

Gloucestershire Old Spots Pig Breeders United

# The Old Spots Gazette

Winter 2017 Vol 1 Issue 4



*Happy New Year*

*Courtesy Old Narrow Gauge Farm, Maine*

**Wishing all GOSPBU members a happy, healthy and successful 2018. As our Club goes from strength to strength our family grows larger and good news about our beloved breed spreads across the USA we need you out there promoting and spreading the word about just how good the meat and pigs we produce are. So get out there. And please send us any of your news and photographs, we love to hear how you and your pigs are doing. Have a great 2018.**

**Luther Clevenger Club President GOSPBU**

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## Gloucestershire Old Spots Pig Breeders United

*"The mission of GOSPBU is to preserve and promote the GOS pig for genetic conservation, provide breeder and membership support, and educate the general public."*

## GOSPBU News



Amy Pickard from The Old Spots Pork & Lard Ranch in Austin Texas comes on board at the GOSPBU as new Registrar.

"Howdy! I am pleased to be taking over the registrar responsibilities for the club. A big thank you to Lance and Angie of Really Farms for their work as the previous registrar. There is a bit of a back log from August 2017 until now, but I should be able to work through it quickly. Please remember to fill out the registration/litter certificate forms completely and accurately. Scanning and uploading documents or promptly sending them via email to [registar@gospbu.org](mailto:registar@gospbu.org) will allow me to process requests quickly. I'm looking forward to serving our club as the new registrar! Happy New Year and may all our sows have large litters!"

Christmas morning Peacehaven Star gave Luther & Julie Ckevenger 9 Stars for Christmas! What timing.

(Photo right)

Photo Below Balsham Ellen enjoys her Christmas Eve Supper.



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## The Goodin Family Farm

4 years ago my husband and I bought our first farm located in Skagit Valley in Washington State. We got our first 2 pigs after living there for only 2 weeks and a few registered Berkshire pigs a year after. I had chosen Berkshires for what I thought would be my breed of choice, because of watching a Gordon Ramsay show where he raised a pair to butcher. I also have a love for my English heritage so naturally I wanted to pick breeds for our farm that have roots from the UK. Never in a million years would I have thought that one of my biggest passions would be pigs, especially a big, white, spotted, floppy eared pig from England!

My Nana and Great Grandparents are from Redditch, England and I have English and Scottish roots from my Dads side as well. I grew up with many different traditions or normalities compared to most Americans. From putting the kettle on, party crackers at Christmas, watching Mr. Bean, enjoying a good roast with Yorkshire Pudding, or eating beans on toast which most people think is the weirdest thing ever! My comfort food! But I digress. That interest and love of my heritage is what led me to my first beloved Gloucestershire Old Spots. Originally I had just wanted a GOS to make a nice cross with my Berkshires. I soon found that I would want them much more than for just that. One of the main reasons we chose this breed was because of how well it does on pasture and its reputation as the "orchard pig". Living in the Pacific Northwest we have to be careful pasturing animals certain times of the year because of how wet the climate is. Very similar to the UK really. We didn't want pigs that would immediately root the pasture to oblivion. They've proven to be better about this than some of the first pigs we started with and when given an adequate area, are fantastic foragers with minimal rooting. It wasn't long after getting our first gilt that my husband and I were both in love with these sweet natured pigs.



Our first GOS, Luna, is our princess pig. She got to live the pampered life in the barn with goats the first year of her life since she was too small to live with our older, more pushy pigs. She was best friends with our Anatolian Shepherd livestock guardian dog puppy and ate orchard grass hay with the goats. Her world was turned upside down when she had to go be a pig with all the rest. That was almost 2 years ago now and she still acts like a princess about most things! She is Blue Group Princess Ann line after all. One thing that seems to be true with all the other GOS we have is how affectionate they are. Luna will give me hugs as I call it by walking up next to me and curling her head around my legs and

making happy grunts. If I squat down on the ground she will also try to flop over into my lap for belly rubs. Not easy for a 500 lb. pig! Another thing that we weren't used to at first was the piglets. I affectionately call them "puppy piglets" because they really act like puppies! All of our previous Berkshire piglets didn't really seek out human attention until they were much older and

were always flighty. These spotted babies run towards you instead of away from you! It's absolutely fantastic. We were in transition for 5 months living at my in laws farm while we purchased our current farm. During that time Luna had a litter of piglets. Her paddock happened to be set up by a frequently traveled side road. I don't know how many times we saw cars stopped to look at the adorable site out in the pasture. Pretty soon, the piglets were trained to run to the fenceline when a car slowed down! It was so incredibly gratifying to see the smiles they put on people's faces and to even be able to chat with people about them.



