

THE BERKSHIRE NEWS

The Official Newsletter of the ABA



AMERICAN
BERKSHIRE

THE SEEDSTOCK ISSUE 2021

WE ARE VERY EXCITED TO PRESENT “Old School”



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A Message from the Board of Directors: Pete Brummer, President



Greetings fellow ABA members and Registered Berkshire enthusiasts,

As I write these notes, the 75th National Barrow Show has concluded. It was a very successful show and sale for the ABA. As we reflect on the rest of the 2021 summer show season, we highlight the \$80,000 and \$45,000 boars sold at the Summer Type Conference. There has been a lot of excitement about Berkshires in the show ring, and we as a board look forward to new opportunities for our producers in 2022!

While I am excited about the show segment of the ABA, I am equally excited about the path that the ABA Board of Directors and Cory have laid out for the meat quality segment of the ABA that will provide enhanced value to the pedigree and additional support for our membership. We will soon roll out a new ABA logo and a new seal to be offered to breeders to place on their Registered Berkshire pork. We have several other ideas in motion to further promote the meat quality genetics of the ABA.

We also have some hard decisions for moving forward. The most complicated will be addressing breed purity. This will be important as we work to preserve the future of the ABA.

I am excited to help lead the board and membership to new opportunities, new relationships, strengthening old relationships, and promoting the greatest breed of swine in the world.

Feel free to reach out with your thoughts and excitement for the ABA.

Sincerely,

Pete Brummer
(717) 877-4000

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Cory Edge
Director of Berkshire Operations
cory@americanberkshire.com

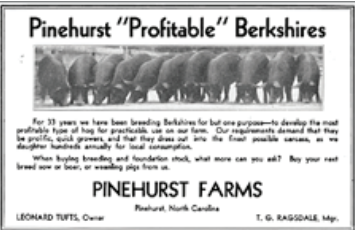
Rose Criswell
Membership Services Coordinator
rose@americanberkshire.com

American Berkshire Association
2637 Yeager Rd.
West Lafayette, IN 47906
(765) 497-3618
office@americanberkshire.com
americanberkshire.com

ON THE COVER:

From the November 1983 issue of The Berkshire News, this cover hangs in the ABA office.





FROM THE BERKSHIRE NEWS...

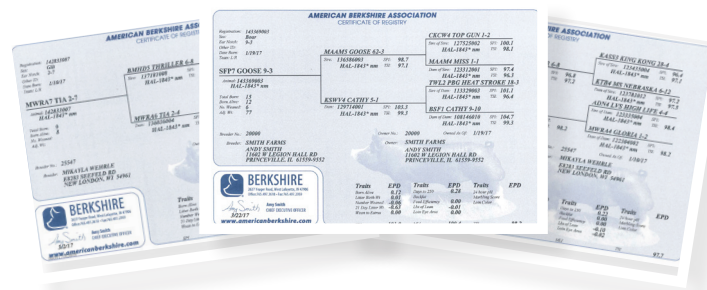
The breeding of Berkshire swine at Pinehurst Farm was started by Mr. Leonard Tufts in 1903 with the idea of developing a type of hog that was best suited for the wants of the farmer and packer likewise best adapted to this part of the South. A farmer wants a quick growing hog that will reach a marketable size and finish in the shortest time...

Mr. Tufts and Mr. Ralph Jenkins were Vice-President and President of the ABA during the mid 1920's when the ag industry was at rock bottom. Read more about their contribution to Berkshires on the blog at americanberkshire.com.

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TRIPLE M FARM: MYRON DAMMANN

A MAN THAT PRODUCED BERKSHIRE QUALITY AND QUANTITY

by Merrill Smith

Myron Dammann purchased his first Berkshire in May 1948, a 35-pound gilt from Mr. L. Hobart Kinder, from Spring Valley, Minnesota. This 4-H project with the name K's Epoch Sally became the foundation that would grow into the largest privately owned Berkshire herd in this country and maybe the world by the mid 1970's. This sow weaned nine pigs her first litter and four gilts from that litter were put back into the herd. That started a strong, massive, productive sow herd that eventually provided for breed improvement in litter size, mothering ability, and weaning average.

