

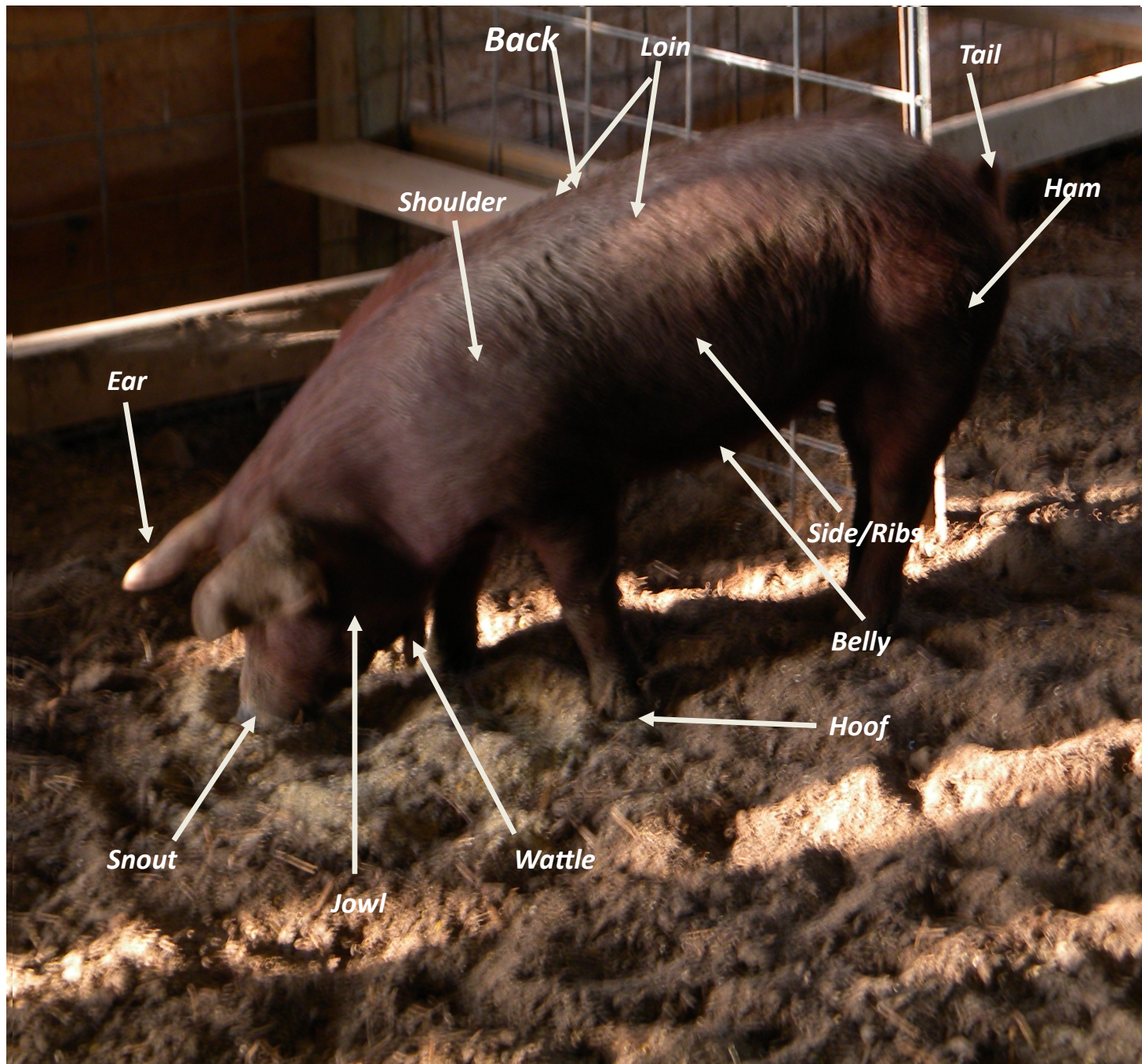
# **Red Wattle Hog Association Selection Guide And Owners Manual**

