

# SHOW PIG SELECTION

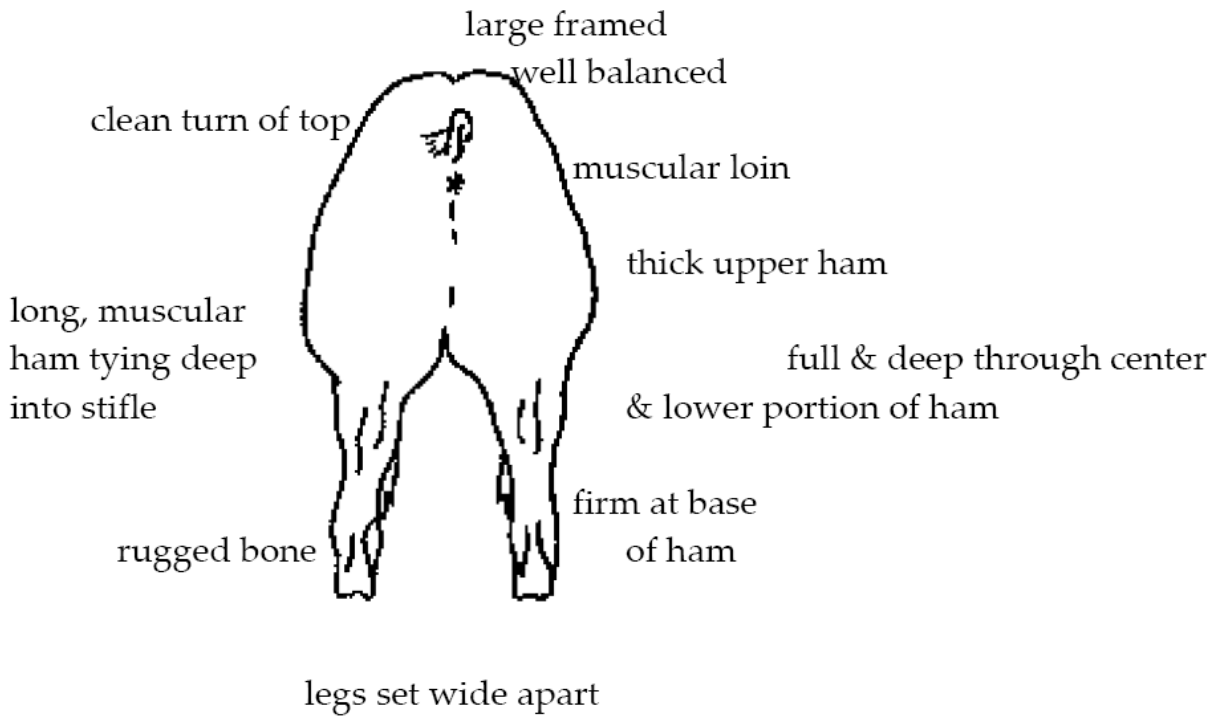
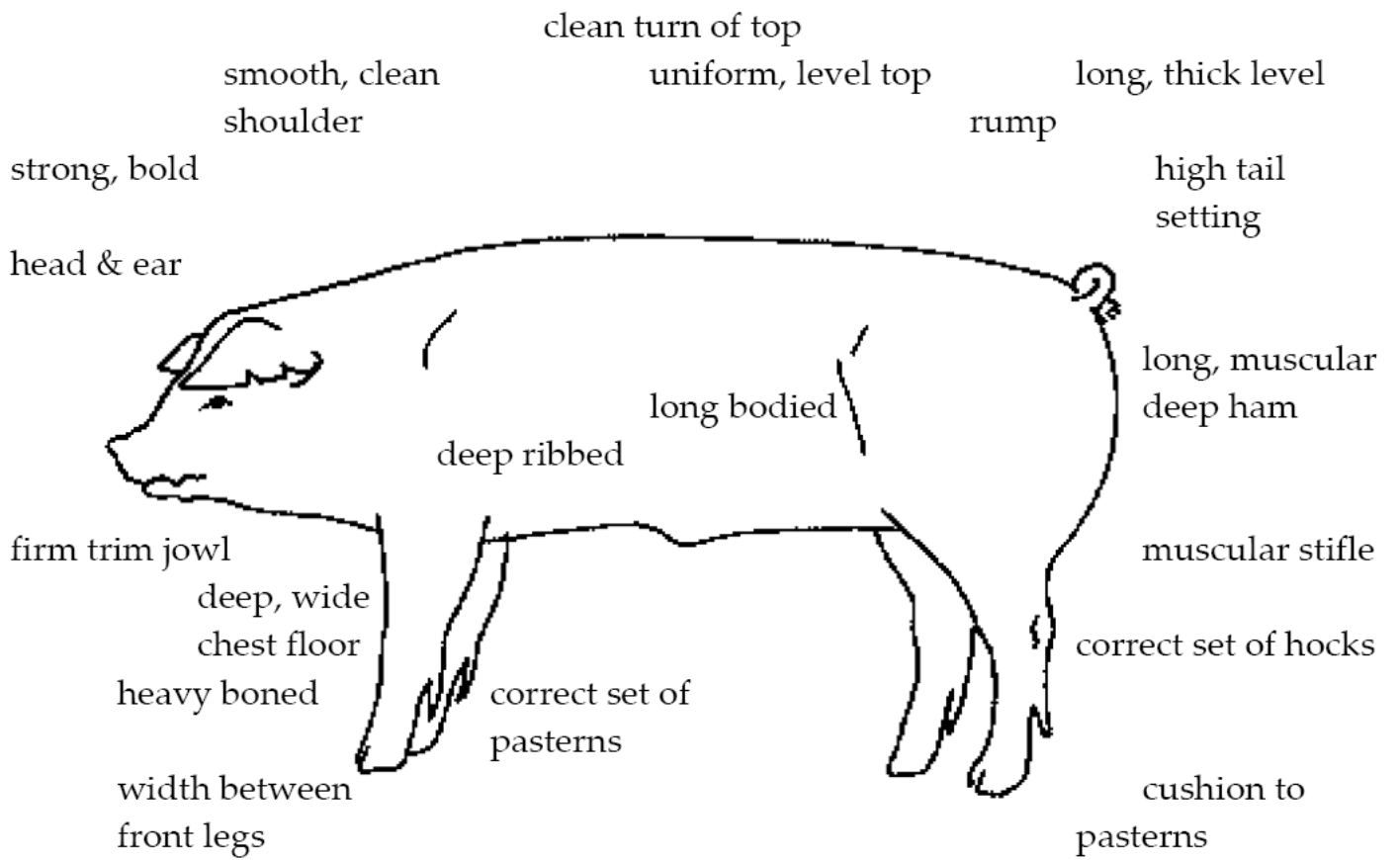
Darrell Rothlisberger  
Rich County Agent



