

Feeding your Pasture Pigs & Piglets

Idaho Pasture Pigs eat grass very well, but their bodies require some grains and minerals as well. Supplementing with a small amount of grain is the best way to ensure they get the necessary minerals they need in their diet. When your soil is deficient in a certain mineral or minerals, then the grass they are eating will also be missing those minerals. Feeding traditional pig feed is not going to get the necessary minerals into your pigs' diet because that feed is formulated for free-choice feeding and it is recommended to hand feed IPP.

At weaning, piglets should be getting about a ½ of a pound of feed both morning and night. All piglets go through growth spurts periodically and increasing their feed at that time is necessary. At about three months old they should be getting the adult ration.

Recommended feeding for full grown (non-lactating) sows and boars is a half of a scoop (about one pound) both morning and night during the growing seasons when there is ample grass. It is recommended to increase the feed for adult pigs to about a whole scoop (2 pounds) both morning and night during the non-growing season when when grass isn't growing.

IPP do enjoy certain hay and their favorite seems to be a soft grass hay or alfalfa hay. Supplementing their diet with hay when the grass isn't growing will give additional nutrition and benefit the pig's overall health.

The type of grains used in the feed will vary based on what is readily available in your area and that is absolutely fine. Keeping the protein level at 18 – 20% is highly recommended as well as getting a quality mineral that has ALL of the necessary minerals/vitamins your IPP need. NexGen 2090 from Kent is just one good example.

www.idahopasturepigregistry.com

Pasture Care

The pigs are going to dig a little in your fields if the grass gets too tall for them to eat, so please make sure you mow the grass if it gets too high. Mowing the pastures during the growing season will help keep the grasses at a good grazing height. Pigs are physically unable to rotate their heads like other animals, so they have to eat from the top down. Grasses that are taller than 8 - 10 inches will be difficult for pigs to eat and if you have smaller piglets, it may have to be shorter yet. If you have dandelions, the pigs are going to dig them all out. They absolutely love dandelion roots and will find every one to eat. Depending on your location, there may be other grasses or legumes the pigs find just as delicious. Once the dandelions are gone, the pigs will continue to graze and your pastures grasses will grow in nicely.

It is extremely important that your grazing pigs get the necessary minerals and vitamins they need or they will start digging in the ground trying to get more. Paying special attention to selenium is important, as a lot of the ground in the United States is deficient in selenium. The best way to get an accurate test of what is in your soil is to get it tested. Pigs tend to make additional wallows in wooded areas and along fence rows because the dirt is cooler in the shaded areas. They will nose the ground in the early spring looking for the fresh green shoots that want to start growing. This is not rooting and once the grass starts to grow, they stop and graze normally.

To determine how many pigs you can raise on your property, you should get the local carrying capacity for your area. The general rule of thumb is that for every one cow you can raise per acre, you can raise ten adult Idaho Pasture Pigs.



For additional information regarding the complete breed standard, becoming a Registered Breeder, using the online system, and additional educational topics, please visit the Registry website.

Idaho Pasture Pigs



Idaho Pasture Pig Registry

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www.idahopasturepigregistry.com
(715)674-2287

Idaho Pasture Pigs

The Idaho Pasture Pig (IPP) is a breed of pig composed of the Duroc, Old Berkshire, and Kunekune pig. These are true “grazing” pigs that are very gentle in nature, have great personalities, and are easy to work with, smaller in size than traditional pigs, great mothers, able to live outdoors all year round, and can grow extremely well with a diet of primarily grass.



Litter Size:

The average litter size of the Idaho Pasture Pigs is 5- 7 for a gilt (first time mom) and 8 – 10 for a sow.

One of the benefits of this breed is their smaller mature size. Sows should mature out at 250 – 350 pounds whereas the boars should mature out at 350 – 450 pounds. When feeding a diet of primarily grass, the butcher pigs should reach a butcher weight of about 230 – 250 in approximately 10 months.



Nutritional Benefits

There are many benefits of raising pigs on pasture both for the pigs themselves as well as in the pork you are producing.

Pig's Health:

Pigs raised outside with ample shelter, forage, and water are less prone to sickness and are overall healthier pigs. They have better muscle development due to being able to move and exercise continually, which relates to a higher protein level.

Nutritional Value of Pork:

Pork from pasture raised pigs *who are consuming a diet consisting primarily of grasses, legumes, and forage* have a higher nutritional value.

1. Higher in omega-3 fatty acids which may improve brain function and reduce the risk of cancers and cardiovascular diseases.
2. Higher in protein and Vitamin E which builds and repairs tissues and promotes cell protection from free-radicals
3. Has less saturated fats and more heart-healthy polyunsaturated fats. This can reduce the risk of heart attacks and cardiovascular diseases as well as lower cholesterol.

Idaho Pasture Pigs are able to thrive on primarily a grass diet, but they do require a small amount of grains in their diet for their overall health. Overall, 80 – 90% of the diet of an IPP can come from grasses, legumes, and forage. This means that the pork from an IPP can be nutrient dense and have superior benefits to your health.

Knowing what and how your pork was raised and what their diet consisted of is going to help you choose the best option for your family!



Growth Rate

4 weeks	15 – 20 pounds
4 – 6 weeks	20 – 30 pounds
3 – 4 months	50-80 pounds
5 – 6 months	100-130 pounds
6 – 7 months	150 – 170 pounds
9 – 10 months	225 – 275 pounds

Shelters

The A-frame shelter is ideal for winter & summer shelter as well as farrowing. Pigs give off a lot of heat themselves, so their own heat will go up to the peak of the A-frame and come back down on top of themselves. They are basically able to heat themselves and stay very warm with straw as bedding even in temperatures below zero.

As a sow walks into the shelter, her back hits the slanted roof and she lays down. This will naturally leave a space behind her for the piglets and this will assist in preventing piglets from getting laid on.



Measurements are located on the picture

One main thing to remember is that there are multiple different ways to do shelters, wallows, feeding locations, waterers, shade, etc. with these pigs. Things will differ based on location, temperatures, and growing season. Do what works the best for you and your pigs.