

Red Wattle Hog Association

Call for election, Aug. 2019
Reminders & Updates
Understanding the strange things hogs do
Humane treatment

The year has passed by so quickly. That's what happens when everything goes smoothly. It's hard to imagine it's our election time again. The RWHA holds annual elections in the fall to elect the Board of Directors that will help lead and guide our members and hogs based on our principles of Protect and Propagate. Grow the breeds' population while protecting its integrity as a heritage hog. All associations exist to protect the purity of specific breeds of animals and to record that information. It's becoming more important than ever to protect and propagate heritage breeds. Most have endangered or threatened populations. This is due mostly to large CAFO's that produce cheap pork for the public and to breeders who cross breed and/or are not breeding for the security of the breed.

Our Board of Directors plays an important part in securing the future of Red Wattles. This year we will elect our Vice-President who will serve a term of 3 years, and 2 Board Members at Large who will serve one year terms. The President, Vice-President and Secretary/Treasurer all serve 3 year terms that expires by rotation each year. This allows more experience to remain on the board rather than having all new board members every year.

If you would like to hold a Board position you will need to write a brief statement that includes your name, where you live, how long you've raised hogs, how long you've had Red Wattles, what do you like about Red Wattles, what do you see as your future with them, what do you see as the overall future of Red Wattles, and what you would like to do as far as progress with Red Wattles and the RWHA. You must submit your statement no later than Sept. 15, 2019. Send to: Kathy Bottorff, 41 Jones Rd. Horse Cave, KY. 42749. Or you can email to: redwattles@hotmail.com. Any statements received after that date will not be accepted. All submissions will be presented on our next newsletter along with voting ballots to be returned.

The previous Boards of Directors have worked diligently to assure the RWHA has the information and materials each breeder needs to be successful. The Breed Standards and Rules of Registration are in place and easily achievable. We have a great website that works well for our members and others, and it continues to grow and change with helpful information. The ground work has been done for a successful association and breeders. We hope you will consider becoming part of the Board of Directors - a dedicated team - that will continue to protect and propagate Red Wattles as a heritage hog that NATURE created thru hundreds of years.

Reminders and updates

You can renew your RWHA membership starting Jan. 01, 2020 thru Mar. 31, 2020. Membership forms can be found on our website under the RWHA tab at the top of the screen. This is your mail in option. You can also find Pay Pal on that screen if you prefer to use it. Please do not use both.

Come join Red Wattle enthusiasts on the Red Wattle Hog Association face book site. The moderators or administration of the site are your Board of Directors members. Topics are about our hogs or the life events that can affect all hogs. We share information, teach and learn, show off pictures, and get to know other Red Wattle breeders. It's a good and comfortable place to be and we hope to see you there.

Your questions, comments or concerns are always welcome. They are what helps us grow and learn. Feel free to contact any board member for a discussion. Their contact information is on our website.

When registering a hog please make your payment to: Mountain Niche Registry. The registry office is unable to deposit any payments made to RWHA. Those payments must be forwarded to the sec/tres to deposit and slows down the process.

The curious habits of hogs

Have you ever wondered what makes your hog do what it does especially when they're in an unfamiliar situation? They're using their senses that have been developed naturally over centuries for them to survive. Understanding how and why they act as they do will make our lives *and theirs* much more pleasant.

