



AMERICAN
BERKSHIRE
— ASSOCIATION —

150TH

ANNIVERSARY

1875 - 2025

Annual Meeting

Booklet Information



149th Annual Meeting Minutes

JUNE 14, 2024

The annual meeting of the American Berkshire Association was called to order at 5:53 p.m. by President Pete Brummer. There were 9 Board Members and 25 Members in attendance. The meeting was held in a room at the Indiana State Fairgrounds.

President Brummer named Rose Criswell and Drew Farrer as the credentials committee. Ken Lane, Matt Ritter and Heather Brummer as tellers.

Pete Brummer gave the Presidents report, he asked for a moment of silence for Merrill Smith and all Berkshire Breeders that have passed in the past year. He talked about live sales and on-line sales being a challenge. He thanked the current Board of Directors for their past year of service.

The minutes from the 2023 Annual Meeting were reviewed, Ernie Birchmeyer made the motion to approve the minutes.

Discussion was held, there needs to be a correction to change the year from 2022 to 2023 shows. Lance Knobloch seconded the motion with the correction. Motion passed.

Committee Reports were Given:

Executive Committee report was given by Pete Brummer.

Finance Report given by Jeff Wippel. There was income of \$82,000 for the year. Questions were asked and answered, discussion was held. Ernie Birchmeyer moved to accept the Financial Report. Steve Stassen seconded; Motion passed.

Marketing and Communications report was given by John Barnes. The Berkshire News is going well, editor is Mallory Boggs. Registered Berkshire Pork has items to help producers market their meat.

Breed Improvement Committee Report was given by Lance Knobloch.

Events Committee Report was given by Ernie Birchmeyer. On-line sales are hurting live shows and sales.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

John Barnes was chairman of the nominating committee; he gave the following report:

The following names are brought to the membership to fill three (3) spots on the board of directors:

Ernie Birchmeyer; Brice Conover, Chad Decker; Troy Siebold; Jeff Smith

Steve Stassen made the motion to close nominations. Andy Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed. Ballots were handed out.

While the tellers were tabulating the votes awards were handed out.

President Pete Brummer discussed the 150th Anniversary of the ABA in 2025.

Voting was as follows: Brice Conover and Jeff Smith are elected to serve 3-year term. There was a tie for 3rd between Ernie Birchmeyer and Troy Seibold.

Ballots were handed out to only vote between Ernie and Troy.

Results, Ernie Birchmeyer secured the third spot on the board.

Jeff Wippel made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Vance Aldridge seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Karla Smith

2024 Berkshire Top Registrations and Transfers

TOP 15 SENIOR RECORDERS

BREEDER	LITTERS
1. Cedar Ridge Farms, IL	605
2. Tuthill Family Farms, IL	184
3. Six Mile Farm, CO	165
4. Fly'n K Berkshires, IA	135
5. Wippel Family Berks, OH	133
6. Austin & Ken Lane, IA	92
7. Cedar Ridge Farms, IL	80
8. Phenotypic Acres, IA	74
9. Shipley & Snyder, OH	72
10. Albright Swine Farms, MI	55
11. Adam Jay Conover & Al Conover, IA	55
12. Bryan Cockerill, OH	52
13. Heimer Hamps, MO	50
14. Eggers and Sampson Showpigs, IA	49
15. Brice Conover, IA	47

TOP 15 SENIOR TRANSFERS

BREEDER	TRANSFERS
1. Shipley & Snyder, OH	152
2. Fly'n K Berkshires, IA	135
3. Tuthill Family Farms, IL	112
4. Decker Showpigs, IN	109
5. Austin & Ken Lane, IA	108
6. Petrik Farms, SD	97
7. Phenotypic Acres, IA	96
8. Brice Conover, IA	90
9. Albright Swine Farms, MI	86
10. Kent Brattain & Family, IN	83
11. Lockman Genetics, KS	76
12. Heimer Hamps, MO	75
12. Adam Jay Conover & Al Conover, IA	75
13. Eggers & Sampson Showpigs, IA	64
14. Hamilton Show Pigs, IL	55

