

AMERICAN GUINEA  
HOG ASSOCIATIONFEATURE  
ARTICLES

- Companion Farrowing
- Q & A — Vaccinations

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## Curly Tales

## Dear Members,

**July marks the one year point in my term as President and I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you.**

***Thank you to the Board of Directors*** for their support and patience while I muddled my way through learning my roll on the board. We have an extremely knowledgeable and dedicated group of people who bring to the table various areas of expertise, which, when combined, makes for a well-rounded board.

***Thank you to the dedicated folks who realized the importance of this breed*** and rallied together to form the Association initially and worked tirelessly to save the Guinea Hog from becoming simply a page in America's Agricultural History books. The historical significance of the breed is one of its major draws for many of us as breeders and will continue to play an important part in its preservation.

***Thank you to my little herd*** for providing me with meat for my family, a bit of income from breeding stock and feeders, and for hours of entertainment as well as keeping me in shape slogging feed and water buckets!

***Most importantly, thank you to all of you, as members.*** From the breeder who travels the states to bring in a diverse group of breeding lines, to the backyard homesteader who raises one litter a year for meat production, each serves a vital part of the success of the breed as a whole.

Thanks to all of you, the breed has secured the upward trend of a secure future. The highlight of my responsibilities as President has been to get to know so many of you via phone calls and e-mails. As different as your goals may be ultimately, the uniting theme that resonates from all is the amazing love of for the breed.

This is your association and its success is dependent upon your input and support. Please continue to keep in touch with myself and your Regional Directors with any thoughts, ideas or concerns you may have. Together we can continue to build a wonderful future for "our little black pigs!"

Happily working for you and the hogs,

*Angela*



*“...hoop houses...are relatively inexpensive to make and are easily moved.”*

Maternity  
Ward

# Companion Farrowing

## “The Buddy System”

by Angela Ingraham

One of the questions often posed by new breeders is that of whether to separate the expectant sow from the boar, or the rest of the herd, as the case may be. While, as in all areas of livestock management, there are many methods that are successful, I came upon a solution that worked amazingly well for my set up and wanted to share it.

I had expanded my breeding program and had one proven sow due to farrow and, for the first time, had three "first timers" also due. I had several concerns to manage:

- Most pigs do not like to be alone, and separating can cause stress. Successful first-time farrowing is best

done in a calm, quiet setting.

- If two sows farrow at the same time, piglet sharing is common. Babies nurse from either sow and may even bond to the other mother. Because I don't notch ears at birth, and don't tag until they are a bit older, this would negate my ability to register any of the piglets in question.

- My boars are mature, and have tusks. I like their tusks and rarely do any filing, so they are a danger to small piglets that have delicate skin. A gentle nudge away from the feed can spell tragedy in the way of a nasty gash. Even the gentlest of boars can turn its head and snag a little one by accident.

- I live in Zone 4 and April nights are still very cold. Customers want piglets in the spring but farrowing with the danger of extreme cold is always scary.

Since I butcher at 14-16 months, I always have some feeder pigs in different stages of growth. I knew I wanted each sow to have her own area for farrowing, so several weeks before their due dates, I set up individual housing with paddocks. In my case, I used hoop houses. Relatively inexpensive to make and easily moved, they are simply two cattle panels, bent over and secured with posts, and one, 4'x6' piece of plywood on the westward side, topped with a tarp.



# Companion Farrowing (continued)

I used to have small wooden run-in sheds but we are notoriously bad at building things and I always felt like the farm looked a bit "Beverly Hillbilly." These hoop houses are tidy and portable, taking only a half hour to set up. Imagine what you could do if you were good at construction!

Several weeks before farrowing, I separated each sow into her own area with a companion pig. In this case it was March and the companions were from a September litter. They all settled in beautifully

and just a few weeks later the benefit of this arrangement became apparent. The first sow delivered on a fairly cool night - in the low 40's. The next eve it was in the mid 30's and when I checked on them, there in the light of my flashlight, was a happy pig pile. One mama, one companion, and eight piglets lined up on the older pigs' backs all the way down the V shape which was formed where they were snuggled against each other. This was repeated with the other two first time sows, with no losses and warm toasty

piglets, even in the 20 degree temps that followed. I did run a heat lamp to one house on a night that the sow was due because temps were the teens, other than that, none were needed.