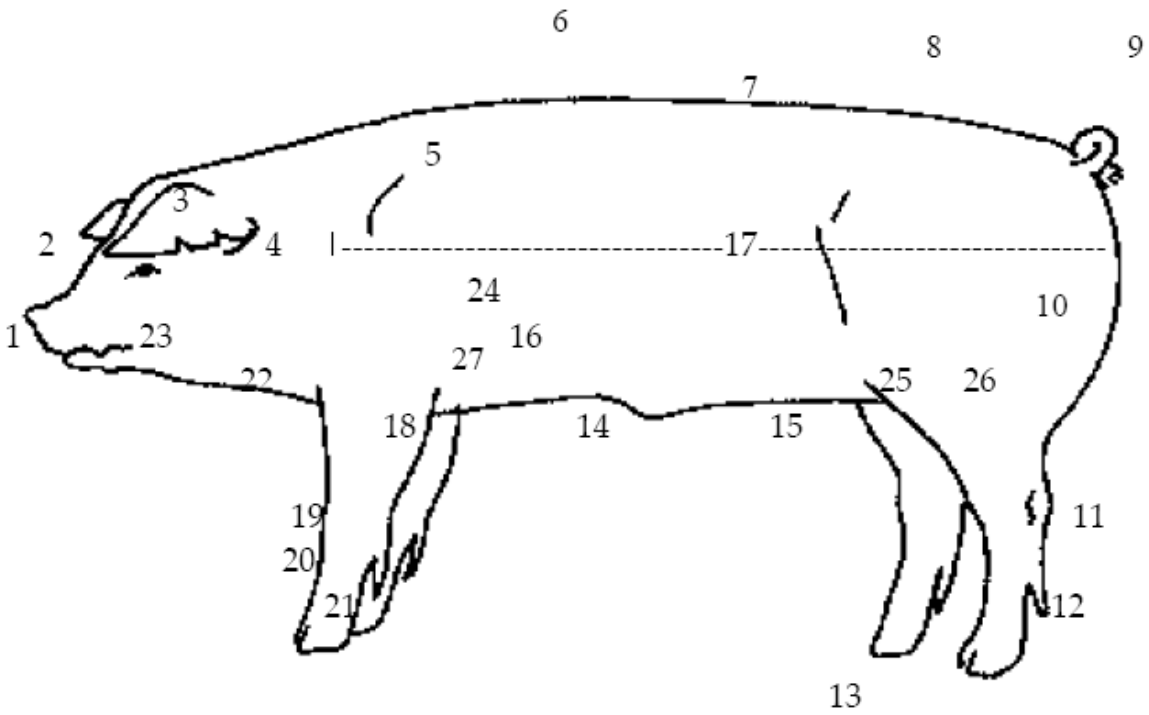
**UtahState**  
UNIVERSITY

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**extension** 

# The Ideal Show Pig



# Parts of the Pig



- |                              |                  |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Snout                     | 16. Belly        |
| 2. Face                      | 17. Side         |
| 3. Ear                       | 18. Elbow        |
| 4. Neck                      | 19. Knee         |
| 5. Shoulder                  | 20. Cannon bone  |
| 6. Back                      | 21. Pastern      |
| 7. Loin                      | 22. Jowl         |
| 8. Rump                      | 23. Mouth        |
| 9. Tail                      | 24. Rib          |
| 10. Ham                      | 25. Flank        |
| 11. Hock                     | 26. Stifle       |
| 12. Dew claw                 | 27. Elbow pocket |
| 13. Toe                      |                  |
| 14. Sheath (Barrows & Boars) |                  |
| 15. Teats                    |                  |

