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Buying Replacement Gilts

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Buying Replacement Gilts

One of the best ways to improve income from your hog business is to improve the quality (meatiness) of the hogs you are sending to market.

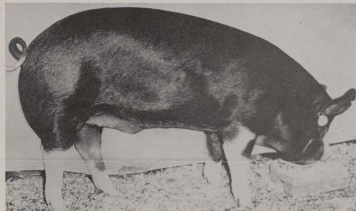
The ham, loin, picnic, and Boston butt have to return the major portion of the hog's value. These four meaty cuts represent 50 per cent of the value of the hog but make up only 33 per cent of the live weight.

If the meatiness of your hogs isn't as good as you think it should be, get some meaty, fast gaining gilts from a neighbor or purebred breeder and then buy a good certified or a tested boar.

When you select a meat type hog, look for one that has good general balance, one that stands squarely on a sound set of feet and legs, and is muscular in the ham and loin. This meat type hog should be firm, free from excess fat along top line, the jowl, belly, and lower ham.

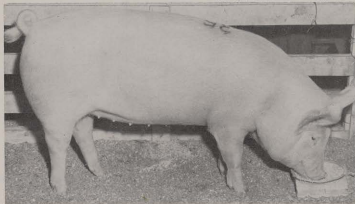
In contrast, the distinguishing features of the meatless hog are fine bone, a narrow stance in both the front and rear, a loose jowl, a flabby middle, a narrow rump with tapering shallow hams. This hog lacks adequate length, generally is carrying excessive back

By **LaVerne Kortan**, Associate Extension Livestock Specialist



Courtesy of Berkshire Association

This is a gilt of excellent type. Notice the deep, full ham, smoothness, trimness, and balance of body.



Courtesy of National Yorkshire Registry, Inc.

fat, has a counter sunk tail and is lacking in muscular development.

WHERE TO FIND GOOD REPLACEMENT GILTS

Outstanding purebred as well as commercial producers can be found in all swine producing areas.

There are good producers in every breed as well as in well-planned grade and cross-breeding programs. The important thing is to look for the good individuals, the more productive sows and boars from productive families of pigs. This is the type of market barrow now in demand by consumers. It carries a large percentage of its weight in the most valuable cuts.

Buying Replacement Gilts

Cooperative Extension Service



Purebred producers in South Dakota generally farrow more spring pigs than fall. Most of these producers would farrow more fall pigs and could make available fall farrowed gilts to commercial producers if necessary arrangements were made.

Many commercial producers do a good job in the production of high quality meaty gilts. These producers are an excellent source from which to obtain replacement gilts and they certainly should be considered when replacements are needed.

WHEN BUYING REPLACEMENT GILTS

Locate producers who have sold hogs on a graded basis. This grade record should give some indication of the hog's meatiness. Many purebred as well as commercial producers are entering carcass shows. Secure and study the results of these shows. Not only will you be able to find out which producer is doing a good job in producing meat hogs, but you will be able to identify the breeds which are consistently out in front.

Many producers are now in a multiple farrowing program and will not be saving replacement gilts from each farrowing group. If this producer is a modern hog man, he may have some excellent replacement gilts for your sow herd.

Obtain replacement gilts from producers who

have followed an approved breeding program for several years. The gilts should receive special consideration in the producer's selection program and the boar in this herd should have been selected because of his outstanding meatiness and growth rate.

Suggested requirements for replacement gilts are as follows:

1. Blood tested and negative for both brucellosis and leptospirosis.
2. Free from all other diseases.
3. Adjusted weights of 220 pounds at 180 days.
4. Backfat probes of less than 1.4 inches at 200 pounds.
5. From litters of eight or more raised.
6. At least 12 functional teats.
7. Have sound feet and legs with adequate bone.
8. Are trim, balanced, heavy hammed, and well muscled.
9. Littermate barrows slaughtered at 200 pounds were over 29 inches in body length, had less than 1.6 inches of backfat, more than four square inches of loin eye area, and a meaty cut percentage (ham, loin, boston butt and picnic) of at least 52 per cent.
10. Place with these gilts the best certified litter or tested purebred boar than can be found.