warburton, Lymm, Cheshire, WA13 9TY.

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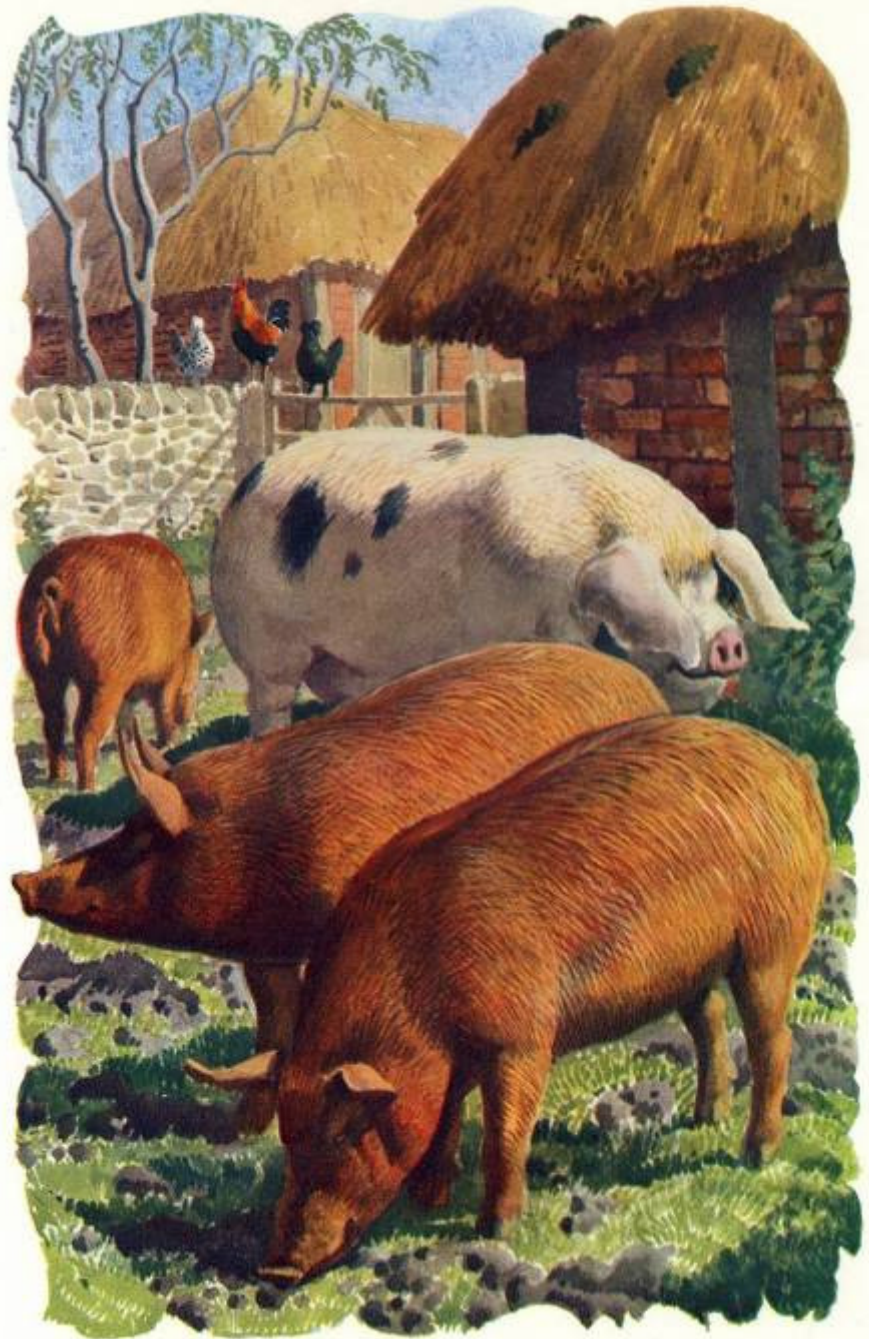
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The Autumn edition will be published in Sep/Oct and we invite contributions and suggestions as to what you would like to be included.

Edited by Richard Lutwyche

We thank all those contributors listed within these pages.

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A painting by C E Tunnicliffe from 1949 showing A GOS with three Tamworths.

TAILPIECE...

FIRST SWINE FLU
AND NOW BARBECUE
SALES ARE UP



From The Times 12th June 2009