## The Goodin Family Farm

One of the most important things I think GOS offer to people, is an opportunity to truly enjoy raising an animal to nourish their family or customers. I think most people would rather eat a pork chop that came from a friendly animal that was loved than the latter. For those people who are wanting to join the "grow your own" movement, you couldn't ask for a better pig in my opinion. They certainly are easy to love. Our customers who buy weaner piglets generally have a better experience raising these pigs because of their fantastic temperament. It may make it sad to say goodbye, but it gives a more enjoyable experience overall. Getting to eat bacon at the end of it helps too! If it's not enjoyable, people are not going to want to do it. If you can get them to fall in love and care about something, they are generally going to want to do what they can to make sure that that thing continues! Getting people's interest and love for these pigs is what will help grant them a future and preserve what they are.



We may be fairly new to the GOS world, but we have high hopes to become more involved with this lovely breed. Our goal is to be able to offer more people pastured pork from our purebred GOS pigs and educate them about the great qualities of their meat. Not to mention sell quality weaner piglets and limited breeding stock. Our son is also planning on taking a GOS to fair this year through our local 4-H program. This will be interesting considering he will be up against Show type pigs like, Durocs, Yorkshires, and Blue Butts. His plan is to educate people on how we raise pigs and how important old heritage breeds like the GOS are. My husband and I also hope to visit the UK for our 15 year wedding anniversary in 2021 and would love to see some true British GOS pigs! How romantic, right? It's funny what the farm life will do to you. But we wouldn't change it one bit. Here's to high hopes, spotted pigs, and farm dreams!

**With Thanks to Cassie Goodin for words and pictures. We look forward to her show report next year.**



We were extremely happy when we read the new proposed Standards for Grades of Pork Carcass from U.S.D.A. Why so happy?

Finally, there is a proposed system that will properly recognise Pork taste and flavour attributes. The proposed system is based on marbling and colour. Similar to the USDA successful Beef Grading system, the Prime and Choice Grades will identify the very best Pork for marbling and color, so that consumers can knowingly get Pork that will have the best taste and flavor.

**Pork Carcass Quality Grade**  
*based on lean color and marbling*

Quality Grade	Lean color score	Lean marbling
USDA PRIME	4-5	≥ 4
USDA CHOICE	3	≥ 2
USDA SELECT	2	≥ 2

*\*Carcasses with less than slightly firm lean are not eligible for quality grading.*

**U.S.D.A Beef Cut-Outs Prices Oct 27, 2017**

Choice Beef	600-900 lb carcass	\$ 203.55 lb
Select Beef	600-900 lb carcass	\$ 192.35 lb

*11¢ per lb premium for Choice over Select. Almost \$100 per head on 900lb carcass.*

You only have to look at current beef prices to see were Choice compares to Select.

Why the higher price? Choice has better eating attributes which leads to enhanced demand and then receives higher prices from the final consumer.

We must recognize the efforts of the National Pork Board with support of the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC). They have worked diligently over the last while to initiate this game changer.

It's a 180° turn. For twenty years National Pork Board and NPPC promoted "The other white meat" slogan for the Pork. An unmitigated disaster. \$1 billion of Producer check off funding over that time, with pork losing market share over the same period. Pork per capita consumption flat lined when total meat consumption increased. Instead of promoting Pork as the alternative to Beef, "the other white meat" program branded us to chicken, that sells for half the price of Pork.

Basic marketing tells all; that you never build a brand chasing a cheaper product. It was dumb marketing and the results set back our pork industry because it also got chasing the fallacy consumers wishing to buy leaner and leaner pork.

