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Hybrid Broodstock Pig Production (Grizzly Pigs Farm)

An English Large Black sow was bred to a Landrace/Duroc boar at the end of June 2013.

Farrowing occurred in the third week of October and 6 piglets were born, 3 male and 3 female. Unfortunately one male and one female piglet were lost in the first 4 weeks. The weather was below freezing at noon from the time the piglets were born, and snow covered the ground soon after (loss was not due to temperature).

The remaining two female piglets, "hybrids" were named "Munch" and "Kin" and stayed in the unheated, straw filled, outdoor shelter and pen with their mother for 10 weeks. They were relatively small at 10 weeks, weighing 41 lb (Munch) and 31 lb (Kin) when moved from their mother into a straw bale enclosure inside the barn of the carriage house at Grizzly Pigs Farm.

This was an unheated enclosure, and lit 16 hours a day. The piglets were fed Yukon Grain Farm pig starter, then pig grower, twice a day mixed with their daily (warmed) water requirement to make a warm mash. A small amount of vegetable scraps were added "ad lb" when available.

MunchKin outgrew their enclosure by mid February, and were too heavy for the weigh scale. Approximate weight was 96 and 80 lb.

Measuring the pig's weight

The use of a crush and weighing pad is impractical for a free-range pig operation such as GPF. All moving is done manually, a crush and scale system is too heavy and large to move around the paddocks. Mr C. Vangell suggested a measuring method from the internet (How to Calculate Pig Weight Using a Measuring Tape) from Oregon/Washington State University - attached. All weight measurements from Mar 9th used this method.

See "Growth of Hybrids…." For details of weight gain.

To check the accuracy of this method, which is claimed to be accurate to within 4%, it was used in 2014 when number of GPF raised pigs were

slaughtered for processing. So long as the heart girth measurement is done with the tape snugged firmly, the method was found to be very accurate.

Feeding and Husbandry

All pigs required feeding and watering twice a day, morning and evening. The Boar was full grown, eating a total of 6lb dry food (Yukon Grain Farm) daily. The piglet received one pound of dry food per day, per month of their life, eg at 3 months they received 3lb per day each. Food was placed in individual bowls, and for the most part each sow ate from one bowl only – one did not try to bully the other for both of them.

In summer and fall they were in electric fenced paddocks, where they happily cleared the ground, before moving back to solid walled paddocks for the winter.

Although the project officially finished in Fall 2014, the weight data was continued until Nov 1st. The weight difference between the two sows continued throughout their life, the large piglet maintaining its size differential. Perhaps appropriately this was "Munch". Compared to an ELB, born 6 months earlier, and in Spring thus having a warmer environment to develop in, their weights are not at all unreasonable, especially for winter reared piglets.

Munch and Kin were backcrossed to an ELB boar in November. Kin gave birth to 7 piglets, and Munch to 12 in February 2015. The piglets were ready to be picked up by the customer in late March at over 30lb. The customer professes to be "very pleased with their progress to date" (May 1st 2015). As of May 3rd, both Hybrids are back with the boar, as is a new 3rd Hybrid sow, reared over winter 2014-15.

The photo is Munch with some of her piglets, Late March 2015.

The project has provided the funds to successfully set up the hybrid brood line at GPF; the resulting back-cross piglets are not only seen to be winter hardy, but also grow very well.

Jonathan F. Lucas, sole prop. Owner/Operator GPF, May 2015

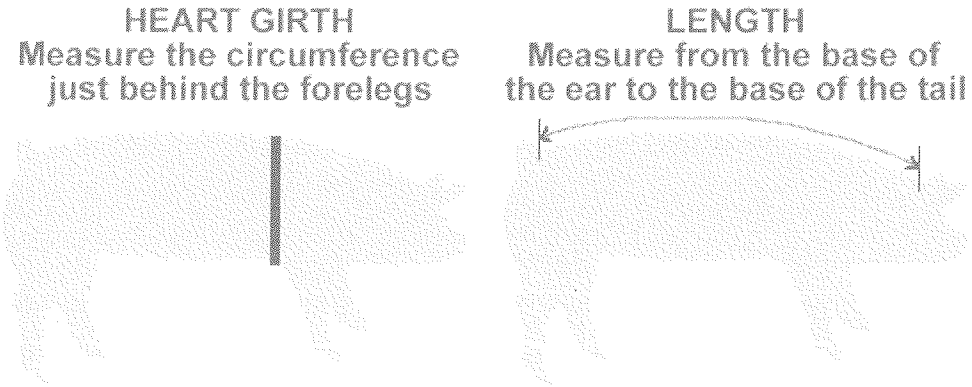
Growth of Hybrids "Munch,Kin" 2013-14

Date 2013	Munch lbs weight	Kin	
Dec 11th	41	31	10 weeks, moved from Mother to straw enclosure in Barn
Feb 17th	96	80	moved to unheated shelter outside
Mar 9th	141	107	
April 6th	198	140	
April 13th	214	150	
April 20th	207	159	
April 27th	216	175	
May 3rd	231	181	
May 10th	242	192	
May 18th	258	202	
May 26th	258	210	
June 1st	273	220	
June 8th	309	225	
June 25th	350	287	
July 1st	356	268	
July 6th	371	252	
July 13th	377	273	
July 27th	398	286	
Aug 3rd	428	336	
Aug 17th	452	328	
Aug 24th	459	340	
Sep 14th	469	354	
Nov 1	521	474	**"Stiltskin"** English Large Black, 6 months older 546 & born in Spring..getting warmer, not colder

Compare to a control or a normal?

obvious maturation

How to Calculate Pig Weight Using a Measuring Tape



1) Measure the pig's heart girth. Place the fabric measuring tape around the pig, just behind the front legs. Note the pig's circumference in inches.

2) Measure the pig's length. Start at the base of the pig's ears and measure to the base of its tail. Note the pig's length in inches.

3) Calculate the pig's girth measurement. To calculate the girth, you will square the heart girth measurement.

   For example, if the pig had a heart girth of 44 inches: 44 x 44 = 1936

4) Multiply the pig's girth measurement by its length.

   If our example pig had a length measurement of 39 inches:

   1936 x 39 = 75,504

5) Divide your total by 400 to get the estimated total live weight.

   For example: 75,504 / 400 = 188.76 lbs.

6) To estimate carcass weight, multiply your live weight by 72%.

   For example: 188.76 x 0.72 = 135.90 lbs

Adapted from Washington State University