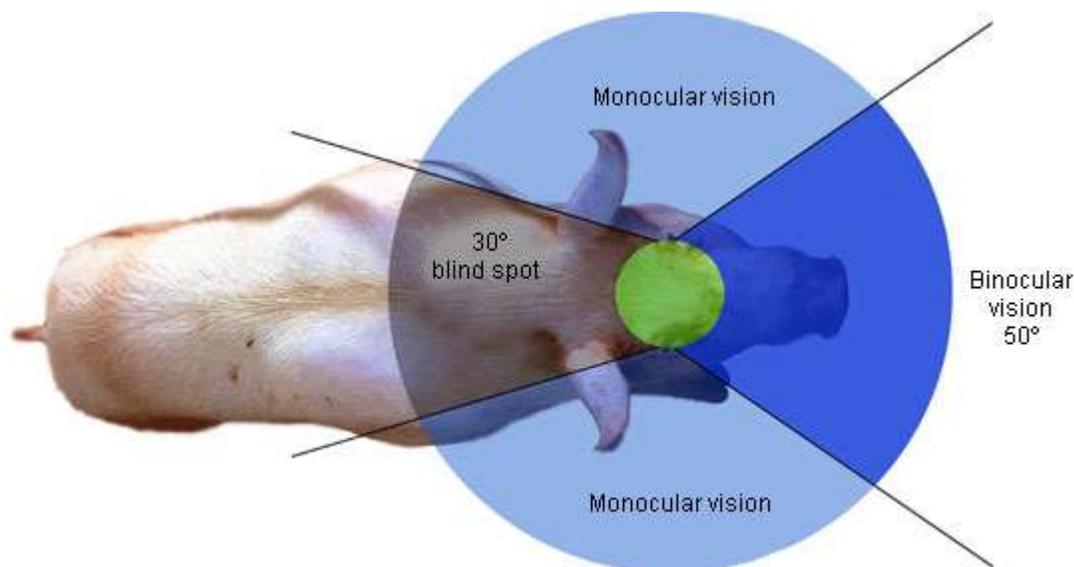
Hogs use their senses of hearing, smelling and seeing just like we do but nature has equipped them differently with their very own special superpowers. Humans usually **SEE** first, or we turn to **SEE** then react. Next our other senses kick in such as hearing and smelling. Hogs use their senses of **HEARING** and **SMELLING** first. This is a developed protection mechanism from predators or danger in the wilderness with thick forests, hills and ravines where a predator or danger may not be easily visible but can be heard or smelled. With humans- hearing and smelling compliment our eye site. With hogs their eye site compliments their hearing and smelling.

Hogs eye site is also very different from ours. We see what's in front of us and turn our heads to see around. That's called Binocular vision and allows us to also see 3D or depth. Hogs see much like this but they also have a superpower called Monocular vision that allows them to see to the sides simultaneously without turning their heads and each eye acts independent of the other in this vision. They can see what's on the left side and right side at the same time and process what they see. The hogs field of vision is actually all around with the exception of what's directly behind it.

Now you know a hog's priority or natural instinct is to first **HEAR** and **SMELL**. This is why they stop often when you're trying to move or load them or have them do something they're not used to. They need to sniff and listen for safety. If you usually speak to them in a normal tone but a louder voice or more noise and activity when you need them to do something, they go on alert. Their ears are telling them something's different. If they're going to a place or in a situation they've never been before, their hyper senses are telling them to be more alert. Where ever they're at, they first have to check it out for safety and they do that by first **hearing, smelling** and then **seeing**. They're Monocular vision (side vision) doesn't allow them to see depth. No 3D. They can't judge how close or far away something is. But they can still see that something is different. This is why when loading or moving hogs it's always best to remain calm, use normal voices and don't rush. Patience is your best friend at these times.

Remember they're only doing what comes natural to them but they're in an unfamiliar situation and on alert. Because of the superpower Monocular vision, it's also recommended to keep their path as level as possible and with no shadows or obstacles in their way. They have no depth perception with this vision and will naturally stop to listen and smell for safety. Loading ramps are a good example. They don't like them because it's change. They need to smell and listen first, but also the side vision throws them off because of the change in height and their lack of depth perception. This is why experts will tell you to not give the hogs a choice, but allow plenty of time and patience.

Make your loading chute narrow enough for your hogs to move through but not wide enough to turn or bolt. If you have a long chute it may be wise to build doorways along the way so they can be closed once the hog passes. Many people will even either build their chute with enclosed sides or drape coverings over the sides so the hog cannot see anything except what's directly in front of it. Then they allow the hog(s) their own time to make their way thru the chute and onto the ramp, smelling and listening along the way. Keep voices and noise to a minimum. It's much less stress on them and you. If you don't have a chute, it's recommended that you bring your vehicle and ramp to the hogs. Allow them a few days to become familiar with it. No matter what, your goal for handling hogs that will be in unfamiliar situations should be as hands free and stress free as possible. Prepare in advance and allow time for the hog to do what comes natural to it. That doesn't mean you should stop the rub downs and belly rubs though. They'll love you for it.