October 2011

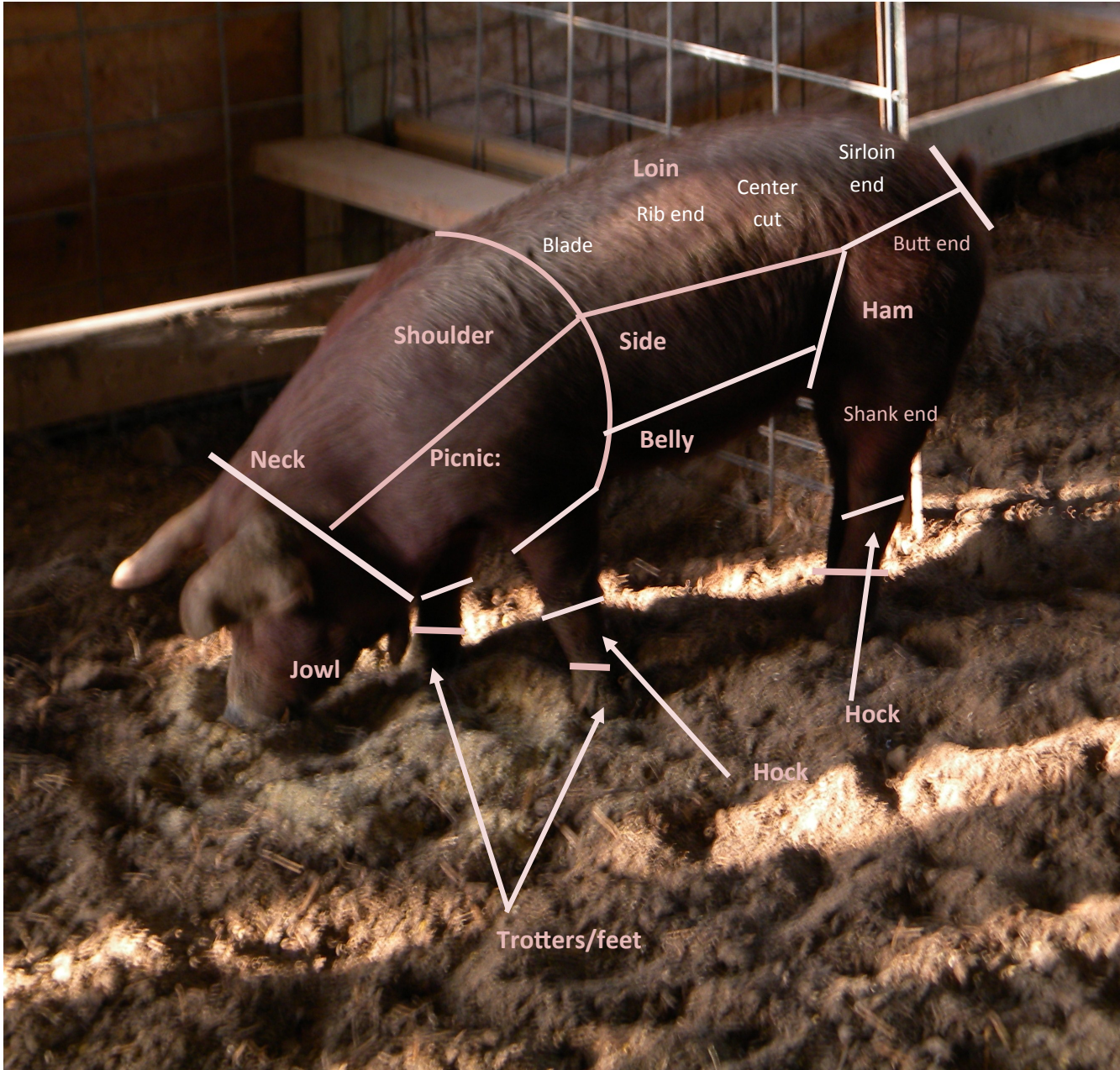
Produced with the help and encouragement of the members/breeders of the Red Wattle Hog Association.