An older, experienced sow may not need a companion for her comfort, but it would certainly help if you live in an area where the spring season is cold and the weather unpredictable. Many people don't have barns to bring the sows into and in my case, it was so successful that I will adopt this as a yearly practice. Maybe it will work for you, too!



## Association News

### — The Genetics

**Committee** has been working on incorporating a Breeders Assist Program on the website but at this time we are unable to find one compatible with our website as it is set up.

This is high on our priority list as it receives regular requests, however we want to do it once, and do it right, so your continued patience is appreciated.

— **Making some changes to our Bylaws is also in the works** and will come up for your vote once the Association's Attorney has sent it to us for review.

This is considered a major change so will be voted on at a General Membership Meeting that will be held via teleconference. It will be announced well ahead of time and your participation is encouraged.

— **The development of a Breeder's Handbook** has been on the table since last year and locating writers for sections of its content continues.

— **Our first Auction was held** and five gorgeous piglets from the Beardsley Zoo in Connecticut were offered and bid on. It was a successful first venture and we hope to offer

piglets like these again in the future.

— **The AGHA will be participating, for the first time, at the Mother Earth News Fairs** in Oregon and Wisconsin.

If these are deemed successful, we will vote on whether or not we will attend the Pennsylvania and Kansas Fairs in the fall.

Go to <http://www.motherearthnewsfair.com/> for more info.

*The Board is eager to receive member feedback on these programs or on any others that you would like to see in the future.*



Angela Ingraham

Susan Williamson, DVM

## Do I Have to Vaccinate My Piglets?

Very few people do any vaccinations whatsoever with Guinea Hogs. That is the beauty of heritage breeds in general, and of raising them in a more natural, outdoor/fresh air paddock or pastured environment. There are a few exceptions such as when castrating piglets, shipping/exhibit out-of-state, and keeping hogs as house pets:

**Castrating and Tetanus Bacteria** – When castrating piglets that will go back out into the pasture or into pens on soil, tetanus prevention steps are recommended. Neither author would ever castrate a piglet without first taking steps to provide the animal with protection from Tetanus bacteria. **Tetanus bacteria:**

- can be present in saliva, dust, manure and soil in any part of the country and is a serious illness caused by one particular clostridium bacteria,
- can enter the body through a cut or puncture wound and begin to reproduce,
- produces a toxin that leads to muscle spasms and eventual locking of the jaw,
- symptoms (initial and non-specific) appear in three days to ten weeks, are easy to misdiagnose, initially cause extreme pain, and
- treatment is often unsuccessful and usually results in death or euthanasia.

### **Tetanus Prevention Option #1 – Tetanus Vaccine (Tetanus Toxoid Injection):**

- is a simple subcutaneous or intramuscular injection which is given at 1cc per piglet at least two weeks prior to ear tagging or castration,
- stimulates the animal to begin producing its own tetanus antibodies,
- provides approximately one year of protection when followed by a booster at two to four weeks of age, and
- is available through most local livestock supplies and online vet supply companies such as Valley Vet.

**Tetanus Prevention Option #2 – Tetanus ANTITOXIN Injection**—Many producers prefer to castrate and ear tag in one, very early session and cannot wait the full fourteen days required by the vaccine in order for Tetanus antibodies to be produced. In these cases, because protection is needed immediately, Tetanus ANTITOXIN is used.

### **Tetanus Antitoxin:**

- is used immediately after a puncture wound, cut, or other skin penetrating injury has occurred,
- is given to an unvaccinated animal to protect them from getting tetanus following injury,
- is offered by most supply companies and usually runs just under \$20 plus shipping for 10 vials, enough for 20 piglets
- contains preformed antibodies that give immediate, but short lived, immunity to the body. These antibodies are not stored by the body for later use. They force an immediate immune response, but do not cause the body to create its own antibodies.