Why are bellies (bacon) and ribs at top of the Pork Cut Outs? Obviously, they are not lean. They have taste and flavor. Follow the money trail! Consumers vote with their money. Last Friday Bellies were \$1.67lb, Loins 99¢ lb, hams 72¢ lb. If want to increase revenues, we need greater demand for Loins and Hams. Better tasting, darker pork, with more marbling will enhance demand and drive prices higher. There will be opposition to these proposals. Some will prefer the status quo. Some people don't like change, and some will feel threatened by new grade changes and the intervention of U.S.D.A

We must produce pork that consumers wish to eat, predictably and consistently good, not a random hit or miss good eating experience. If as an industry, we can get every American to eat pork one more time per month, this is equivalent to 7 million hogs. Demand is what drive prices higher. Why are Beef carcasses \$2.03 lb and Pork carcasses 77¢? Demand. Consumers vote with their money. They pay more for the taste-flavor of beef.

Game changing is what these newly proposed grades will do. No longer will lean hogs bring premiums. The switch will be to hogs with marbling and darker colour. We will see a big push to breeds like Durocs and heritage breeds, due to their meat eating attributes. **Jim Long CEO Genesis Genetics**

## Carcass Return Guide

# The butcher kept your meat?

by Dr. Christopher R. Raines, Assistant Professor  
Department of Dairy & Animal Science  
The Pennsylvania State University

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**No, the butcher probably did not keep your meat.** Ever since the first butcher processed a meat animal, the customer has wondered what happened to some of their meat. How could it be that a 1,200 pound steer left you with only 475 pounds of beef? Or that a 250 pound hog generated only 125 pounds of pork? What might seem like a reasonable answer - that the butcher kept your meat - is very unlikely. Take into consideration what happens during the conversion of a market animal into cut and packaged meat, and chances are the math will make more sense. **This brief guide is intended to serve as a general base for meat product return and may not fully account for slight variations that different animals and butcher orders may incur.**

## Step 1: Converting an animal into a carcass

**Dressing percentage (DP)** relates the weight of the carcass to the weight of the live animal and is calculated as:  $(\text{Carcass Weight} \div \text{Live Weight}) \times 100$ . This can be affected by many things, such as gut fill, fatness, mud on the hide, or shorn versus unshorn. Very fat animals have higher dressing percentages than light very lean animals.



**~70%**

The average dressing percentage for hogs is about 70-72%.

**Example:**  
Live weight = 245 lbs.  
Actual DP = 72%  
Carcass wt. = **176 lbs.**



**~60%**

The average dressing percentage for cattle is about 60-62%.

**Example:**  
Live weight = 1312 lbs.  
Actual DP = 60%  
Carcass wt. = **787 lbs.**



**~50%**

The average dressing percentage for sheep is about 50%.

**Example:**  
Live weight = 127 lbs.  
Actual DP = 52%  
Carcass wt. = **66 lbs.**

## Step 2: Making cuts out of a carcass

This is where it starts to get tricky to predict just how much meat the carcass will yield because that depends largely on how you order the meat cut. **Bone-in or boneless?** Opting for boneless cuts will reduce your total pounds of meat returned. **Do you want ground meat with 10% fat or 20% fat?** Lower fat content ground meat will result in more discarded fat, thus reduced total pounds of product received. **Was the animal overly fat to begin with?** If the animal was fat from the start, more fat will need to be trimmed away, thus reducing total pounds of meat returned.

### Pork

For bone-in pork, expect no more than 75-80% of the carcass weight back as meat. For boneless, 65-70%.

**Example:**  
Carcass wt. = 176 lbs.  
Boneless pork = **123 lbs.**

### Beef

For bone-in beef, expect no more than 65-70% of the carcass weight back as meat. For boneless, 55-60%.

**Example:**  
Carcass wt. = 787 lbs.  
Boneless beef = **472 lbs.**

### Lamb

Most lamb cuts are bone-in. Expect no more than 70-75% of carcass weight back as meat.

**Example:**  
Carcass wt. = 66 lbs.  
Lamb cuts = **50 lbs.**

## Step 3: Aging and further processing (optional)



The longer a whole carcass ages (hangs), the more moisture it loses due to evaporation, thus losing weight. Instead of aging an entire carcass for > 2 weeks, ask if your butcher is willing to age just the middle meats, aged.



Ordering bacon? Cured hams? Smoked sausages? Applying a heat process to meat cuts will also reduce the total yield of meat returned from an animal. Different products have different yields.

