

American Guinea Hog Association



From the President,

Snark, Snark

First and foremost let me apologize to all of our members for the confusion and turmoil that has arisen in the last few months and for that as a fellow member, hog raiser and as your President, I am sorry.

With that said we now must move forward. There is no restriction on registering piglets due to inbreeding or color. The words in the breed description have been changed back to the way they were in January. I would like to bring to light some things about the motions made in February. Since that time the board received 5 letters of concern over the motions and 1 phone call. We also received some 14 in support of the motions. This is a total of 21 responses out of 448 members in good standing. The count of piglets that list any amount of white on litter registrations are less than 2% of the total registered. So where are we going with white? We are going to create a data base of what lines throw white.

Also tagging and notching is not mandatory but is highly recommended as a way to identify the animal. We do ask that you please tag, notch or tattoo.

With all of this now behind us, where are we going? I am still working to try and incorporate DNA testing in the hopes we can find and add lines that haven't been in the registry. I.T. and Tech are still working on the breeders and membership list. There are a few members that are not up to date and your Regional Director will be getting in contact with those members. They are also working on linking breeders assist

to the website. We are also working to update the information on the website.

We have established a few committees to fix some issues we have and the first area is our by-laws. There is some wording and content issues that the committee and an attorney are working on. We will have a membership meeting before the year is over.

Last I would like to thank Ruth Bennett your Registrar for her work she does and has done.

Also I would like to thank Ann Glass, former Secretary for the last 18 months, for all of the hard work she has done and not just taking notes during the meetings. Ann is the one who published the newsletters, sent out the welcome letters and welcome packets.

Nancy Gaedke, former Treasurer for the last two years. She made sure the bills were paid, the Registrar was paid and keeping the AGHA functioning and noticed in various publications.

Ron Farnsworth
AGHA President

District Directors Needed!

We will be taking nominations for one district director for regions 3, 4, 5, and 6.

These positions will be until our next elections in the spring of 2016. We will only accept self nominations. That person must be a current member in good standing and having been a member for a period of no less than 1 year. The person must also be raising guinea hogs. Please send a brief bio about yourself, what region you are in and why you would like to be on the board. We must have these no later than the 24th of April. The board will vote and select the candidates at our May 1st meeting. You can email them to your Regional Director, the President or Secretary.



Photo courtesy of Angela Ingraham of [Flint and Steel Farm](#)

Blowing Coat

Submitted by Angela Ingraham

Many of us have experienced it. Our gorgeous, shiny, full coated sow suddenly "blows coat" during lactation or after weaning and ends up looking like an old moth eaten sweater. It can happen suddenly, or as long as 3 months after the piglets are weaned. The hair may come out slowly from all over the body, or may leave big patchy areas that are bald, or nearly so.

"Blowing Coat" is known technically as 'telogen effluvium'. Hair goes through stages of growth. The actively growing stage is known as anagen. Telogen is the resting stage. During this stage hair is more likely to shed. Hormones and dietary stress during lactation can cause the sow to enter telogen and large numbers of hairs are shed simultaneously, often coming out in clumps. Since her body is putting its energy into milk production, or her reserves are depleted after weaning, the hair will not grow back as quickly as with a normal shed.

Feeds high in Omega-3 fatty acids will aid in regrowth. Soybeans used in hog feeds are a good source of Omega-3. However, if you are mixing your own feeds and are not using soy you will need to add another source. Flax meal and eggs (cooked) are good sources of Omega-3 that are readily available as supplements. Many feed stores have flax available in bulk. Flax seed oil is available, but costly. Walnuts are also a good natural source if you have those available to you.

Stimulation of the hair follicles may also be beneficial and the sow will often be seen scratching, leading to the concern that there is a parasite condition. Checking for parasites to eliminate that as a cause is easily done by taking a skin scraping and placing it alternately on a white, then a dark, piece of paper. Mites or lice will easily be seen moving if present. Giving the sow a good brushing with a stiff horse brush will

stimulate growth.

It may take a few months, but your sow will be back to her beautiful self in no time!

Angela Ingraham
Flint and Steel Farm



Photo courtesy of Frizzled Farm

A custom mix of whole oats, whole field peas, black oil sunflower seed, flax seed, wheat, steam rolled barley and kelp meal.

See article on feeding with comment about Lysine, also good for hair growth.