Earnest Dammann and his wife had three children with names that all began with the letter "M". Therefore, the farm was named "Triple M Farm."

Myron graduated from Elkton High School in 1953. He went on to be an honor student at the University of Minnesota and graduated with High Distinction in 1957 with a B.S. degree in Animal Science and Plant Industry. He was a member of the University of Minnesota's Livestock Judging Team. While in college, he would return home almost every weekend to manage the Berkshire operation. Following graduate work, he returned to the farm full time in 1959. He served in the Minnesota National Guard and Army Reserve from 1959 to 1965.

Growing Triple M Farm Berkshire herd was not easy and was met with many challenges. Myron's parents did not have estate planning in order. So, Myron

had to purchase the farm and hogs he grew from his siblings after his parents deaths. This almost financially ruined Triple M Farm. However, Myron persevered and worked hard and smart to be able to continue his passion, crop farming, and Berkshire hogs.

In July 1977, he was informed by his hog buyer, Hormel and Co., that one of the hogs he'd sold them in late June had been tested and found to contain sulfa residues by USDA agents at their plant. Myron knew he had not fed any sulfa to his finishing pigs. A long battle with the Federal Bureaucracy began. Myron and his wife, Lenore, sent numerous letters and telephone calls to the USDA. He was invited to testify before the USDA in Washington D.C. on Sulfa Residues in swine and their testing methods. Myron called this "Sulfagate" because it was one coverup after another by USDA officials. Myron was not opposed to the governments right to monitor swine for residues, but they were doing it in an unjust and unfair manner. In the end, Myron won his case against the USDA and their methods of testing for sulfa residues in swine. This took a lot of work, knowledge, time, and money. Very few win cases against the USDA in Washington D.C.. Some people in D.C. actually thought Myron was a chemist. He is just that intelligent.

Myron married Lenore Anderson in June 1970. Lenore's first husband was killed in a car accident. Lenore was one of the best things that ever happened to my Myron and Triple M Farm. She became a truly special Berkshire person and wife. She took care of all the farrowing responsibilities, kept the



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records organized, made customers feel welcome at the farm, delivered pigs to customers and market, helped with other chores around the farm, and most of all loved and promoted Berkshire hogs. She was a good seamstress and would sew Berkshire sows and pigs and helped raise money for several charities. She served as chairperson for the NBS Women’s programs. She was always helping and giving to other people. She was a mighty big part of the achievements of Triple M Farm. Very sadly, Lenore passed away on Christmas Day of 1987 after a battle with cancer.

One of Myron’s best traits that have helped him in life and its challenges and in being successful in raising Berkshires is his integrity. He was and is not afraid to tell the truth and face the truth.

While in Graduate School at the University of Minnesota, Myron did a major research project on the use of Iron. The challenge was to address anemia in indoor raised piglets. Everyday Myron injected different levels of iron into the test piglets. Included in the test were piglets that received no iron. Each day the piglets were weighed and their hemoglobin levels measured to help determine the proper amount of iron needed. Myron communicated with researchers in England. Sow’s milk does not have iron. After all the data was collected and analyzed, it was proven to have a positive effect on nursing pigs. This was important in the late 50’s and early 60’s as pig farrowing began to move inside. Many Minnesota University Ag researchers wanted Myron to stay at the University and work on a doctorate and eventually be on staff. Myron chose to go home and farm and raise Berkshire hogs.