For more reading, see: D.M. Wulf, (1999). *Did the locker plant steal some of my meat?* <http://ars.sdsstate.edu/MeatSci/May99-1.htm>

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With thanks to the Goodin Family Farm

## Denny's Family Show Pigs

Meet GOSPBU's newest member Dennys Family Show Pigs and their gilt Patches.

Meet Patches our Gloucestershire Old Spot gilt. She was born on January 20th 2017 in Illinois and on February 22nd we brought her home to Logansport IN. She has been very spoiled and has the best disposition.



Patches was shown in our County Fair - Cass County Fair - and she did an **AWSOME** job representing the breed. She was chosen **Champion GOS Gilt**. She was the first GOS that has ever been shown in the county fair here. Only the judge and one other person had even heard of the breed. Our goal



is to start raising them and to have them recognized here on the show level and to help educated people about them. She is now back out roaming in her pasture and will be having her first litter on Christmas.



**(Well done Denny Family for getting out there with Patches. Fingers crossed for a super litter. Ed)**



**GOS Birth Stateside**

Piglets abound at The White Buffalo Ranch in Oregon as the UK pigs get into their stride and pop piglets out for owners Luther & Julie Clevenger. On 7 December Bramleyhouse Countess gave birth during the night to 7 bright and healthy piglets to sire Chilthorne Patrick a favourite boy of owner Julie.



Meanwhile Peacehaven Dahilia (right) one of the rarest lines in the UK had 7 nice looking piglets. The sire is CHILTHORNE PATRICK.

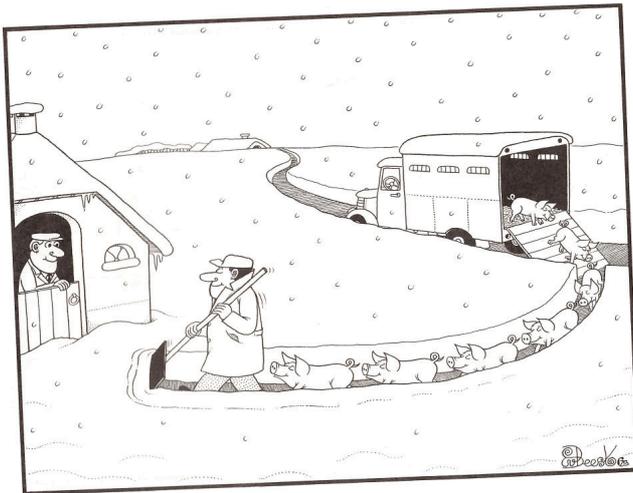


You may remember Kimberley Ruessler telling us about coming through the Florida hurricanes. We are happy to tell you that they not only all survived but their sow had a litter of 11 piglets (left) to their Black group boar Walter.

And in Maine piglets abound at Old Narrow Gauge Farm too. (Right)

(We look forward to seeing and hearing about more of your GOS pigs throughout 2018. Happy New Year and may all your farrowings be successful Ed)





Two piggy cartoons above from renowned Dutch cartoonist Emil Van Beest's book Pigmania published by Farming Press ISBN 0-85236-157-X. Sadly now out of print but my trusty pig scout Steve Handley found this at a car boot sale for just a £1. (\$1.23)

**Editor's Note**

Christmas.....its sneaks up on us every year. Here at Fowgill for the first time in a good number of years we will NOT be farrowing pigs over Xmas. The 26th (Boxing Day) has been the most favoured day usually when we are feet deep in snow or its blowing a massive storm and freezing cold. This year whilst the pigs are snug in their beds I will be snug by the fire eating my Xmas chocolates and watching trashy movies on the tv. On the day itself we will be having a good leg of our own GOS pork with all the trimmings instead of Turkey. I do hope you have enjoyed reading this issue and if you have any stories, pictures or general piggy stuff you want to tell us about please do so as its great to hear all your news.

Wishing you all a very happy, healthy and successful 2018.

Oink Oink

*Mandy x*



I think there are several husbands and wives out there who can agree with this sentiment!

Walton Webcasting hosts live hog shows and sales across the mid USA and is worth a look. Find it at [www.waltonwebcasting.com](http://www.waltonwebcasting.com)

The next broadcasts are from Phoenix AZ Nationals Show & Sale 28-30 Dec 2017.



Editor Mandy Garbutt UK © GOSPBU & Mandy Garbutt

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