



University of Idaho
College of Agriculture
Cooperative Extension Service
Agricultural Experiment Station

Current Information Series No. 254

December 1974

LIBRARY

JAN 20 1975

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

University of Idaho

SWINE TESTING PROGRAM

John A. Jacobs
Animal Scientist

Gene W. Gibson
Extension Swine specialist

Representatives of the College of Agriculture Department of Animal Industries met with directors of the Idaho Swine Producers in the spring of 1973 to determine ways in which the University might better serve the swine industry of Idaho. The directors pointed out that many producers had no convenient way of obtaining carcass information. Each year the Department of Animal Industries uses 150 to 200 market hogs in its teaching program which includes carcass evaluation. It was decided that the University should initiate a swine testing program with the following objectives:

To obtain accurate rate of gain and feed efficiency data for Idaho swine producers.

To evaluate the carcasses from these pigs to determine retail yields and carcass quality.

When necessary, to provide information to assist producers in evaluating and improving their breeding programs.

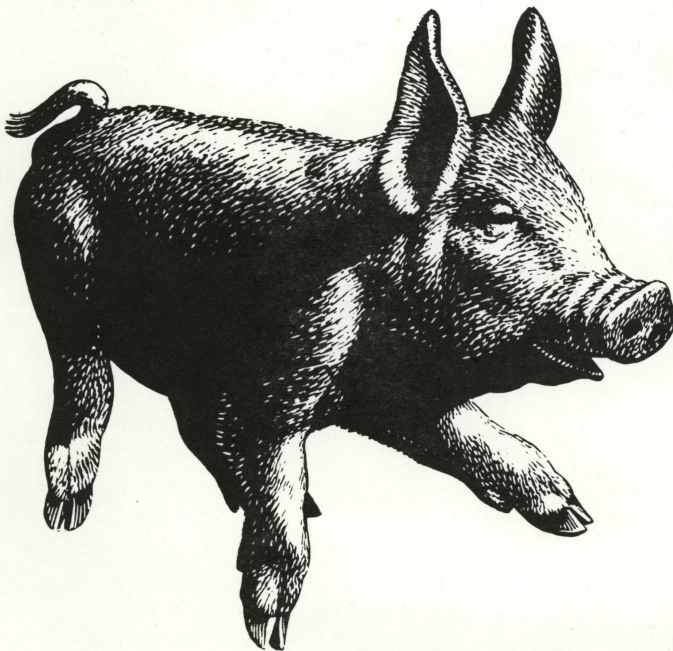
To utilize these test pigs in the Animal Industries teaching program.

Testing Procedure

Producers interested in having pigs tested should contact their county agent. The county agents will be contacted by University personnel when pigs from their area are scheduled to be tested. Producers may then bring their pigs to a collection point to be picked up by University personnel.

Each producer will be able to test 6 pigs (barrows or gilts) at a given time. All pigs must be ear-notched for identification and have birth dates provided. For the producer to obtain the maximum amount of information, at least 2 pigs should be selected from a litter and they should be representative of the litter—not the best or the poorest. All pigs will be purchased as feeders by the University when they are picked up. They should weigh between 30 and 50 pounds at time of purchase.

When the pigs arrive at the University they will be wormed, vaccinated and reweighed before being placed on test. Each producer's pigs will be tested



S
53
E322

together in a separate pen. Feed efficiency and rate of gain data will be recorded and all pigs will be weighed every 2 weeks during the test period to obtain intermediate gain data. All pigs will be fed the same growing ration until they reach 125 pounds. At that time they will go on a finishing ration until they reach slaughter weight. All pigs will be slaughtered at 220 to 250 pounds and will be evaluated for carcass quality and cutability. Fig. 1 shows the type of information which will be sent back to the producers on each pig.

In addition, the producer will receive a copy of the rations used during the feeding trial.

Using Test

Information on these pigs is confidential and will not be released without written consent of the producer after he reviews the data. If a particular problem is noted about a producer's pigs, this will be reported on the data sheet.

Producers should use the data in their selection programs. For maximum efficiency and profit the producer should attempt to achieve the following goals:

- Age at slaughter—less than 180 days.
- Average daily gain—more than 1.5 pounds.
- Feed efficiency—less than 3 pounds per pound of gain.
- Average backfat—less than 1.4 inches.
- Rib-eye area—more than 4.8 square inches.
- Percent lean cuts—more than 55 percent.
- Percent ham and loin—more than 40 percent.
- Average quality score—2 to 4, based on Wisconsin standards: 1—very pale, soft and watery, usually without marbling and strongly associated with stress syndrome; 5—very dark and dry.

Department of Animal Industries
 University of Idaho
 Feedlot and Carcass Data

Name _____ Address _____

Date _____ Animal No. _____ Breed _____

Sex _____ Sow No. _____ Sire _____

Farrowed _____ Age in Days _____

On-test wt. _____ Days on test _____

Off-test wt. _____ Ave. Daily gain _____

Slaughter wt. _____ Ave. Feed efficiency _____

Hot wt. _____

Cold wt. _____

Cold side wt. (right) _____ Carcass length _____

Wt. Shoulder _____ Backfat: 1st rib _____

Wt. ham _____ last rib _____

Wt. loin _____ last lumbar _____

Total wt. lean cuts _____ ave. _____

% lean cuts _____ REA _____

% ham & loin _____ Quality: color _____

Grade _____ marbling _____

ave. _____

Comments: _____

Fig. 1. This is the information supplied to producers who have pigs in the testing program.

Grade based on USDA standards—U.S. no. 1

Pigs have been tested from most areas of the State during the first year of this testing program. Several interesting facts have been noted so far:

- The best pigs tested have been either purebreds or crossbreds, produced under a systematic crossbreeding program utilizing

purebred boars of two or three breeds.

- Many of the pigs being produced tend to be overfat with poor growth rates as a result of poor selection and mating.
- The modern meat-type pigs cost less to feed to market weight than the fatter type due to improved growth rate and feed efficiency.