Myron had many friends and mentors that helped him over the years with Berkshire hogs and the success of Triple M Farm. Twins, Tony and Tom Burke, helped Myron on his farm when they were young. Later Tony went on to be a hog buyer at Hormel and later in charge of product procurement. Tom went on to be big in the promotion and sales of Angus cattle. Tom will be inducted into the Saddle and Sirloin Club in November 2021. Both of them continued to communicate and help Myron after they were in the work force. Tony actually bought Triple M Farm Berkshires as a hog buyer and would help Myron market his hogs at the best times. Milo

Wolrab, Wayne Yake, Al Christian, Joe McKenna, Kenny Coomer, and Ken Kehrli were all appreciated by Myron among others.

Triple M Farms produced Berkshires that could compete with all breeds at any level back in a time when Berkshires were not popular. They were a leader in the certification program based on two littermates being processed and measured to meet standards that made the littermates more valuable by being part of a certified litter. A sire became a certified meat sire if he sired at least 5 certified litters. Triple M Farms produced more Berkshire Certified Litters and CMS sires than any other herd. In addition, their pigs were proven to grow fast and their females excelled in all phases of reproduction. Triple M Farms sold lots of breeding stock all over the U.S. and other countries that proved to be breed improvers. Numerous champions in the 1960’s and 1970’s were either shown by Triple M Farms or had a Triple M Farm pedigree.

Myron received many honors and awards over the years. In 1955 he was selected to attend the National 4-H Congress as Minnesota’s Outstanding Pig Club Member and in 1956 he was presented the Liebenstein Award as Mower County’s Outstanding 4-H Club Member. He was a charter member of the Mower County Pork Producers and in 1992, he was inducted into the Mower County Livestock Hall of Fame. In 1994, he was honored with the Distinguished Service Award from the Minnesota Pork Producers. In 1998, he received the American Berkshire Association Distinguished Service Award. He served two terms on the ABA Board of Directors and also served on the Mower County Pork Producers Board.

Myron is a strong believer in a people friendly, animal friendly, community friendly, and environmentally friendly sustainable agriculture. He is a big fan of Classical music, reading, collecting scale model Allis-Chalmers tractors and equipment, historical sites and nature.

Despite it all, Triple M Farms and Myron Dammann helped the Berkshire breed and its breeders immensely at a time when we really needed it. Myron faced the challenges and the Berkshire breed of today exists because of what he did.



Ask any salesman that called on Myron if the sign is true? Myron could be a tough sell and sometimes hard to please. That was because he was a lot smarter than those of us that called on him.



Myron Damman showing at the National Barrow Show where he had many Berkshire Champion boars, gilts, and barrows. Myron has attended every NBS held at Austin, MN since it started in 1946. (Possibly the only person that can say this.)



Myron and his wife, Lenore, stand in one of their Cargil-type finishing floors in 1978. Lenore was very important in the success of Triple M Farm until her death on Christmas Day, 1987 from cancer.

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FKB5 LADY IMF 52-9 [FKB 6044]

#1 SPI SOW IN THE NATION

DAMS OF DINSTINCTION

9 of the top 10 sows in the
NATION for SPI are from FKB

EN	ABA REG. #	FKB TAG
1. 52-9	135544009	6044
2. 52-6	135544006	6043
3. 73-8	135562008	6019
4. 65-6	154539006	9051
5. 62-7	154536007	9050
6. 42-14	164157014	0072
7. 43-12	160612012	0019
8. 54-11	154398011	9002
9. 42-18	164157018	0074



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SELECTING FEMALES



Strong maternal genetics is a key predictor in your herd's generation success and bottom line. Whether you're breeding for the show ring or for the highest-quality Berkshire pork to put on the plate, selecting great genotypes, especially from a female perspective, will impact your herd for generations to come. It's important to look at soundness, growth rate, muscle, condition, underlines, and reproductive efficiency to farrow large, healthy litters.

We wanted to ask ABA members what they look for when selecting breeding females, and here are some of the responses:

ALAN BLACK, OKLAHOMA

I look for a moderate framed gilt with a decent amount of muscle, but not completely ripped, and a good spring of rib. I also look for an adequate amount of bone to skeletal shape as well as a good set for her vulva.