A big THANK YOU goes out to all who offered their knowledge, inspiration, critical review & encouragement during the completion of this project

# Parts of a Red Wattle Hog



# From squeal to tail: Cuts of Pork



Head: head cheese

Jowl: jowl bacon, sausage, head cheese

Neck: sausage, soup bones

Shoulder: Boston Butt roast, Cottage bacon, blade steak. Bone-in

or boneless blade roast, ground pork

Picnic: smoked or fresh picnic roast, ground pork, sausage

Trotters: pickled pigs feet

Loin: chops, loin roast,

tenderloin, Canadian bacon, Irish bacon

Side: Ribs, sausage

Belly: Bacon, sausage, pancetta

Ham: Smoked ham, ham steaks, fresh ham roast, pork cutlets,

prosciutto

Hock: smoked ham hock

Tail: seasoning, roasted

Fat/Lard: cooking, soap making

# Porcine Vocabulary

**Hog:** swine weighing greater than about 120 lbs.

**Pig:** Young swine less than about 120lbs often used by the beginner to refer to a hog.

**Piglet:** very young swine

**Shoat:** a pig: male or female from weaning to about 120 lbs.

**Butcher weight:** refers to the preferred size a hog should be when sent to slaughter generally  $\geq$  225lbs

**Feeder pig:** weaned pig up to about 70 lbs. sold for the buyer to feed out to butcher weight

**Growing/finishing hog:** any swine weighing  $> 50$  lbs. in the feeder lot or feeder pasture before it reaches butcher weight and goes to the processor

**Dam:** mother

**Sire:** father

**Sow:** female hog after she has farrowed at least once.

**Gilt:** young female swine before first farrowing.

**Barrow:** male that has been castrated

**Boar:** intact male

**Stag:** older male or older castrated male being sent to slaughter.

**Farrow:** giving birth

**Gestation:** period of time from breeding to birth approximately 3 months, 3 weeks and 3 days.

**Litter:** sibling group from the same farrowing

**Ear notching:** standardized system of permanent identification markings involving removing small V shaped notches from the ears

**Pork:** meat from hogs

**Market hog:** hog ready for slaughter  $\geq$  225 lbs.

**Live weight:** Weight of hog just before slaughter

**Rail weight:** Weight of carcass

**Dressing percentage:** amount of usable meat processed from the carcass

## *Why should you use card grading to evaluate RW stock?*

The RWHA is implementing a card grading system in order to help all breeders make better decisions about which Red Wattle Hogs to retain for breeding stock and which to send to the processor. It is imperative that we improve our selection process to ensure the quality of the genetics we steward for the future of the Red Wattle breed.

What is card grading?

Card grading is a simple system. It allows the individual animals to be evaluated against a standard for the breed. The RWHA has developed this guideline booklet to help in the evaluation of individual animals.

Unlike the traditional show ring system, card grading doesn't compare animals to each other. It compares animals to the standard of perfection for the breed.

Card grading animals results in a measurement of the animal's value for breeding purposes:

Animals that are excellent— sound and conform to the breed standard/guidelines with a high percentage score receive a Blue Card.

Animals that are sound for breed and show most of the characteristics as outlined in the guide receive a—Red Card.

An animal that is acceptable with no disqualifying features or unsoundness would receive a—Yellow Card

Animals that are unacceptable for breeding; unsound or do not meet the breed standard/guidelines receive a—White Card

There is no "Winner" in this system.

For example: Ten RWs could be evaluated and all of them receive blue cards

Or

Ten RWs could be evaluated and none receive blue cards

Or

Any combination of blue, red, yellow and white cards might be awarded.