### IMPORTANT:

Do not administer antitoxin and toxoid at the same time.

If it has been more than a year since a toxoid was administered, an antitoxin injection should be given if a pig suffers a large cut or penetrating injury.

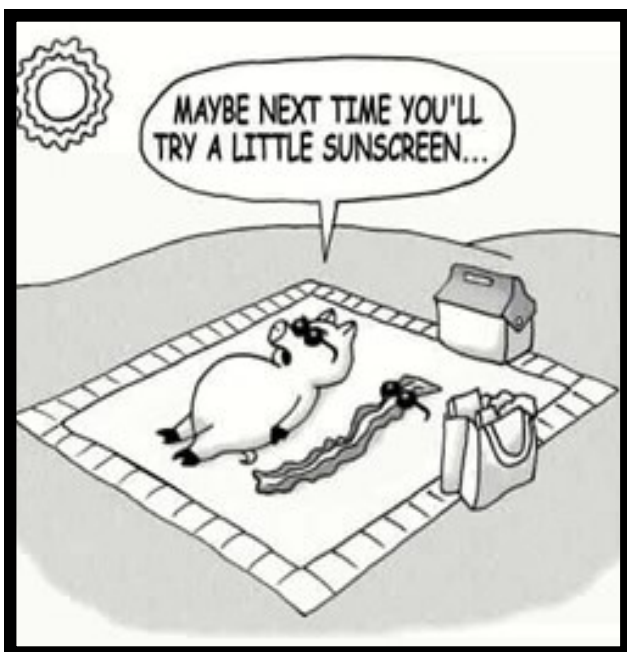
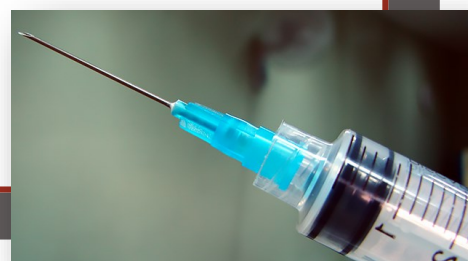
## Do I Have to Vaccinate My Piglets? (continued)

**Out-of-State Shipping & Exhibiting** – When pigs are to be shipped out of state or to shows or other exhibitions, each state, fair or show has its own set of regulations, from a simple, vet farm check and paperwork to the requirement of testing for pseudorabies and swine brucellosis. Vaccinations may be part of the state requirements and rules change over the years, so always check with the State Department of Agriculture (where the buyer resides) before you sell/ship out of state.

Your herd may have unique needs for vaccination as well. Some areas may have more cases of pneumonia than in other areas, or your herd may have a higher risk for leptospirosis, for instance. If you have a petting farm, you may need to vaccinate for various zoonotic diseases, which are diseases that can be transmitted to humans. As most Guinea Hogs are kept outdoors and on grass, their risk is often different than a commercial herd's risk. Discuss risks and benefits with your veterinarian.

**Hogs Kept as House Pets** – Finally, any American Guinea Hogs kept as house pets may be required by state law to be vaccinated for rabies by a licensed veterinarian. Check with local animal control to determine if that is necessary.

NOTE: A veterinarian can demonstrate how and where to correctly administer vaccines.



## HOGWASH

*Purely Playful*

*Porcine Puns*





**"One cannot  
think well,  
love well,  
sleep well,  
if one has not  
dined well."**

**Virginia Wolfe**

# Swine & Dine

by **Tori Rozanski**

Outdoor grilling is one of the things I do to help keep our home cool on hot summer days. Thanks to AGHA members, Diane Thaxton and the Sinclair family (Jennifer and John), I have two yummy grilled pork chop recipes to share.

My personal cooking style is to "wing it," throwing in this and that until things "seem right." Both of these recipes will work

well for my fellow "improvisors" and I did take a few liberties when I prepared these two dishes here in my own kitchen.