TOP 5 JUNIOR RECORDERS

BREEDER	LITTERS
1. Armstrong Kids, IL	38
2. Kole Clark, GA	24
3. Logan Christle, MN	16
4. Autumn, Adele & Tegan Johnson, IN	15
5. Gracie & Hope & Reagan Flashpohler, IN	13

TOP 5 JUNIOR TRANSFERS

BREEDER	TRANSFERS
1. KPO Livestock, OK	47
2. Cullan/Jaxson/Maci Schmidt & Cade Jacobson, NE	40
3. Kilee Dolch-Blehm OK	32
4. Krayten, Pryor, Suttyn Trogdon, IL	31
5. Wyatt & Gracelyn Beck, IN	29

TOP RECORDERS BY STATE

AL	Cristen Haynes	8
AR	Rodney or Regenna Lybrand	2
AR	Coda Caughron	2
AZ	Byron Garigan	7
CA	Cy Hawkins	14
CO	Six Mile Farms	165
DE	Amanda Fabi	2
DE	David McClements	2
FL	Robert Karas	5
GA	Lane Bennett & Laney Kate Bennett	25
IA	Fly'n K Berkshires	135
ID	Scott, Griffen Adams / Logen Middaugh	1
ID	Kirk Pugsley	1
IL	Cedar Ridge Farms	605
IN	Decker Showpigs	32
KS	Lockman Genetics	28
KY	Ty W Jones	12
LA	Racca Livestock	11
MD	Andrew Bauer	15
ME	Bradford & Christina Littlefield	1
MI	Albright Swine Farms	41
MN	Logan Christle	16
MO	Heimer Hampshires	50
MS	Hammons Showstock	5
MT	Spencer Braaten	1
MT	Sarah Perkorewicz	1
NC	Nahunta Farm	17
ND	Jim & Monica Reinfeld	4
NE	Seybold Berkshires	45
NH	Lucy Akerstrom	1
NH	Stephen Akerstrom	1
NM	Cody Hartsfield	1
NM	Taylor Vanlandingham	1
NV	Lovelace Family Farm	1
NY	Francine Gray	5
OH	Wippel Family Berks	133
OK	Winter Livestock	12
OK	Malia &/or Cheyla Ward	12
OR	Cara Jansen	8
PA	Rattlesnake Mtn Farm	32
SC	James D "Jimmy" Trotter	4
SD	Petrik Farms	29
TN	Travis L Loope	9
TX	Charles Real	30
UT	Scott W. Larsen	3
VA	John M Patterson	18
WI	UW-Platteville Farms	24
WV	Mike & Judy Secrist	3

TOP 5 STATES FOR RECORDINGS

1. Illinois	1,167
2. Iowa	816
3. Indiana	654
4. Ohio	488
5. Texas	377

Important Voting Information

1. Meeting booklets can be found online at americanberkshire.com
2. There are four ways members can vote:
 - a. You may use the enclosed ballot to mark your vote submitted by mail or fax.
 - b. You can vote online on our website at www.americanberkshire.com/annual-meeting
 - We have received multiple submissions under the same name and herd mark in the past. We will only accept 1 ballot per herd mark and if multiple submissions are received under the same herd mark, the most recent submission before the deadline will be counted.
 - c. You may assign your voting privilege to any member attending the membership meeting by completing the enclosed proxy form. If you use this option, the proxy form must be signed and notarized.
 - d. You can vote in person.
3. The ABA office staff will have 100% control of all ballots submitted by mail, by fax or electronically. If you are mailing or faxing a ballot and/or proxy, please include the slip of paper with your breeder number and signature.

Please send all ballots to:

American Berkshire Association
2637 Yeager Road
West Lafayette, IN 47906
Fax: 765-497-2959

4. You are eligible to vote if:
 - a. You have paid your year 2025 Annual Membership Maintenance Fee of \$75,
 - b. have recorded two (2) litters since June 14, 2024,
 - c. and if all your accounts are current (not past 120 days).