Winter feeding of Guinea Hogs in the Northeast

Submitted by Angela Ingraham

During the growing season, those of us in the colder regions can pasture our hogs, but from late November until the grass begins to grow in mid to late April it can be a challenge. Balancing weight, nutrition, and costs over such a long period of time without the advantages of pasture and forage requires some trial and error, as many of us have found. Feed costs can be exorbitant if you are over-wintering both breeders and feeder pigs. Getting the most nutrition from every meal fed is a must. Severe cold may require a bit higher fat and protein levels for maintaining condition. This is especially important for gestating sows who are bred for spring farrowing. Corn is relatively

cheap, but puts fat on much too quickly with Guinea Hogs, and hay alone may not provide a balanced diet.

Since I wintered the highest number of hogs this past winter that I have ever had, I felt the financial pinch and knew that if I was to expand my meat market, I needed to do some research. I have not fed hay to my hogs in the past. Having a good size herd of sheep and limited storage space, my hay supply is precious, and I never really thought of hogs as hay-eaters. Feeding organic grain, however, is somewhat expensive. How to get the most value from what I feed and the best nutrition for my herd is utmost in my mind.

I asked several AGH breeders for their methods and will share with you my findings.

Although Spence Farm Foundation is in Illinois, the pasture period is similar to mine here, so I asked Marty Travis about his operation. Spence Farms supplies AGH meat to the restaurants in the Chicago and downstate area and it is so well received that there is always a waiting list. The meat is well marbled and exceptionally tender, the hogs grow slowly and do not become too fat. Marty feeds primarily their own quality alfalfa hay through the winter with little or no grain. The hay is supplemented throughout the winter months with apples, squash and root crops, with an occasional treat of their own wheat. In the spring they are returned to pasture.

In a similar method, Karma Gloss of Kingbird Farm in Berkshire NY, near Ithaca, feeds alfalfa hay, plenty of root veggies and 1/2 # to 1# of grain ration per day, depending on hog size and whether gestating. Karma also mentions that it is a challenge balancing the AGHs weight with nutrition.

Pam MacKenzie of Abundance Acres Farms here in New York State, as I do. She also feeds a hay diet in the winter, supplemented with grain. Their herd of 15 hogs is given half to a full bale of hay a day, depending upon which hay cutting and the weather. She said that at first the hogs were not interested in the hay, but by not providing much grain in the beginning, they soon learned that it was good to eat. Pam says "The hogs didn't go for the hay at first; a week or two went by and they acted like they were starving but ignored the hay! Chris felt compelled to give them more mash, but I told him that others had experienced the same behavior in their hogs and that we should just wait for them to come around. Then suddenly one day they realized that hay was for eating and that it was YUMMY!" In addition, the herd received just under a pound of grain per head per day and on occasion, some whey. She occasionally throws out some whole corn ears to combat boredom. (I use whole field peas for this same reason, getting the hogs to move around in the snow can be a challenge)

Jack Rowland also raises his herd here in NY State and I am very excited to try his

feed method next winter. When he began feeding conventional hog feeds, he noticed that a large portion went right through them, even ground feeds. He then began researching sprouted grains and discovered that the process of sprouting removes the natural anti-nutrients contained in dry seed that are designed to fight off bacteria, mold and even animals. Once the seed begins to sprout, a number of conversions occur. Large amounts of enzymes are released to convert the starch and proteins into sugars and the building blocks to grow the plants. This serves to increase the palatability of the grain as well as increasing the B vitamins and essential acids such as Lysine (side note: Lysine is one of the supplements used to combat "Blowing Coat" of sows in the other article).

Jack uses a 50/50 blend of wheat and oats for his sprouting. Oats are loaded with bran, which is important to keep hogs regular. He has noticed that the feces now contain very little undigested matter, indicating that this method gets the full benefit of nutrients. Since I have a source for field peas, I will try adding those to my sprouting next winter. A full article of Jack's methods will be in the fall newsletter, just in time to give it a try yourself!

Following these methods, I will definitely be adding a quality hay to my hogs diet next winter. I have also learned that soaking the hay initially, with either plain water or adding molasses to the water, will encourage hogs that are not accustomed to eating hay. This, along with sprouting my grains, will not only cut my costs but provide my hogs with superior nutrition. I feel enthusiastic about going forward with my plans for pastured pork production. Hooray for me!

Angela Ingraham



Q&A With The President

Question: My sow just farrowed and is not producing milk, what can I do?

