



Swine Showmanship

The objective of swine showmanship is to show your animal to the best of your ability and show your understanding of the swine industry. You will be asked questions about pigs and judged on how you work with your animal in the show ring. You want to be respectful of your pig and other members showing too. To learn more about the swine project and how you should show a pig, find a member enrolled in the project and ask them for advice!

Handling Pigs

Pigs are shown in a different way than most large animal species. Rather than using a halter, you will be challenged with walking your pig using a whip, cane or pipe. It is important to note that in doing so you tap your pig in the proper area making sure to not bruise your animal or cause damage to the retail products. Do not ever hit your animal with the whip making sure to always keep the welfare of your animal a top priority. Always present your pig between yourself and the judge. Keep your pig moving at all times with its head held high. If your animal stops walking, tap it on the side of its belly. Never tap your pig's face or ham. Drive your pig at the judge so they can see all sides and angles of the pig while being courteous to others in the ring by not blocking them or their pig. This includes walking the pig towards the judge, away from the judge, and parallel to the judge to show the profile. Be sure to keep your pig at least six feet away from the judge at all times. Avoid walking your pig in a corner and stay away from the sides of the ring. If the judge approaches you to ask questions, leave your pig, but continue to keep an eye on it as you engage in conversation. Always keep eye contact with the judge and watch for further instructions from them. If your pig runs, remain at a walk until you reach your pig. To prevent this from happening, give a slight tap on your pig's nose to encourage them to slow down. Do not touch your pig with your hand. If your pig becomes dirty, use the brush in your back pocket to brush it clean before returning the brush to your pocket.

Showmanship Questions and Answers

Questions:

1. What breed of pig are you showing?
2. Where does bacon or pork chops come from?
3. Where is the most valuable cut of pork found on a pig?
4. What kinds of diseases are common in swine?
5. What is the average for back fat found on a pig?
6. How many days is the gestation period of a sow?

To contact an expert in your area, visit msue.anr.msu.edu/experts or call 888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464)

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Answers:

- Varies; there are 8 common breeds.
 - Tamworth: swine are red and have ears that stand up, and a long snout.
 - Yorkshire: are white, and have erect ears, and a long snout.
 - Duroc: are red with droopy ears.
 - Chester White: are white, small, and have droopy ears.
 - Poland China: are mostly black with variable white areas and spots.
 - Landrace: are white, very long bodied, and large floppy ears.
 - Berkshire: are black with some white extremities particularly the feet.
 - Hampshire: are black with white front legs and shoulder “belt” and erect ears.
- Either explain or if you can point on your pig at the side of the belly for bacon and along the topline of the pig for pork chops.
- Loin
- E. coli, Respiratory disease, and swine dysentery
- Approximately 0.6-0.8 inches
- 114-117 days