Card grading is an excellent tool for both experienced breeders and "newbies" to use to evaluate potential breeding stock.

# Red Wattle Hog Association

## Selection Guide

### Disqualifications

Does not have 2 wattles, small cramped chest, crease back over shoulders and over back (depression over the spine that is easily noticeable), badly deformed legs or broken down feet, large black or white spots in the coat, coat that is not some shade of red from almost yellow to almost black. Very small. A score less than fifty points.

### Detailed description

**Head and Face:** Head proportionate to body- not too large or too small. Medium length snout. Eyes set wide apart and symmetrical. Face dished to almost straight. Nose pliable with nostrils symmetrical and large.

*Objections:* Head out of proportion to body. Narrow between eyes or eyes set at different levels. Crooked nose. Face extremely dished.

**Eyes:** Large, bright, intelligent and kind

*Objections:* Dull, small, weak

**Wattles:** 2 wattles well attached, in the same location on the corner of the jowl on each side, firm and of a kidney shape

*Objection:* less than two wattles, poorly attached, located at any point other than the corner of the jowl

**Ears:** Set wide apart, symmetrical in form and attachment, upright, tipped or lopped. Pointed and with a moderate thickness. Under control of the hog.

*Objections:* Nearly round, thick, not the same size, set and shape. Swinging/flabby and not under the control of the animal. (The hog should be able to perk up its ears.)

**Neck:** Thick, deep and slightly arched

*Objections:* Short, straight, thin, shallow

**Jowl:** Broad, full, neat and smooth

*Objections:* Large, loose, flabby or small, thin and wedge like

**Shoulders:** Broad, very deep and full. Muscle should extend well down. Shoulder should not protrude above the line of the back.

*Objections:* Small, thin and shallow. Protruding above the line of the back.

**Chest:** Large, full, deep and broad.

*Objections:* Flat, shallow or narrow

**Back and Loin:** Good width. Slightly arching, having an even width from shoulder to ham. Firm not pliable. Surface even and smooth.

Objections: Narrow, crease over spine easily noticeable behind shoulders; swayed or very humped back. Weak or mushy.

**Sides and Ribs:** Sides should be deep and full with long strong ribs sprung in proportion to the width of the shoulders and hams.

Objections: Shallow, narrow, flabby

**Belly and Flank:** Smooth and full and carried out in line with the sides.

Objections: Narrow, drawn in or pulled up, sagging or flabby

**Hams and Rump:** Full, firm, well muscled with good width and coming well down to the hock. Full in crotch.

Rump should have a rounded slope from loin to the base of the tail. Filled out well around tail.

Objections: Long narrow hams or short thin hams not extending well down to hock. High crotch. Rump narrow, flat or too steep

**Tail:** Well attached with thick root, good brush,

Objections: Too thick or too thin. Very long or very short

**Legs & Feet:** Strong with good bone, straight, nicely tapered. Legs set wide apart and well under the hog. Pasterns strong. Feet firm and tough. Toes balanced, of equal size and straight. Hooves- Black preferred with striped or dark brown acceptable. Hog should not appear to be standing on tiptoes nor be rocked back onto pasterns.

Objections: Legs extremely long or very short. Thin legs. Crooked-knocked kneed or pigeon toed. Legs as large below the knee/hock as above. Legs set too close together. Hocks in or out of a straight line. Hooves that are long, slim and weak. Splayed or crooked toes. Toes of unequal size.

**Coat:** Moderately thick, smooth or curly, covering the body well.

Objections: Hair coarse, harsh, rough and not covering the body evenly

**Color:** A shade of red from almost yellow to almost black. NOTE: Dorsal stripe of a darker red and shading to a darker shade of red on legs is acceptable. Solid color preferred with a limited number of black "freckles" accepted.

Objections: Any color other than red. Any large spots or stripes of a different color

**Size:** Large for age and condition. Boars 3 years and over  $\geq$  600lbs. Sows 3 years and over  $\geq$  500 lbs. Piglets six months  $\geq$  200 pounds. These figures are based on animals in fair condition.