A hogs hearing, sense of smell, and eye site are more advanced and sensitive than humans out of necessity for survival. They rely on them for threatening or uncomfortable situations and their reactions are instinctual. Understand how and why and your life with them will be much easier and enjoyable.

Humane Treatment of Hogs

This can be a difficult topic to discuss because everyone's situations can be very different and everyone has their own idea of what's humane and what isn't. Our goal is to help everyone become even better given their own situation and we welcome your input and/or questions and comments.

First let's get CAFO's out of the way. Concrete buildings, no access to fresh air or grass and dirt. Overcrowding, gestation crates, farrowing crates, medicated feed and more. Operated as factories for pork production, with no positive interaction or compassion for the animals. No smaller farmer breeder likes these things and we know they're not necessary to raise hogs or produce pork.

So, with that said lets discuss how we can keep our hogs happy and healthy and you as successful as possible. We'll touch on these topics in this issue and go further in depth in future issues.

Your hog needs 3 basic things to survive. Water, food, and shelter.

Water of course for hydration. The water should be kept fresh and with easy access at all times. Water is used in several manners. It helps the hog adjust its body temperature. It moves nutrients into body tissues and helps in waste elimination. It helps with milk production, growth and reproduction. A newborn piglets weight is around 80% water. A butcher hogs weight is around 53% water.

A hog can lose almost all its fat and 50% protein and still live but it will die if it loses 10% or more of its water.

Hogs also do not perspire as a cooling mechanism like we do. They need moisture to keep cool and to prevent heat stroke or injury. Wallows are good and they'll usually build them for you. You can also set up a sprinkling or misting system or use a water hose to cool them down. The water evaporation cools them. Making their hot weather home near a pond or creek can also help.

You can provide your hog drinking water by different methods. Water pans or dishes. Barrels with nipples, or water troughs are good suggestions

Food. We know not everyone is able to have lush green pastures to graze in. It could be because of climate and soil conditions, lack of available land, or even predators which forces a person to keep their hogs closer together in protected areas. Hogs are grazers naturally and they get a lot of their nutrition from the grasses and even from the soil but sometimes it's not possible. Those conditions make their food even more important. No matter what, work with your county extension agent or state college agriculture department for a good swine recipe for your particular situation. It's free. Use soil samples. Some soil is full of the good minerals that hogs need, some is not and you may need it added to their food recipe. Normally they get some of these minerals by rooting and even just walking. They're absorbed thru their skin or ingested. Soil samples can also tell you what grasses grow better in your area because it can be vastly different from farm to farm.

Hogs are what they eat. Feed them a good diet and they'll stay healthy and give you great pork. Feed them a high carbohydrate diet and they get fat just like we do. Vegetarian is best with no breads, cookies, doughnuts, pasta or pastries.

Most everyone supplements their hogs diet with a swine recipe of grains, vitamins and minerals. Not everyone has the room, ability or time to grow crops and not everyone has easy access to Non-GMO or organic products for their supplemental feed. It can get very expensive or impossible for some breeders. This is another reason to work closely with your county extension agent or agriculture college department to develop the best swine recipe for you depending on your particular circumstances.

***** There is a good basic food article in the RWHA tutorial titled Feed Basics. It will also help keep you on track. What and how you feed will either make or break you so it's a very important part of your education and practices.

- Shelter. Climate is vastly different across the country. Depending on location and climate, hogs need some type of shelter, be it trees and woods for shade in the summer and wind breaks in winter, to enclosed hog shelters in freezing winter. Hogs use more of their food energy in the winter to keep warm rather than gain weight or grow so it's costing you money if you don't provide them good shelter. In the warm months they need relief from the sun and heat because their bodies don't have a natural cooling mechanism. No shelter needs to be professional or expensive. You can use scrap lumber, scrap metal sheets, or whatever is handy, free or cheap as long as it provides shelter from weather. In the summer time if you don't have good shade or trees consider using tarps as roofs with the sides open.

We'll go more in depth in future issues. These 3 topics are most important to keep you and your hogs healthy and happy. Without them the hogs are stressed. A stressed hog is more susceptible to injury and illness.