Answer: Bottle feed the piglets colostrum and then start on milk replacer. If you have cows or goats in milk you can bottle feed them some of that.

Question: I recently lost a couple piglets and need to make changes to an already submitted litter application, how do I do that?

Answer: Paperwork changes are processed by Ruth the Registrar. Ruth handles all litter registrations, hog registrations, transfers, and AGHA member registrations.

Ruth is the best direct contact with questions on paperwork and will be able to assist you in getting these updates made on your litter application.

Ruth can be reached a number of ways.

Email:

registrar@guineahogs.org

Mail:

Ruth Bennett, AGHA Registrar

19941 S Ave.

Dallas Center, IA 50063

Phone:

(515)344-9841

To submit your questions please send an email to secretary@guineahogs.org.

Meet Your AGHA Board Members

Submitted by Cathy R. Payne

The Executive Board of the AGHA consists of ten members working as volunteers to make sure that the American Guinea Hog continues to be viable and is preserved for future generations. This is the only registry available for the American Guinea Hog, so the efforts of volunteers willing to devote their time is crucial to the association.

This article will introduce you to board members who have agreed to be featured in this way. In order to serve on the board, one must have been a member of the AGHA for at least one year and be a member in good standing. Regional Representatives are voted upon by the Membership to serve for a 3 year term. The Board offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer are elected by the

representatives. Officers must have served on the board for a minimum of one year before they can be elected, unless there are no candidates that meet this requirement.

President Ron Farnsworth

Contact: president@guineahogs.org

Ron has been a board member since June, 2013 and was elected President by the Executive Board in May, 2014. He resides in Region 2, in South Georgia. Ron and his wife started raising American Guinea Hogs in 2009 and have retained their first breeding boar. He currently has two breeding pairs plus a third breeding sow. His breeding stock is from CHF (Carolina Heritage Farm) Gra Moore, Yokeley's Family Farm, and Blue Field Acres. You can visit their farm at [Farnsworth Family Farm](#).

Ron began volunteering for the board when it was restructured. At that time all offices were being vacated and the association needed to be staffed. Ron wanted to help preserve both the association and the future of the breed.

Ron devotes many hours of volunteer time each week on various tasks and projects to benefit AGHA members. These include chairing and planning monthly meetings, receiving and returning phone calls, answering emails, approving new members, reviewing registrations and transfer papers, doing research with The Livestock Conservancy, managing the website, doing telephone interviews for various press and media, and administering the official AGHA Facebook page.

Ron is a retired US Army Veteran who served 21 years of active duty. He did not farm or raise livestock until he met his wife, in 2009. Together, they strive to raise and grow as much as their food as they can. In addition to homesteading and his volunteer duties, Ron has a fulltime job with his local school system as a master ASE certified school bus technician and is a school bus driver.

Ron hopes that one day a DNA database will be established, and would like to see the American Guinea Hog Association spearhead a project to move AGH bloodlines across the country in order to increase diversity.

Region 2 Representative Cathy Payne

Contact: region2@guineahogs.org

Cathy is the newest board member. She volunteered to fulfill a Region 2 vacancy left

by Eric Slatt and was appointed by the Board in November, 2014. She joined the AGHA in October, 2013 when she started her herd of American Guinea Hogs at her small scale NE Georgia farm, Broad River Pastures. She currently has four breeding sows and one breeding boar from a variety of lines. Her boar is a Sullbar VA Samson grandson. One of her sows from Clear Morning Provisions also includes this lineage so it can continue to be preserved. The other 3 do not have the VA bloodline and allow for relatively low COIs in their litters. The herd reflects several different body types.

Cathy is on a bit of a mission to preserve heritage breeds and was delighted to discover the American Guinea Hog. She retired from teaching special education after a 33 year career that ended in May of 2010. She left suburban Atlanta with her husband, Jon, to live a healthier rural lifestyle and raise their own food. Jon started a local locksmith business and Cathy runs Broad River Pastures. She breeds and raises Gulf Coast Native sheep, American and Silver Fox rabbits, and American Guinea Hogs. She also works with volunteers and interns who want to learn homestead and farming skills and keeps annual and perennial gardens. She is also a board member of the Georgia Sheep and Wool Association. She is currently doing interviews for a research project that will eventually result in three books about the American Guinea Hog. She chairs the AGHA by-laws committee.