Objections: Too small. Not thrifty.

**Action & Style:** Animated and vigorous with free easy movement

Objections: Dull/stupid. Wobbling, stiff or awkward.

**Condition:** Healthy. No signs of mange, scurf, lice, sores, scale. Well fleshed with good muscle tone. Tissue free from lumps and bumps.

Objections: Unhealthy, thin. Showing signs of disease or parasites. Hair dull, harsh.

**Testicles:** Easily seen and of each the same size and carriage, neither too large nor too small. Scrotum well attached.

Objections: Only one testicle showing. Uneven carriage. Poorly attached "flabby" scrotum.

**Teats:** Minimum of 12 teats for sow and 14 for boar. Evenly spaced front to back and evenly paired down the line. No blind teats on sows. No inverted teats on sows or boars.

Objections: Blind teats on sows. Less than optimal number of teats. Inverted teats. Missing teats or an odd number of teats.

**Disposition:** Calm, quiet and gentle, easily handled and driven

Objections: Wild, vicious or stubborn

**Other notes:** Boars should be active breeders. Sows should successfully raise litters that average  $\geq 8$  piglets.

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### ***Internet resources:***

Redwattleproject.org      *official site of the Red Wattle Hog Association*

<http://chla.library.cornell.edu/cgi/t/t...mage&seq=1>      *from Cornell's online library. Older hog book*

Albc-use.org      *American Livestock Breeds Conservancy*

Slowfoodusa.org

[www.ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/swine](http://www.ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/swine)

[www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org)

[groups.yahoo.com/group/redwattlehog/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/redwattlehog/)

[www.facebook.com/pages/Red-Wattle-Hog/102630559794944](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Red-Wattle-Hog/102630559794944)

[www.facebook.com/pages/Red-Wattle-Hog/102630559794944](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Red-Wattle-Hog/102630559794944)

Thepigsite.com

Attra.org



# Things I wish I had known when I started out

The membership of the RWHA was asked to submit their tips for new Red Wattle owners in an effort to give them a leg up on their new venture with Red Wattle Hogs. Here is their advice:

1. Only register the very best of your piglets. Most piglets should be eaten. This is very important to maintain quality throughout the breed and to improve the quality and consistency of your herd and the Red Wattle Breed. And this will help get RW pork on people's plates. Remember if no one is eating RW's then the breed will fade away. Both quality breeding stock and pork production are imperative to the survival of the breed.
2. It is very difficult to tell at weaning how a piglet will turn out. Pigs are easier to evaluate effectively at 6-8 months. It costs a bit more to register the keepers at this age but it's worth it in the long run in an increase in quality stock retained.
3. Keep good records. It will help you learn so much more about your RW's over time and it will help you become a wiser steward of your RW's.
4. Join the Red Wattle Hog Association. Go to [redwattleproject.org](http://redwattleproject.org) Click on RWHA. Download the membership form. Then read the newsletter, ask questions, vote on issues and stay informed.
5. Join the forum on [redwattleproject.org](http://redwattleproject.org). Just click the Forum button and follow the instructions.
6. Fat hogs don't breed. Evaluate your breeding animals often and adjust feeding as necessary. Fit and trim and good health is what you are looking for. Not fat and flabby.
7. When breeding gilts to mature boars: make sure that all gilts are #350-400 lbs. and sturdily built. Otherwise it is advisable to breed gilts to a young boar of similar age and size.
8. Do not hesitate to contact the RWHA with questions: [redwattles@hotmail.com](mailto:redwattles@hotmail.com)
9. Do some reading: Dirt Hog, Small Scale Pig Raising, Storey's Guide to Raising Pigs, Raising Pigs Successfully, Raising the Homestead Hog, Pig Perfect, Home Sausage Making, Home Production of Quality Meats and Sausages are just a few books you might want to read and add to your farm library.
10. No boars or dry sows should be penned with lactating or close to farrowing sows. This is dangerous and encourages cannibalism. A farrowing group of no more than 3 weeks apart is desirable more than that and the older pigs will still milk from the other sows starving the little ones. Wean at 6-8 weeks and then put with boar.
11. If you have never owned a pig before, consider purchasing a couple of feeder pigs. Raise them to butcher size. Put one in your freezer and sell the other. This will let find out if you are a pig person without making a large investment in stock and facilities.
12. Research BEFORE you bring home your piglet...never buy on a whim no matter how cute they are.
13. Fencing and housing should be in place before you bring home your pig as your husband/wife will probably not appreciate the box in the kitchen "for now" idea.
14. It's a myth that pigs will eat anything. Pigs are however omnivores. They need a well balanced diet with adequate protein, vitamins/minerals and carbohydrates. While they can be raised "on pasture" they are not ruminants and will require a more complete diet than pasture alone can provide.
15. Castrated all males not being retained for breeding stock if you do not have a ready market for Boar Meat.
16. Verify with the breeder that the vehicle/method you intend to use to transport your RW's home will be acceptable before you get to their farm.
17. Piglets scatter looking for the teat on the first day. Be sure to have the sow in a smaller area for at least a few days before and after farrowing. Be sure it is piglet escape proof.
18. Online: [attra.org](http://attra.org), [www.thepigsite.com](http://www.thepigsite.com) are good resources. Also use your search engine to help you find plans for hog handling equipment. Most land grant colleges offer free plans.
19. Make contact with and use your local custom grain mill, coop, feed store as a resource to figure out what will be the most nutritious and cost

