

**First Quarter 2014  
Volume 4, Issue 1**

**American Guinea Hog Association**



**Dear Friends in the Wonderful  
World of Hogs,**

Greetings to each hogger out there on the farm. I hope spring has finally arrived. We, here in Iowa have had a cold, hard winter. During the winter it is good to increase the minerals we offer to the American Guinea Hogs. We need to make changes according to the seasons. I hope your hogs are able to have lots of piglets in spite of the cold. As mentioned before, there are times when change is necessary. One of these changes taking place this time of year is a change on the American Guinea Hog Association Board of Directors. This is to say that this the last letter that I will be writing as president of the board. According to the plan of the board, Ron Farnsworth will now fill the position of president. I am stepping down to fill the position of advisor. I will be here to answer questions and give advice to those that need help. I hope to be sharing information about treating your hogs naturally with herbs that will keep them

**From the Presidents Farm**

Snark Snark, We are well into the New Year and with that comes change. Our long time President Mr. Kevin Fall has decided to take a small step back and is now our adviser. I know he will advise us well.

I would like to continue the great work the AGHA has been doing and strive to move us even further. One key thing is litter registrations. I encourage all breeders to register your litters no matter what the end result of the pigs may be. Those litter registration numbers are what we and The Livestock Conservancy use to define the size of our herd. Just this year we have moved from critical to threatened on the priority list. Great work!

With this of registering your litters come good breeding practices, culling those that don't meet the profile. Or just hogs you don't think would make good breeding stock.

As your new President I will try to resolve issues in a timely manner and be in constant communication with our

happy and healthy. This is to help the Association move forward and for the betterment of the Hogs. Changes like this can help improve the health of the board and bring in new ideas. Please continue to support the American Guinea Hog Association and throw your weight behind the new president. He has been on the board for a while and is very capable. Also, keep supporting the other members of the board as they do a great job and work hard at keeping the Association intact.

So, may your sows have large litters for you, your barrows grow fat and may your grass stay lush and green. And may the Father who created all things be with you all.

Kevin Fall

Here is one idea for a hog drinker.

You can build the entire thing for less \$20 and it takes about 15 minutes. Most of the supplies you will need can be found at hardware stores, Lowes and Tractor Supply. I'm sure any farm supply store will have most of the items needed. I use 55 gallon food grade plastic drums. I got mine for free but you can find them easily on Craigslist and other forms of buying and selling media. You will need 1 large hog nipple, 1 each  $\frac{3}{4}$ " threaded pipe adapter, either plastic or brass, 1 each  $\frac{3}{4}$ " inside diameter washer on 1 garden hose gasket or o ring. Tools needed are a  $\frac{3}{4}$ " spade drill bit or graduated bit and

members. If I don't know or have the answer I will get you to the person or persons who do.

What's new and coming you may ask?

We are working with the livestock conservancy on DNA test of the guinea hogs. This is not a quick process and will take some time. We hope to have a breed profile/standard in place in the not so distant future. Also we are looking to some ways of being able to capture lost blood lines that may be out there.

Ron Farnsworth



**Nap time!**



**Tools and fittings**

one or two pairs of pliers.

Cut the top of the barrel off at about 12 inches down from the top and if you have a jig saw or something to cut into plastic, cut a couple of grab holes in each side near the top. This may come in handy later. Next drill a  $\frac{3}{4}$ " hole about 8 to 12 inches from the bottom of the barrel. You should have to thread the nipple into the barrel. If the hole is too large, it will leak. You don't want the nipple too far down because the hogs won't be able to drink. Slide the washer over the threaded end of the hog nipple and insert it into the barrel. Install the garden hose gasket or o ring over the threads of the nipple, then screw the pipe adapter on the nipple and tighten.

You can either put the barrel right in the pens or bungee cord it to the outside of the fence with the nipple sticking through. Clean as needed.