* If you are unsure if you are eligible to vote, please contact the ABA office. *

5. Voting will open May 1st, 2025, and close on the following date:
 - a. Mailed in ballots must be in the American Berkshire Association office by Monday, June 23rd, 2025. If mailing proxies and ballots, please allow 5-7 days to reach West Lafayette, IN.
 - c. Faxed ballots are due to the American Berkshire Association by 4:00 p.m. EDT on Wednesday, June 25th, 2025.
 - d. Electronic ballots must be submitted by Wednesday, June 25th, 2025, at 11:59 p.m.

If you have any questions, please call the ABA office.

No carry-in ballots or proxies will be accepted at the conference or the Annual Membership Meeting.

Constitution and By-Law Changes

By-laws ARTICLE XIX - Markings and Identification Requirements, Section 4

Current language:

Disqualification for Registration of Breeding animals. The presence of one or more of the following are disqualifications for registration: a) less than 6 functional teats on each side, b) the presence of one or more swirls on upper half of the body, c) total blindness, d) rectal or uterine prolapse, e) hermaphroditism, f) atresia ani; g) cryptorchidism or monorchidism; h) scrotal and/or umbilical hernia, and i) ear carriage that “breaks” to the point in which ears are continually directed in a downward angle.

New language, will rewrite the sentence to read:

Disqualification for Registration of Breeding animals. The presence of one or more of the following are disqualifications for registration: a) less than 6 functional teats on each side, b) total blindness, c) rectal or uterine prolapse, d) hermaphroditism, e) atresia ani; f) cryptorchidism or monorchidism; g) scrotal and/or umbilical hernia, and h) ear carriage that “breaks” to the point in which ears are continually directed in a downward angle.

By-laws ARTICLE I -Board of Directors, Section 2

Current language:

Section 2. Nominations of candidates – the President of the Board of Directors will appoint a nominating committee of three (3) members only one (1) of whom may be a Director. The committee shall nominate no less than five (5) and no more than seven (7) members to fill the three (3) vacancies.

New language, will rewrite the sentence to read:

Section 2. Nominations of candidates – the President of the Board of Directors will appoint a nominating committee of three (3) members only one (1) of whom may be a Director. All nominating committee members must be voting eligible ABA members in good standings. The committee shall nominate no less than five (5) and no more than seven (7) members to fill the three (3) vacancies.

By-laws ARTICLE I -Board of Directors, Section 3

Current language:

Section 3. Election Procedure – Directors shall be elected by membership vote at the Annual meeting. Members may vote in person; electronically through a secured electronic voting system approved by the ABA, by proxy, or by mail ballot, which must be sealed and received at the American Berkshire Office at least three (3) days prior to the Annual meeting. Ballots will be mailed to all active members not less than twenty-five (25) days prior to the due date. Members may vote for the nominated candidates or write-in any active member’s name; if the person is contacted and is sincere in his/her desire to serve. The ballots will be opened and reviewed by the credentials committee, and counted by the tellers, appointed by the President for that annual meeting. The three (3) candidates, receiving the most votes will be elected each year and serve a three (3) year term.

New language, will rewrite the sentence to read:

Section 3. Election Procedure – Directors shall be elected by membership vote at the Annual meeting. Members may vote in person; electronically through a secured electronic voting system approved by the ABA, by proxy, or by mail ballot, which must be sealed and received at the American Berkshire Office at least three (3) days prior to the Annual meeting. Members may request postal delivery of ballots to their registered address, facilitating remote participation in the voting process. Alternatively, downloadable forms are available on the ABA website for printing. Members may vote for the nominated candidates or write-in any active member’s name; if the person is contacted and is sincere in his/her desire to serve. The ballots will be opened and reviewed by the credentials committee, and counted by the tellers, appointed by the President for that annual meeting. The three (3) candidates, receiving the most votes will be elected each year and serve a three (3) year term.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINEE

Tyler Hough

Mount Airy, Maryland

What is the best time and method to reach you with questions about your candidacy?

I am available most of the time, the best time would be between 11am-5pm any day of the week. The best method would be on my cell phone, 443-878-4045.