effective feed for your animals. It will vary considerably from one region to another.

20. Nothing substitutes for good strong fences carefully maintained. Hogs can be trained to electric fence, but electric fence alone will not keep two boars separated when a female in heat is involved. Hogs new to electric fencing should be inside a sturdy fence when they have their first encounter with the shock, otherwise when they bolt forward and they will bolt forward, your pig will be both scared and on the loose.
21. Spend lots of time observing your hogs. This will help you recognize signs of estrus and ill health.
22. Whey is not an adequate source of calcium for hogs.
23. Animals like routine. Do your best to keep a schedule. This reduces stress.
24. Never handle animals when you are angry or stressed. Calm handlers make for calmer, more easily handled animals.
25. Though RW's are very gentle the sows are protective of their babies. A squealing piglet will bring momma running and she won't be happy! Be aware of where the sow is at all times. Always have 2 escape routes.
26. Think about what you want from your RW's before you bring them home. Some pork for your freezer? To raise and sell breeding stock and feeder pigs? Direct marketing RW pork? How big of an operation do you want? To whom and how will you market your pork?
27. Know the laws of your state regarding processing and selling meat. Contact your state's Bureau of Animal Health or it's equivalent.
28. Pigs do not like to be moved in the dark.
29. Nobody can 'sweat like a pig' because pigs don't sweat---and if given a bucket or pan of water they will take a little drink and just play with the rest---if you don't give them mist or a puddle they will make their own mud to stay cool---so invest in some kind of watering system, attach it to something sturdy to give them access to fresh drinking water all the time. Then be sure they have a access to a mud hole or misting area so they can stay cool.
30. Castration is something that should not be put off no matter how distasteful it is. If you are new to pigs get help from a vet or knowledgeable farmer who has experience and can help you learn the proper technique.
31. Have twice as much feeder space as recommended...the boss sow will claim hers first and you want to make sure that the pigs at the bottom of the pecking order get plenty to eat.
32. Any pig that you bring in to an established herd should be fenced out of the herd but within sight and sound of the herd. You will have much less fighting when you release them into the herd. A temporary fence in the middle of the pasture but exposed to the herd on all sides is a great way to start.
33. Learn from your mistakes and move on. Don't beat yourself up, it takes too much energy.