MATT M'CRORY, MISSOURI

Females should have the basics in terms of skeleton, flexibility and their angles must be right. Got to have a shoulder that lays into all reach and comfort, while having flex to hock. Elevation and extension allow you to have the advantage of mating to boars that might be out there in terms of power, width, and foot size. If you can find these gilts with the extras that include the width of pin set, bone, and rib; you're ready to make the next generation better.

CHRIS CONOVER, IOWA

Pedigree, Pedigree, Pedigree. I look for proven sow lines on both sides of the pedigree. I want big framed, deep-sided, long-bodied females that are adequately muscled and walk like cats. I look for trailheads that are not set up high. There has to be a natural slope to the rear of the female signifying a proper birth canal.

ROBIN CLARK, ALABAMA

Excellent well-spaced prominent underline with at least 12 teats, extremely deep-sided, strong & straight structurally correct with huge feet moderate bone & sound on feet & legs, extremely wide-based with width through the chest floor, sizeable vulva preferably straight down for easy breeding, long neck & body with evidence of femininity, genetic background from an excellent mother with quality littermates throughout preferably from a sizeable litter, easy handling disposition with a background of sows that just love to lay down & raise pigs & will hop up in a flash if a pig squeals or laying down just doesn't feel right, meatiness throughout but not to the point of being too tightly wound as to be able to farrow or move about freely.

LANCE KNOBLOCH, IOWA

I place a lot of emphasis on who the parents are and how productive they are maternal. With our sows gestating outside in all kinds of weather we select gilts that are structurally correct that will hold up in group gestation. Breed character is also something we put a lot of emphasis on as well.

FRANCINE M. GRAY, NEW YORK

When selecting breeding stock, I look for a fast growth rate and size, temperament with other piglets, and balance. I only select gilts with curled back ears, classic white in mid head, the tip of the tail, and symmetrical markings on all legs.



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bred by Kane Causemaker

- littermate to 2021 Champion Gilt at Houston



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NEW CHANGES, NEW OPPORTUNITIES

by Cory Edge

As I think on the impact that seedstock have not only from the eyes of a producer, but as I wear the ABA hat, there are crucial decisions that weigh on the minds of many. What boars do I need to breed to? What gilts do I retain? Do I have any prospects to keep intact? When and where do I market my program? What selection criteria should I focus on? What do customers want? What do ABA members want? How can we continue to advance this breed? These questions and many more get asked daily by breeders, board members, and ABA staff alike.

Though I may not have all the answers, I certainly understand the ABA's role is to help create the best opportunities for Berkshire breeders and enthusiasts to market and exhibit their livestock, seedstock included. With that said, and recent announcements surrounding 2022 events made public, I would like to share the ABA perspective that may provide some answers to those questions listed above.

First and foremost, the ABA is grateful that Team Purebred and CPS provided the opportunity to support young people in the purebred swine industry and invited Berkshire enthusiasts to market their seedstock to producers alongside their breeds. Without question, the Berkshire breed has been able to grow over the last 18 years because of youth involvement through the Team Purebred platform and participation at CPS events. However, COVID-19 has created many challenges over this past year with scheduling and executing our shows events. The ABA Board of Directors received a lot of feedback during the months of June and July of 2021 that having four national shows was not doable for families. To

address this issue, the ABA Board offered a proposal asking for all breeds and junior organizations to collaborate on two national shows at Des Moines, IA (The Exposition) and Louisville, KY (Summer Type Conference) as this would: 1) reduce costs of shows for each organization; 2) accommodate the busy schedules of junior parents; 3) prevent parents and exhibitors from having to decide between Summer Type Conferences in Springfield, IL and Louisville, KY; and 4) create more impactful opportunities for breeders, exhibitors, and buyers. A meeting was hosted by the ABA in early August of this year that included leadership from ABA, CPS, Team Purebred, NSR and NJSA to discuss this vision of collaboration. Unfortunately, the ABA was put in a difficult position when decisions were made several days later that did not align with the proposal.