Background and Personal Info:

I was born and raised in Mount Airy, MD on my family's farm. I am the 4th generation to be involved in the family operation. At Woodcamp Farm we have a 25-cow herd consisting primarily of shorthorns, and operate Hough Family Showpigs. Our showpig operation houses 50 sows and emphasizes a focus on purebred genetics. Last year we sold over 200 showpigs to 7 different states. I am a 2019 graduate of Trine University in Angola, IN where I was able to earn a BSBA in Marketing. After graduation I returned home to Mount Airy, where I now reside with my wife Becca and daughter Caroline. Professionally I am the Director of Government Relations for Maryland Farm Bureau. I am still actively involved in Maryland and Howard County 4-H as a volunteer. As an active volunteer I am in my 11th year as the Coach for the Howard County Livestock Judging and 3rd year as one of the Coaches for the Maryland State 4-H Livestock Judging teams.

How many Berkshire litters did you record last year?

7 litters

How many years have you been raising Berkshires?

We purchased our first Berkshire gilt from Dave Holloway in 2012. The next year in 2013 we had our first Berkshire litter born on our farm, and we have grown our Berkshire sow herd since.

In what ways are you actively involved in the Berkshire breed (local, state, national level)?

We are fortunate to host the Pandemonium in Timonium show at the

Maryland State Fair the past two years. Both years we have exhibited at the show and supported in as many ways as we could. For many years we attended the Summer Type Conference in Springfield before the Summer Type Conference moved to Louisville. During our years of attending the Summer Type Conference, we have also attended the Berkshire Annual meeting including assisting with the election and serving as a clerk.

Give a brief narrative of what motivates you to be an ABA Board member and your goals for the board:

The Berkshire breed has many great breeders and advocates from the East Coast, and I am motivated to continue my path as an advocate of the breed by being an ABA board member. On the East Coast we may not have the breeders with the large sow herds and litter registrations that we see in other parts of the country, but we have many that truly care about the breed and strive to improve the breed. I hope as an ABA Board Member I plan to represent not only those on the East Coast but also provide input as a smaller scale operation. One of the main goals for the board would center around the ABA shows in my home state of Maryland. I believe that there is an opportunity to further grow involvement in these shows and to potentially increase membership and exposure.

As a member-driven organization, how do you envision increasing member opportunities, in addition to increasing member involvement in current ABA programs?

To increase member opportunities and involvement in the American Berkshire Association (ABA), a multifaceted

approach is essential. Expanding educational programs and workshops on breeding, genetics, nutrition, and farm management can provide valuable knowledge to Berkshire producers. Additionally, developing youth-focused initiatives and utilizing opportunities through the Foundation will help engage the next generation in Berkshire farming. Market development assistance, including guidance on direct-to-consumer sales, export opportunities, and branding strategies, can further support members in expanding their businesses. Encouraging research and innovation through collaborations with universities and agricultural experts will also drive advancements in breeding and sustainability practices. To enhance participation in current ABA programs, fostering greater networking opportunities through regional and virtual events will help members connect and share industry insights. Recognizing outstanding breeders and farms through awards and social media spotlights can boost engagement and showcase excellence within the community.

If someone new asked you why they should raise Berkshires, how would you respond?

The response first and foremost is Yes, you should raise Berkshires! The Berkshire breed is so diverse and offers an opportunity to anyone no matter what your focus is. If your focus is on the showpig side, Berkshires are at the top of the list for quality and competitiveness in the ring. Not only does the breed have multiple highly successful bloodlines to maintain genetic diversification but it offers reliability in the farrowing and mothering abilities of the sows. If your

focus is on the commercial side of the hog world, there is no better option than Berkshires for meat production and carcass quality. The Berkshire breed is proven for carcass quality and proves it every year with the ABA Annual Progeny Test.

What do you think is the biggest challenge the Berkshire breed faces and how do we navigate that challenge?

