

IPP Press Quarterly Newsletter

Quarter 3, 2021 2nd Edition

Letter from the Editor

Dear readers,

Happy Independence Day! We hope everyone had a fantastic and safe Holiday. Each year our family makes sure we go to at least one firework display because we all know it's not the Fourth of July without them. This year one of our kids asked us why we have fireworks on the Fourth of July, we told them it was tradition. As we all know the Fourth of July celebrates the date on which the Declaration of Independence was adopted in 1776. A little-known fact, fireworks were not displayed in the air that year. We actually have President John Adams to thank for our fun and exciting tradition each year. Before signing the Declaration of Independence, John Adams wrote a letter to his wife "will be the most memorable epocha, in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated, by succeeding generations, as the great anniversary festival," he wrote. "It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shews, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations from one end of this continent to the other from this time forward, forevermore."

Happy Independence Day!

Your Editor



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The Gathering Place Homestead

The Gathering Place Homestead was born in 2019. It was the start of a great new adventure and we haven't looked back!

Jason grew up in rural Virginia, surrounded by endless stands of pines, tobacco fields and dairy farms. We lived on about 12 acres that was adjacent to "the homeplace" where my Dad grew up. I liked listening to stories about how my Dad and aunts and uncles would raise chickens, hogs and milk the family cow every morning. Growing massive gardens, picking fruit and canning everything you can imagine. I thought it was idyllic, but my Dad didn't remember it all that fondly. He would often say "Who needs a garden, green beans are three cans for a dollar!" or "Who needs a chicken, eggs are 99 cents a dozen!" Looking back, I can't fault him, they had it pretty tough growing up and he had worked hard to get past the homesteading (I think it was just called "poor" in the 1950s) of his youth to enjoy the niceties of "modern and civilized life!" Fast forward... I was transferred jobs and moved to Winchester, VA.

My beautiful wife, Kimberly, grew up in suburban Maryland. The area has now become urban due to the Washington, DC sprawl. Her dad had grown up in a very rural area and lived a hardscrabble life. He was bound and determined to give his kids a better life, so Kimberly enjoyed swimming at the neighborhood pool, playing with the other kids who lived in the cul-de-sac of a well-planned community with streets all lined evenly with both sidewalks and flowering trees in between manicured lawns that made green grass an unspoken competition between neighbors, evidenced by her mother winning a beautiful yard award. As a young adult, she moved in with her aunt in a small town in the Shenandoah Valley and expanded her love of animals, working on a horse farm and in a veterinary office. Fast forward... Kimberly was in nursing school, in Winchester, VA.

We met and married soon thereafter.

In 2014, we found ourselves and our four sons, living the suburban dream...a house on a quarter of an acre lot, right on a main street, some good neighbors (and some not so much), a long commute for me and Kimberly spending hours a day shuttling the boys to and from school and activities. Wildlife mostly consisted of squirrels and our dogs and cats were as close to farm animals as we got. We were happy as a family, but Kimberly and I wanted something different than what we had. We both went back to school and I even changed career fields. We began to rethink purposeful living. We began to homeschool. We started a small, very small, garden. We started buying farm fresh eggs, and slowly saw more intention in our choices. We read books and then discovered what we could learn on YouTube, watching people from all walks of adventurous lives, but mostly enjoyed those who opted for a natural and (mostly) self-sufficient life – homesteaders and we knew that's what we wanted. We wanted a lifestyle that showed our sons that not all chicken is boneless, and meat and vegetables didn't start out wrapped in cellophane. We wanted to grow as much of our own food as possible and get away from the chemical-laden, mass produced and processed foods and general junk we had grown up with and were sharing with our boys. We wanted to be as self-sufficient as possible. It seemed like such a daunting task, but we finally decided to take the plunge and go for it!

We found a great home in the next county over, on its own little corner of the mountain. Only three acres initially, but nestled between two large lots that are in conservation status. Only one neighbor in sight. It was just what we were looking for... and like that The Gathering Place Homestead was born in 2019.