Cathy would like to see a strong educational component in the AGHA. Revamping of the current website and articles in the newsletter from a wide variety of members and contributors can play a role in that.





**Sending out a heartfelt thank you to
Ann Glass and Nancy Gaedke
for all their time and support they gave while
serving on the board of the association.
We wish them both all the best!**

Used with permission by the author, D. Phillip Sponenberg

Source: Managing Breeds for a Secure Future: Strategies for Breeders and Breed Associations D. Phillip Sponenberg, DVM, PhD, and Donald E. Bixby, DVM
The American Livestock Breed Conservancy, Pittsboro, NC, 2007

10. Breeder Responsibilities

Breeders have a great many responsibilities to the breeds that they manage, which is a very healthy and a completely appropriate state of affairs. Breeders gave us the breeds we cherish, and breeders are certainly capable of managing them to pass on to future generations. Without engaged and dedicated breeders, breeds lose their relevance in the agricultural landscape and risk being relegated to the status of trivial artifacts or face extinction.

It is the responsibility of breeders to manage the breed type to fall within the breed range. This implies that both management and selection will be appropriate to the specific breed genetic resource that is being managed. This can be a subtle and powerful concept, and is likely to be overlooked by many breeders. While many breeds will thrive under ideal management and abundant resources, some breeds will only maintain their traditional genetic heritage by being placed in environments that challenge them to retain their adaptive traits and remain productive. It is the breeders of the breed that must provide for that environment, and for the selection of the animals that are best adapted to it.

Breeds are an important part of food security. The loss of genomes, either through breed extinction or through breed changes, reduces the options for future food production strategies. Industrial strains are proving to have very reduced biological fitness, and may well not be able to adapt outside of their narrow, if exquisitely productive, agricultural setting. Different breed choices must be available, intact, and viable in order for the demands of changing agricultural systems to be met.

Breeders also have important responsibilities to their associations and registries. Among these are providing accurate and timely information. This can include notification of births, deaths, and ownership transfers, all of which help the registry to maintain accurate and current records. More contentious but equally important is alerting the association to the production of any defects or known genetic diseases within pure or crossbred examples of the breed. Only by having this information can associations take early and effective measures to assure that the breed remains healthy and viable.

Breeds, Breeders, Associations, and the Future

The future has always seemed dark and mysterious, and doomsayers have always pointed to a downward spiral of culture and life throughout all eras of history. Without being unnecessarily pessimistic, though, it is possible to point to some very real threats to breeds, breed integrity, the function of agricultural systems, and what the future might hold. Fortunately, it is also possible to point to some bright spots on the horizon - bright spots that are presently increasing in brilliance as well as size.

Several threats that are unique to this time in history confront breeds and their integrity and use in agricultural systems. Some threats are subtle and internal. Among those is the philosophy of absolute breed purity that keeps breeds completely isolated genetically from all outside influences. This model for breeds and their maintenance is rather recent, having developed only in the last couple of centuries. This model differs from the traditional course of breed development, which insisted on utility and predictability but only as they served functional ends. Anything that contributed to the predictable package was considered fair game, and the concept of complete genetic isolation was not in force. It remains to be seen whether complete genetic isolation will eventually result in a gradual, ever-tightening constraint of inbreeding depression for many breeds. Of all the threats facing breeds, this may be the most insidious and dangerous, because it is imposed by breed advocates that are in no way trying to diminish breeds and their utility.

Communication and transportation advances in the last century have also posed a threat to breeds and their integrity. This threat has usually arrived from a gradual homogenization of regional and international cultures so that unique products and the

animals that provide them are much less valued than once they were. Communication and transportation have resulted in ever increasing consolidation of the production and marketing of agricultural products so that point-of-origin producers must follow the dictates of this consolidation to be successful. Globalization is the final stage of this process, and if unchecked can result in a very severe diminishment of genomes worldwide which produce unique, satisfying, healthy, and interesting local products. Increasingly the cultural environment for breeds and breed maintenance has also changed. Breeds which were once valued as essential ingredients to local and regional agricultural production and cultural identity have become somewhat trivialized as lifestyle endeavors for those wealthy enough to indulge themselves in this activity. Breeds, while saved, have moved from essential partners in survival to a nonessential pet or hobby status. This switch in cultural environment changes the selection environment in which the breeds survive and persist, and can only result in genetic changes as well.