Contributed by Ron Farnsworth

*Angela Ingraham, Representing Region 1, Connecticut, New Jersey, Maine, New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont*

I live in the rolling hills of the Finger Lakes Region of New York in an 1895 farmhouse on 28 acres with my husband and the youngest of three daughters. We have farmed since 2006 and Guinea Hogs joined us in 2007. After just one season, I was hooked. I raised modern hogs for meat



**Water nipple installed in drum**



**Waterer in use!**



**Angela Ingraham**

I have worked for years at a Garden Center where at our festivals I was able to showcase piglets so the general public could learn of the importance of saving out heritage breeds and

the year before and really enjoyed having them, but for someone just over 5' tall, I found the size a tad intimidating. The AGH's size and personality were a perfect fit, as well as the "hands off" approach regarding wolf teeth, vaccinating and other methods of husbandry that modern livestock seem to require. Along with our desire to raise heritage livestock, the ease of handling made our decision to add these great hogs to our farm an easy one. I also raise Icelandic Sheep, Heritage Poultry and keep Nigerian Dwarf Goats.

teaching people the value of knowing "where our food comes from".

For the last 5 years, I have had two breeding pairs of AGHs, this year adding two additional sows and another boar for a total of three lines. I am proud to be involved with the breed and with The American Guinea Hog Association. I am pleased with the recent status change from "Critical" to "Threatened" and know that I have helped in a small way to make that happen!



### **Adding Field Peas to your hogs' diet**

I am very fortunate in that, within a half hours drive, there is an excellent Organic Feed Mill. Through them, I have been introduced to several different grains and feeds that I had not thought of as part of my hogs' diet. One of these is the dry field pea. I am in the practice during the winter months of broadcasting a grain around the paddock areas to keep the pigs active and outside, whereas given their druthers, they would go straight back to bed on the cold wintery days. Call it Porcine Aerobics, if you will. Because whole grains don't get lost in the snow and mud, I have tried whole oats, but found that a large percent do not digest fully. Corn has the disadvantage of very quickly putting weight on an animal, and with a lard breed such as ours, this is even more of a risk. I have seen the affects of rapid weight gain with corn added to the diet so I try to be especially careful when adding it.

When the Field Peas were suggested to me as an alternative, I did a little research and found these advantages:

## GMO contamination vs. corn

It is a well known fact that as much as 90% of all corn grown in the US may be contaminated by Genetic Modification. GMO feeds have been linked to lower reproductive rates and other health issues according to many recent studies. If you are one of many concerned about the long term ramifications of this, the field pea may offer you some peace of mind in this matter. At this point in time, field peas, unlike soy and corn, are not a targeted plant in this area of technology.

## Nutritional Value

The field pea is a nutrient dense grain (60 lb/ bushel) with energy equal to corn on a weight basis and nearly three times the crude protein. Both starch and fiber components are energy sources. Palatability and digestibility of field peas are positive attributes of this grain legume. Since field peas ferment slower and more thoroughly than some other feed grains, stable and efficient rumen function is maintained. These traits may serve to keep animals "on feed" during stress periods and improve growth rate and feed efficiency over other ration ingredients.

## Comparison of nutrient value of field peas vs. corn

Item Field	Peas	Corn
Dry matter, %	89	88
Crude protein, %	25.5	9.8
Total digestible nutrients, %	87.0	90.0
Undegradable protein, %	30.0	60.0
Calcium, %	0.15	0.03
Phosphorus, %	0.44	0.31
Fat, %	1.40	4.30

There are certainly some disadvantages, not the least being availability. Contact your nearest feed mill and inquire about cost and availability. In my area, organic field peas are selling for \$26.00 for 80#, which is actually the same cost as organic whole corn.

Contributed by Angela Ingraham

### **My Adventure Raising Orphan Pigs in the Bathtub**

I had purchased two gilts in November of 2011, and a boar in March of 2012. I put them together to do what came natural to hogs. However, I had never raised a litter before, just had two sets of commercial pigs that I raised up to butcher. My neighbors had raised commercial show pigs for years, so I was confident we could figure everything out.

I began thinking at the first part of July that one gilt was pregnant, and asked the neighbors. They weren't familiar with AGH body types and said if she was, she had weeks to go. July 2012 here was a scorcher! It hit 110 several times, and although the hogs had a large puddle and shade, they were uncomfortable.