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Like many others, we started out with a few laying hens and we quickly graduated up to meat birds. I wanted to get “bigger and better” animals while Kimberly was focused on getting her gardens up to form. One day as we were pulling weeds, I looked over and said “You have to watch this video with me...pigs that graze!” She was not immediately onboard, but came around to the idea after we agreed that if it didn’t work out (if they were too smelly) we would sell them off and move on with life. We spent several weeks researching various breeds and kept coming back to IPPs. They are great pigs and exactly what we wanted – they are friendly, don’t tear up the pasture, just the right size, grow out quickly and taste amazing. Before we knew it, we had a breeding trio and a couple of feeders and a lot of information from breeders willing to take the time and bring us into the IPP community.

We have a small pasture, surrounded with woven field wire and a hog panel paddock set up on the edge of the wood-line for shade in the summer. We built A-frames for them to live in. We found out that many people in our area are unfamiliar with IPPs and tend to ask if we misspoke when we say our pigs graze! We also found that mineral supplements are really important (you might have heard that a time or two before in the IPP community). Everyone wanted to sell us what the woodlot Berkshires and Spots in this area eat. After a while on the phone, I was finally able to get in touch with the right person at NextGen and got them to start shipping 2090 to our local feed store.

I have to admit that while we were initially just in it for the bacon (and sausage and chops and BBQ), we grew fond of our IPPs very quickly. They have great personalities and are fun to watch and interact with. They are not smelly; they enjoy being hosed off on a hot day and they love belly rubs! We have really fallen in love with our IPPs and sing their praises of to just about everyone we talk to.

We were excited to welcome our first litter early this spring and are looking forward to another any day now. We want to continue to educate folks about the benefits of this great breed, continue to build on strong genetics through purposeful breeding and provide our family (and a few friends) with delicious, local, small-scale, ethically raised, chemical-free, pastured pork!

We love sharing the story of our family, our homestead and our IPPs. Thank you for taking a few minutes to learn a little about us!

Jason and Kimberly Fore
The Gathering Place Homestead



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In the Pasture with the Registry

Could you provide an update on the Online Program for the Registry?

We are very excited with the progress of the online program for the Registry. We wish it could be faster, but doing things right takes time and patience!

The online litter notification process has been completed and the online registration section is very close to completion. A new Breeder Prefix form has been sent to all Registered Breeders and once they have been returned, we can move forward with each new breeder creating their own specific account and beginning the next exciting step – online litter notification submissions!"

Your Favorite Pork Recipes

Honey Garlic Pork Chops

- 4 pork chops bone in or out
- Salt and pepper, to season
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/4 cup water (or chicken broth)
- 2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar (or apple cider vinegar, or any white vinegar)