As the ABA works towards ensuring sustainability, continued growth, and creating the greatest opportunities for all, our leaders are tasked to do what is in the best interest for our association's membership. Ultimately, the ABA Board of Directors and leadership sought and accepted a proposal from the National Swine Registry and NJSA for a yearly-reviewed agreement to participate at all NSR events and become a full investor and partner in the NJSA effective January 1, 2022.

Leadership of the ABA will stay committed to providing Berkshire breeders and exhibitors with ways to sustain and showcase this storied and exciting breed.

Official announcement of the ABA, NSR, and NJSA collaboration reads as follows:

American Berkshire Association, National Swine Registry, and the National Junior Swine Association Announce Collaboration in 2022

August 27, 2021

The American Berkshire Association and National Swine Registry are excited to announce that beginning January 1, 2022, all association events will be held collaboratively, starting with the 2022 Winter Type Conference and Southeast Regional in Perry, Georgia that will be held January 18-22, 2022. With this partnership, ABA will be participating in all NSR Open Shows and Sales. Additionally, the American Berkshire Association will become an invested partner in the National Junior Swine Association, and all ABA junior members will have the opportunity to participate in all NJSA events. ABA junior members are also welcomed to participate in NJSA leadership and educational opportunities such as the NJSA Junior Board of Directors, National Youth Leadership Conference, scholarships, and contests.

Effective January 1, 2022, the American Berkshire Association will be participating in all National Swine Registry and National Junior Swine Association events including Winter Type Conference, Southeast Regional, Southwest Type Conference, The Draft, The Exposition, Summer Type Conference, National Junior Summer Spectacular, Southwest Regional, National Barrow Show, National Barrow Show Junior Classic, Simply Southern, Eastern Regional, Fall Classic and Western Regional.

The American Berkshire Association and National Swine Registry are looking forward to this partnership and continuing to provide members with beneficial resources and venues to exhibit and merchandise their swine.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 2022



JAN. 18 - 22, 2022
PERRY, GA



MARCH 3-6, 2021
AUSTIN, TX



MARCH 21, 2021
LEBANON, IN

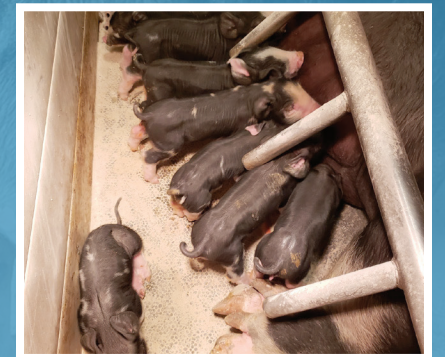


JUNE 12-18, 2022
DES MOINES, IA



JULY 3-8, 2022
LOUISVILLE, KY

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- 10-7 littermates were part of our 2019 #1 Super Sire Pen and #2 High Meat Quality Pen, being the #1 Average Daily Gain, #1 Sensory Juiciness and #1 Cooking Loss.
- The pen was sired by AJC6 Galileo 19-1.
- AJC9 Hustle Belle 10-7's 2nd litter, born August 9, 2020, holds the record at AJC for the largest litter ever farrowed with **22 pigs**.
- SPI 100.4; MLI 113.4; TSI 130.3

- A daughter of WAT5 Blackwater 6-1, **SHE IS THE GRANDMOTHER OF PIGS IN THE 2021 PROGENY TEST AND IS ALWAYS A FAVORITE OF VISITORS.**
- With sows and daughters working across the United States, 23-9 consistently passes on her structural soundness, eye appeal and foot & udder quality.
- 23-9 was the dam of our 2019 STC show string, 1 boar and 2 gilts sired by AJC7 Diamond Lad 3-1.
- This show string sold to North Carolina, Nebraska and Iowa. All of those buyers have been back to AJC and purchased more hogs.



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