I got up July 15 to find little pigs running around under the boar and all over! There were a lot of them, ten or eleven. Several were dead. Mama acted ok, ate and laid in the puddle, and nursed them, but she also squished several during that day and night. The next morning I got up to a dead mama pig and 5 surviving orphans, and immediately freaked out! I called the neighbors to help move the carcass, and gather piglets. I couldn't think of anything to do with them, but had had chickens in the tub before, so that's where they went! (I have more than one bathroom, so it wasn't that inconvenient. I put an oven rack over the tub and a heat lamp on it, with towels on the bottom.

For two days, I tried bottle feeding them every two to three hours with milk replacer, with the neighbors feeding them once while I was at work. One large boar piglet would not drink from the bottle and I was afraid of losing him after all this work. I bought baby rice cereal, mixed it with warm replacer formula, put it in a pie pan and stuck their noses in it like puppies. It worked! That went on every two hours in the tub for several days until they got too big and boisterous for the tub. I'd walk into the bathroom, and they knew they were going to get fed. They'd try to climb out of the tub.....until I put my hand in to get one. You would not think it's that hard to catch 5 little pigs in a bathtub, but it is! I'd put them on the bathroom floor to eat and then back in the tub. I'd mop the floor but left the walls alone.

When they were two weeks old, I bought a 10x10 ft. dog kennel, tarped it and moved them outside. I get home around midnight, so they got three feedings a day, one at midnight. I quit the midnight feedings at about 3 and a half weeks, as they were little butterballs.

I don't know why the mama died, but it was her first litter, it was extremely hot, she'd had a huge litter and was probably stressed. She had had no visible drainage, so I don't know if infection played a part. I contacted Kevin Fall several times during this stressful period. Kevin asked if we'd cut her open to see if a pig was stuck, which could have caused it. I had not thought of that and had already had the body moved. Kevin also advised, for future use, to keep an old section of hose around, as an enema can lower their core temperature.

I learned several things with this experience. Yes, you can save orphan piglets!

I also NEVER want to have to do this again! I also learned if I have to again, and use rice baby cereal, to take the time to wash the walls daily. It took me over two hours to get the “stucco” off when I did wash them!

Contributed by Ann Glass



## Hog Housing Options

Whenever a potential customer contacts me, if they have never had hogs before, one of the first questions is always “What do you use to house them?” I always laugh as I explain that over the years I have scrounged everything from crate boxes used to ship tractors to playhouse and doghouses from people’s yards (“excuse me, I have been driving by your house for a year and notice that you aren’t using that playhouse”). Recently I have tried to get them all painted the same color in an effort to make it a tad less “Beverly Hillbilly” at the farm.

Here is a collection of hog houses used by some of our members and fellow livestock owners that shows the wide variety of styles available. Whether your climate requires protection from intense heat, heavy snow or rain, or just a place to get out of the weather for farrowing, there are some great options. As always, you can spend nothing by using materials on hand, or spend a fair chunk to get something pre-made. The pigs don’t seem to mind either way! Thank you to those of you who shared your photos and ideas.

Contributed by Angela Ingraham



*This simple "A" frame shelter is an easy weekend project and with two eye hooks, can easily be dragged behind a tractor to new pasture areas.*



*This nice 6'x6' hut has an overhang to keep rain from the entrance and the sloped roof would be a plus in a snowy climate. The roof is removable, making it lighter to move around.*



*This port-a-hut is ideal for this wooded setting. Additional anchoring would be required for open windy sites. They are spacious and portable, and come with optional piglet guards. [www.port-a-hut.com](http://www.port-a-hut.com)*



*Teresa writes "A double shelter made from horse panels, hog panels, metal roofing, and plywood. It is 12 feet deep and each section is 6 feet. It allowed the boar and sow to be next to each other and we were able to control breedings. This was the most sturdy hut we built and it did a good job of withstanding the boar rubbing against it. We used all recycled materials we had laying around the farm."*



*The ability to hang a heat lamp safely helps at farrowing time.*





*This style of shade/hoop house is easily constructed by using cattle panels and a tarp or shade cloth. Metal "T" posts or wooden 2"x2"s are used for support. Two or more panels are tied together as needed and the structure can be taken down and relocated for pasture rotation.*

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