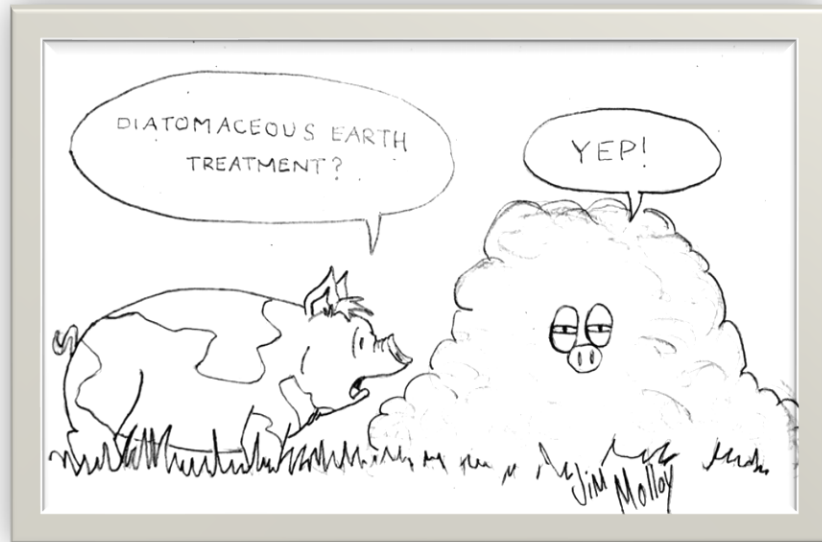
Directions

1. Preheat oven broiler (or grill) on medium-high heat. Season chops with salt, pepper and garlic powder just before cooking.
2. Heat oil in a pan or skillet over medium high heat until hot. Sear chops on both sides until golden and cooked through (about 4-5 minutes each side). Transfer to a plate; set aside.
3. Reduce heat to medium. Melt butter in the same pan, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Sauté garlic until fragrant (about 30 seconds). Add the honey, water and vinegar. Increase heat to medium-high and continue to cook until the sauce reduces down and thickens slightly (about 3-4 minutes), while stirring occasionally.
4. Add pork back into the pan, baste generously with the sauce and broil/grill for 1-2 minutes, or until edges are slightly charred.
5. Garnish with parsley and serve over vegetables, rice, pasta or with a salad.

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Pig Tales



FUNNY STORIES:

The day a pig pooped in my pocket started out as any regular old day. The task for the day was to ear tag our piglets because they were leaving for their new homes soon. I picked up this sweet gilt and cradled her like a baby so my husband could tag her as I held her. During the process my nose received this not so sweet smell of pig poop, after we got done tagging her, I looked down my shirt, pants and shoes for the lovely thing I held smelled but none was to be found. We finished tagging the rest of the piglets and I put my hands in my hoodie's front pocket to pull out my phone only to pull out my phone and a handful of pig poop! Let's just say the hoodie has since been retired!



I saw a pig with laryngitis.
He was disgruntled.

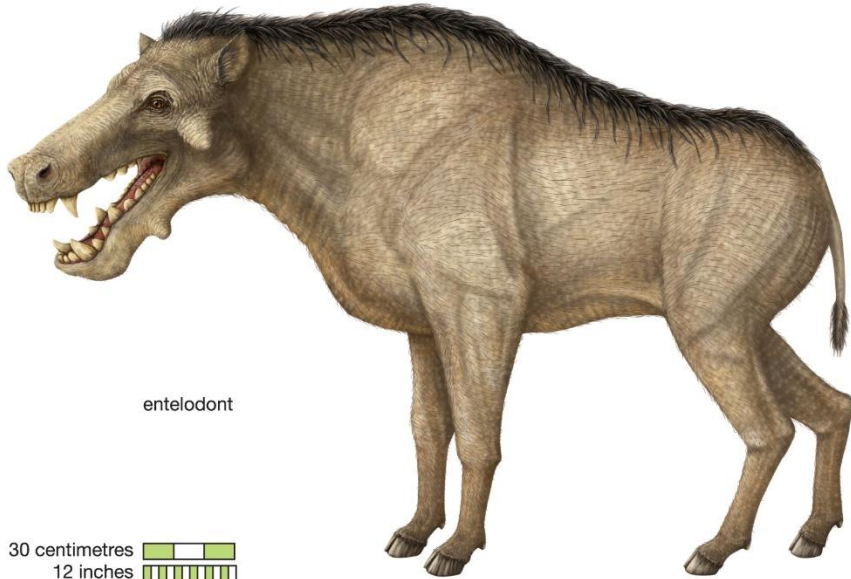


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Did you know?

There were dinosaur pigs! They were called Entelodonts. In popular media Entelodonts are sometimes nicknamed **hell pigs** or **terminator pigs**.



entelodont

30 centimetres 
12 inches

© 2013 Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.

We Need You!

If you would like to share pictures, tips, recipes, jokes, funny stories, etc.

or if you would like to be our next featured farm, please email

lpppress2021@gmail.com





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THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING THE BREED STANDARD

The Idaho Pasture Pigs have quickly become the favorite among homesteaders, small farms and families, and all of us looking to raise grazing pigs with amazing meat qualities. Maintaining the proper breed standard throughout our breeding pigs is essential in making sure the Idaho Pasture Pigs remain the pigs we know and love.

Let's look at the qualities essential in making the Idaho Pasture Pigs such an amazing breed to own, raise, and eat!