Not all is doom and gloom, though. An increasing number of people, both producers and consumers, are realizing that a sustainable and local agricultural system has great advantages for people, animals and the environment. The growth of this view of agriculture will help to provide rare and traditional breeds a secure future as the connection of breed, place, and production system becomes recognized and appreciated by larger numbers of people. Finally, it is important to remember that generations of breeders have given us the breeds that we enjoy and use today. The future hope of breeds and their conservation lies with breeders as stewards. With a few tools and some encouragement they are very much equal to accomplishing this important task and accomplishing it successfully.



***What is the difference
between swine flu and bird
flu?***

***For swine flu you need
oinkment, and for bird flu
you need tweetment!***

Rising Temperatures

Submitted by Heather Nesler



Be sure to keep those hogs cool with the temperatures on the rise.

By offering additional sources of water you can be sure to keep them healthy and happy till summers end. Small kiddy pools are a quick and relatively inexpensive way to provide water for those hogs in a rotational grazing program. They can be dumped out easily and moved.

We have also utilized black plastic cement mixing tubs found at the local farm store or big box home improvement stores. These tubs do seem to last longer but as we've discovered they are no match for a 300lb boar when he tries to lay in it to cool off! :)

There are several additional methods to help keep your hogs cool.

Here is a quick list:

Extra black rubber pans

A homemade hog waterer built using hog nipples and a plastic 55 gallon barrel

Stock tanks

Automatic hog waterer *These come in different sizes and price points. Smaller ones

are supplied by your garden hose while larger units can be hooked into water lines.

Last but definitely not least as well as the most natural, easiest and cheapest solution is letting the hog build their own wallowing hole. We fill it up twice a day during the warmer season. Even if the water is slopped out or soaks into the ground they still have a deep mud hole to help keep them cool.



Newsletter Help Needed!

By Cathy R. Payne

We need YOU - to help with the newsletter and other activities of the AGHA. This is a member-driven and member volunteer organization. How can you help? Several ways.

We need photographs of great looking hogs to illustrate the newsletter. I know you have some great looking hog pictures! Send them our way.

We would like to feature a different breeder (or two) in each issue to share the great work and ideas you have with other breeders around the country. Contact us for a telephone or email interview so we can get your story. Everyone has

something to share. This feature will definitely need a picture to go with it.

We'd like to share recipes using Guinea Hog meat or lard that are not copyrighted. Please share!

We're soliciting articles on any topic related to American Guinea Hogs and exemplary breeding practices. We're especially interested in articles related to our purposes: protecting genetic diversity, promoting interest in the American Guinea Hog, attracting new breeders, and to disseminate information about American Guinea Hogs. Anything to help other breeders choose the best hogs from their litters to use as breeding stock, tips on feeding, tips on housing, etc. will be helpful to others. Please send your articles in!

Contact a board member or your regional director with your articles, pictures, comments or questions.



OFFICES

President
Vice-President
Secretary
Treasurer

Ron Farnsworth
Jesse McDaniel
Heather Nesler
Kim Consol

president@guineahogs.org
vice-pres@guineahogs.org
secretary@guineahogs.org
treasurer@guineahogs.org

Advisor	Kevin Fall	advisor@guineahogs.org
Regional Directors		
Region #1:	Angela Ingraham – NY	region1@guineahogs.org
Region #2:	Cathy Payne – GA	region2@guineahogs.org
Region #3:		region3@guineahogs.org
Region #4:	Heather Nesler – IA	region4@guineahogs.org
Region #5:	Jesse McDaniel – TX,	region5@guineahogs.org
Region #6:	Teresa Hord – CA,	region6@guineahogs.org
Registrar	Ruth Bennett	registrar@guineahogs.org

MAILING ADDRESSES:

Ruth Bennett, AGHA Registrar - effective January 2013
19941 S Ave.
Dallas Center, IA 50063

(515)344-9841

Ron Farnsworth President, American Guinea Hog Association, Inc.
301 Proman Lane
Fleming, Ga. 31309
(912)271-5087

Board meeting minutes will be posted on the website as they become available.

Click [here](#) to log in and access the minutes.

Reminder: If you are having any issues with your online account at AGHA website, please contact us.



Find Us On Facebook AGHA Website

Our mailing address is:

American Guinea Hog Association, Inc.
301 Proman Lane
Fleming, GA, 31309

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)