Diane's chops had a bit of a teriyaki flavor while Jennifer & John's recipe took on a more Cajun bent.

Jennifer & John's original recipe called for oven baking in a cast iron skillet.

Since this violates my "no oven during the summer" rule, my cast iron griddle was placed dead center on my grill, with only the outside two burners set on low. I did not light the center burners. This gave me excellent results and allowed me to make these delicious chops without heating up my kitchen.

## Jennifer & John's Grilled Chops with Potatoes & Onions

### Ingredients:

Sliced Potatoes and Onions (quantity is chef's choice)

#### Base rub for pork:

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| 1 cup   | Brown Sugar  |
| ½ cup   | Garlic Powder  |
| 2 Tbsp  | ground black pepper                                      |
| 1 Tbsp  | salt additional to taste                                 |
| 1/4 cup | paprika  |
| 1 Tbsp  | ground fennel seed                                       |
| 1 tsp   | cayenne...more if you like heat                          |
|         | (Note: I added more – my family thought it was too much) |

### Directions:

- ◆ Liberally coat chops (both sides)
- ◆ Heat cast iron, griddle or skillet, on grill, quickly sear chops on both sides and remove chops to a separate platter
- ◆ Lightly brush the cast iron with lard and quickly place a layer of sliced potatoes and onions on the cast iron – sprinkle with salt
- ◆ Place seared chops on top of the potato/onion layer
- ◆ Place an oven thermometer inside the grill and keep the temperature right around 275 degrees
- ◆ Cook until pork reaches approximately 160 degrees and potatoes are done.

NOTE: You will have plenty of extra rub leftover. This is delicious incorporated into a meatloaf, or used with any slow-cooked meat.



## Swine & Dine continued



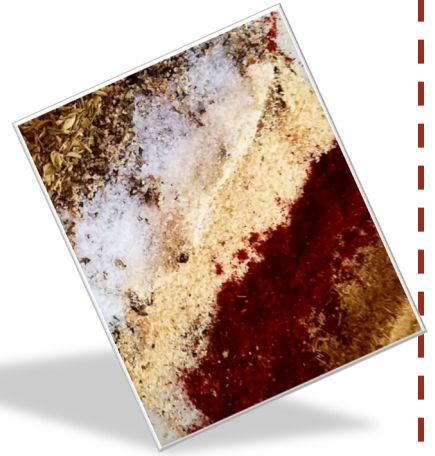
### Diane's Marinated Chops

#### Ingredients:

- ½ cup Sherry
- ½ cup Apple Cider/Juice
- ¼ cup Olive Oil
- Garlic (I used one minced clove)
- 1 Tbsp Lowry's Brisket Rub (Diane said brisket rub is just a salt mixed with paprika, pepper, cumin, garlic, etc. I couldn't find the pre-made rub locally so I mixed my own).
- 1 Tbsp Coarse Mustard
- 1 Tbsp Cider Vinegar
- Rosemary Chopped or as a smoke (I used a healthy pinch of fresh rosemary from my garden – next time I will use less as it was just a smidge overpowering).

#### Directions:

Simply marinate the chops (I marinated mine overnight), remove from marinade, and grill to the desired level of doneness.



## Praise the Lard!



The pig is able to store up supplies of vitamin A in the body fat when fed a diet containing ample supplies of that factor, as for example when grass fed."

-The Nutritive Value of Lard  
Jack Cecil Drummond,  
John Golding,  
Sylvester Solomon Zilva,  
Katharine Hope Coward  
Biochem J. 1920