1. Friendly Disposition. Having a good body conformation is a must, but without a good personality the pig will not make breed standard. Aggressive pigs are not safe for you, your family, or visitors and should be culled.
2. A medium length snout that is neither too short, nor too long is one of the requirements of a breeding quality IPP. A snout that is too short can hinder breathing and can negatively affect the respiratory system of the pig. Having a snout that is too long can ultimately create a pig who will dig and root, as compared to graze. The snouts of the breeding quality pigs should be upturned so that as they put their heads down to graze, they are physically able to get to the grass to graze and do not have to knock the grass over before eating it. The snout should be uniform from the eyes to the snout and not taper in too quickly creating a narrow looking (or pointed) snout.
3. Medium sized pigs. One of the huge draws for people is the medium size of the Idaho Pasture Pigs. The sows should mature to 250 – 350 pounds, whereas the boars should mature to 350 – 450 pounds. These are not your huge, traditional pigs. These were developed to be of medium stature for homesteaders and families alike.
4. Growth Rate will vary slightly based on nutrient value in grasses, time of year and weather conditions where you live, and feed regiment. When feeding primarily grass as their diet, these pigs should reach a butcher weight of about 230 – 250 (live weight) in about 10 months. These are not a cookie-cutter pig, so there will be some variation within the pigs themselves as well as the items listed previously.
5. Overall body conformation should be well proportioned and come back from a great head to a noticeable set of shoulders and into a long & level back. The hams should be well-pronounced and a nice tail set should be noted.
6. The legs of your breeding quality IPP's should be strong and keep the pastern up off of the ground. They should be square under the body to provide ease of movement.
7. All breeding stock should be free of any congenital abnormalities or defects.
8. A uniform underline is desired and well-spaced teats is a desired trait. Lately there has been a lot of discussion on the requirement of teats on breeding stock and I would like to take a moment to make a few notes. There is a preference to both sows and boars having 5 or more teats on either side, but this is not a requirement. I have seen some of the best piglets lately be rejected because they do not have 6 evenly spaced teats on either side. If you have a pig with a beautiful conformation and personality, it is a shame to reject this pig as non-breed standard. We have personally had litters of 12 on a sow who only had 9 teats. She not only produced amazing piglets, but rarely lost a piglet and almost never had a runt. As most of you know, piglets on their own mother tend to pick a teat as their own and then never differ or pick a new one.

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9. This is a problem when a piglet picks a hind teat that doesn't produce enough milk and doesn't tend to grow as quickly as the rest of the litter. With the sow who had only 9 teats – this wasn't a possibility because they had to share. The piglets were always moving around and choosing different teats and they therefore all got the same quantity of milk throughout the day. This aided in her not having any slower growing piglets and all of her piglets grew extremely well. This isn't to say that teats are not important – quite the opposite – they are extremely important and necessary. This is to say that if the conformation of the pig in question is absolutely amazing, then this pig should not be disqualified as a breeding quality piglet based solely on the number of teats. Having 5 on one side and 6 on the other is acceptable – not desired, but acceptable and is not a disqualifying factor.
10. Litter size – The litter size for a gilt (first time mom) is usually 5 – 7 and the litter size for a sow is 8 – 10. There are some sows that produce 12 piglets consistently and a few that do not produce more than 7 per litter in their lifetime, but the average size is 8 – 10. Litter size can vary with nutrition, weather conditions and time of year, and just between pigs themselves. I know the question has been asked if one sow line produces more piglets per litter as compared to others and that is not really the case. On our farm, we could tell you what our pigs normally do, but when talking with other breeders who have the same lines as us, they could have completely different things happening with their pigs. Depending on how hard (cold and long) our winters are in Northern Wisconsin does seem to change the number of piglets we see in our spring litters also regardless of lines or ages.

Evaluating your piglets as they mature through weaning is the best way to compare and judge your litters. Not every pig from a litter is breeding quality. Breeders who are concerned with choosing the best of the breeding qualities for their breeding piglets are essential in promoting this breed to the fullest. Does that mean that sometimes a mistake isn't made? That a pig matures out completely differently than the breeder anticipated? Not at all. Sometimes things just do not work out the way a breeder anticipated. Yes – this has absolutely happened to us over the years and when given the opportunity, we have corrected it with a new pig, so please don't feel like you are alone. Conscientious and Responsible breeders are what will keep this breed true to itself, its developer, and all of us that want to see this breed remain what it is today. Friendly, Grazing, and Happy! (not to mention Delicious)