## WHY SHOW JUNIOR LIVESTOCK?

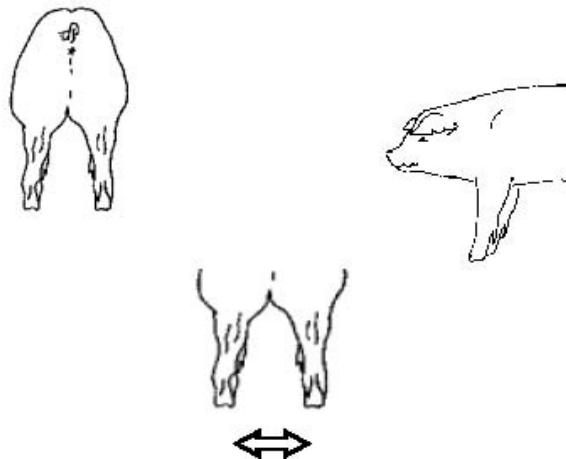
The junior livestock program is a unique opportunity to use live animals to develop youth. Youth learn something about agriculture and livestock production and develop an appreciation for the livestock industry, but the main objectives are to teach life skills and help youth become productive citizens. The experience of youth owning and working with animals, being responsible for their care, health, and growth, and exhibiting them in a competitive environment is a tremendous character building process. Junior livestock projects help develop life skills such as: leadership, communication, decision making and problem-solving. Character building, record keeping and the development of personal responsibility are other skills youths can develop as a result of their involvement in the broad range of programs in junior livestock.

## SELECTION

There are basic areas that need to be considered when selecting your show pig. They are muscle, structural correctness, capacity, frame and style and balance.

### Muscle

There are several indicators of muscle in pigs. The first place to look for muscle is the ham. The widest portion should be through the center of rump and ham. Select a pig that has a bulging forearm.



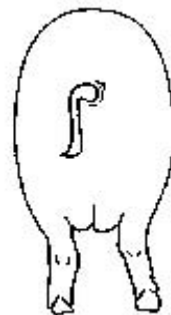
Well muscled hogs are wide based and large boned.

When viewed from the top look for an hour glass shape to the top. This will be a trim, heavy-muscled hog. It should be long and full in the rump, with the center of the ham being the widest part of the body. The shoulders should be wider than the loin, but not as thick as the ham. The loin will be uniform in width. When the hog walks there should be no evidence of fat over the top of the shoulders and the shoulders should move. Also, there should be no fat behind the shoulders or elbow pocket.

### Structural Correctness

Structural correctness refers to how a pig's skeleton is put together, more specifically the bone structure. To be sure your pig is structurally correct, pick a pig that moves with ease and smoothness. Pigs should take long strides. They also should have a proper angle to the pasterns and have flex to the joints like the hock, knee and shoulder. These joints should flex and the pig should take a long, flexible, fluid stride.

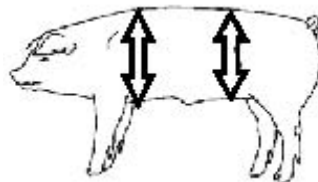
The pasterns should have an angle of 45 degrees and the hock should be at about a 22 degree angle for the best possible movement off the back end. Strong legs are important in market hogs. The bone should be large and the legs should be clean and solid looking.



Proper hind leg structure Poor hind leg structure

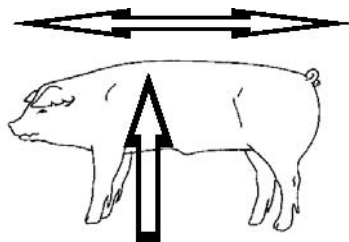
### Capacity

Pigs need to have adequate capacity to allow their internal organs to function properly and efficiently. They need to have a wide chest floor, a good spring of rib, and be deep sided in both the fore and rear flank. Remember that a deep sided hog can still be trim and neat in appearance.



## Frame

A moderate framed hog will grow well and have adequate size. Select a long-bodied, tall hog that stands well on its feet and legs. It should be large boned and show a lot of capacity, being boldly sprung at the ribs.



## Style and Balance

A hog that has style and balance is one that holds its head up when it walks, and is smooth in its overall appearance. It will be clean in the shoulder blades, jowl and underline. Hogs that are balanced stand wide and tall on straight legs, are uniform in the arch of their back, and their shoulder blades are close together.

Select a trim hog that is free of excess fat. Fat gives the appearance of smoothness and shortness. A trim hog is clean behind the shoulders and down the top. The base of the ham should be firm, at the base of the hams (cut up or v-shaped) with the tail setting high, and the tailhead prominent.

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