# LITTER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Farm	Birth Date	Litter Description
Broad River Pastures SE Georgia Cathy Payne broadriverpastures@gmail.com	05/12/2016	BRP Summer Thyme x Sullbar VA ML Porgy, 12 piglets
Chapel Top Heritage Hope Farm Tony, WI Deborah Baker (608) 346-2196 (cell) (715) 532-9798 (home)	5/6/2016	God's Pansy x JWM 07242014-9, 10 piglets
Clear Morning Provisions La Plata, MD Tori Rozanski (301) 643-5284	05/01/2016	Soggy Top Eleanor x HZV Sahib, 9 piglets
	05/07/2016	CMG Jane Austen x Stanfield's Fred Astaire, 8 piglets
Cozy Creek Farms Nathan & Jessica Monroe Bloomington, IN (517) 281-1123	5/23/2016	JPF May x L Acres Pork Chop, 6 piglets
	5/31/2016	JPF Sue x L Acres Pork Chop
Dykstra Farm Woodstock, IL Laura Dykstra (224) 848-0270	04/10/2016	Wandering Peacock Cameo x Stanfield Batman, 6 piglets
	05/15/2016	Gods Blessing Farm Rose x Ham Sweet Farm Lawnmower, 5 piglets
Forget Me Not Farm Candor, NY Jennifer Whitmore Jenniferwhitmore0@gmail.com (607) 659-5630	05/30/2016	Ridgeview Farms Marcus x Roselawns Cadenza, 8 piglets
Friday Farms, Pickens County, AL sandeeshouse@gmail.com (404) 966.4176	05/24/2016	BRP Sirius Black x PVGF Mae, 10 piglets
	06/02/2016	PHF Mackey x PVGF Fern, 6 piglets

Photo Courtesy of Jennifer Howard



# American Guinea Hog Association, Inc.

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## Region 4 Director

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## Region 5 Director

To Be Announced

## Region 6 Director

Kim Consol  
region6@guineahogs.org



## Board Member Spotlight

Susan Williamson, DVM  
Region 2 Director

Susan grew up on a small farm in rural New Mexico, raising hogs, goats, cattle and poultry, gardening with her parents and siblings, and competing with various livestock at the county fair every year as a 4-H member. She had always wanted to be a veterinarian, so at the age of 17, she

left home to study animal science, chemistry and biology at New Mexico State University. Following graduation, she returned for further studies in animal nutrition and ruminant nutrition. She and her husband moved to Maryland in 1996, and she started veterinary school at the VA-MD Regional College of Veterinary Medicine in Blacksburg, VA while working weekends and holidays at an animal hospital as a technician and manager. After

graduating, Dr. Williamson joined that practice as part owner, but has since gone on to work in a multitude of veterinary related careers, such as working for USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services as a field veterinarian. She currently is self employed as a relief veterinarian while raising four boys and a wide variety of livestock, including American Guinea Hogs, and heirloom tomatoes on her family's small farm in Maryland.



## About Our Newsletter



# Curly Tales

Curly Tales is the quarterly newsletter of the American Guinea Hog Association. Its fourfold mission is to inform, inspire, support, and connect Association members as they work together to save America's Favorite Homestead Hog.

### America's Favorite Homestead Hog



**American Guinea Hog Association**  
[www.guineahogs.org](http://www.guineahogs.org)

**HOW MANY  
AMERICAN GUINEA HOG PIGLETS  
WERE REGISTERED IN 2015?**

**ONE THOUSAND FOUR-HUNDRED FORTY!**

## UPCOMING FEATURE ARTICLES

Effective Pasture Seed Mixtures

Parasite Management

Customer Service Before, During and After the Sale

## WE NEED YOUR INPUT

If you have questions regarding any aspect of breeding, caring for, or marketing your American Guinea Hogs which you would like to see addressed in an upcoming Curly Tales issue, please email [Tori Rozanski, \[clearmorningprovisions@gmail.com\]\(mailto:Tori.Rozanski@clearmorningprovisions@gmail.com\)](mailto:Tori.Rozanski@clearmorningprovisions@gmail.com).

## LITTER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Have a litter or litters of registered guinea hogs which you would like to announce in the newsletter?

Please email the following information to [Tori Rozanski, \[clearmorningprovisions@gmail.com\]\(mailto:Tori.Rozanski@clearmorningprovisions@gmail.com\)](mailto:Tori.Rozanski@clearmorningprovisions@gmail.com).

Farm/Owner Name

Contact Information

Farrowing Date

Parentage (Boar and Sow)

Number of Piglets in the Litter