One of the biggest challenges the Berkshire breed faces is maintaining and expanding its market while preserving the breed's unique characteristics. Berkshire pork is highly prized for its superior marbling, tenderness, and flavor, but it competes with larger commercial pork operations that focus on mass production and cost efficiency. To overcome these challenges, education and marketing are key. Producers must emphasize the premium quality and unique attributes of Berkshire pork, targeting high-end restaurants, specialty meat markets, and direct-to-consumer sales. Branding and certification programs, such as ensuring pork is labeled as 100% pure Berkshire, can help distinguish it from standard pork products. Strengthening genetic diversity through responsible breeding programs ensures the breed remains healthy and productive. Collaborating with organizations, chefs, and retailers to promote Berkshire pork can also expand

its reach. By leveraging consumer demand for high-quality, locally sourced, and raised meat, the Berkshire breed can continue to thrive despite these challenges.

What previous leadership experience do you have (church board, school board, pork producers, etc), and how will those experiences make you a good board member?

I have been involved in multiple boards and organizations throughout my 4-H career and currently in my professional career. I am a board member for the Maryland Pork Producers Association, a member of the Howard County 4-H Extension Advisory Commission, and the Maryland Farm Bureau representative on several boards and councils. I have been able to see membership organizations from various angles both as staff and as a volunteer member. I believe this perspective gives me a unique view and allows me to see challenges in multiple ways. My experiences have allowed me to interact with a variety of personalities and leadership styles, all while understanding that the goal remains the same.

Why should ABA members vote for you?

As a candidate for the American Berkshire Association (ABA) Board, I am committed to advancing both the commercial and showpig sides of the

Berkshire breed. My goal is to strengthen breeder opportunities, enhance youth involvement, and expand marketing efforts to ensure the long-term success of Berkshire pork producers and showpig exhibitors alike. If elected, I will work to increase visibility and value for Berkshire showpigs by advocating for more breed-specific jackpots, expanding youth programs, and ensuring strong representation at major livestock shows. Encouraging junior memberships and educational opportunities will help grow the next generation of Berkshire breeders and exhibitors, keeping our breed competitive and in high demand. Additionally, I will promote genetic advancements that enhance both the structural integrity and market appeal of Berkshire showpigs, ensuring they remain a top choice in the show ring.

Beyond the showpig industry, I am dedicated to enhancing marketing and consumer awareness of Berkshire pork, creating more profitable outlets for breeders. I also believe in improving ABA communication and member engagement, ensuring that all breeders—whether focused on commercial pork production or the show ring—have a voice in the association's future.

REP THE BRAND!

Step into the legacy of America's oldest swine registry with official ABA apparel. Whether you're ringside, barn-side, or just out and about, our gear lets you carry the pride of Berkshire excellence wherever you go.

Explore soft tees, cozy hoodies, and everyday essentials made for those who live the breed.

To shop, scan the code or visit americanberkshire.com





Lawton Kemp Jr.

Dudley, Georgia

What is the best time and method to reach you with questions about your candidacy?

Anytime 478-697-2521

Background and Personal Info:

Started raising Hampshire hogs in 1966. Presently have Berkshire, Hampshire, Yorkshire, Duroc, and Chester White sows. Approximately 55 sows of all breeds; all pure. Graduated with a degree from University of GA with a degree in Animal Science in 1977. Various livestock judging times- local, state, 4-H, FFA, College

How many Berkshire litters did you record last year?

30 litters

How many years have you been raising Berkshires?

I have been raising Berkshires since 2011.

In what ways are you actively involved in the Berkshire breed (local, state, national level)?

Register all pure Berkshire litters involved; Involved in Berkshire pork program; Helped start Berkshire breed as a recognized breed at SC State Fair; Member of ABA.

Give a brief narrative of what motivates you to be an ABA Board member and your goals for the board:

To help set policy to promote the use of purebred Berkshire genetics; To listen to member concerns and help correct any identified issues. The everyday breeder who raises commercial hogs needs a voice.

As a member-driven organization, how do you envision increasing member opportunities, in addition to increasing member involvement in current ABA programs?

Increases needed in participation in Berk Progeny Test. Importance of using Berkshire genetics for commercial producers and meet quality.

If someone new asked you why they should raise Berkshires, how would you respond?

The Berkshire breed has an important role in production practices and meat quality.

What do you think is the biggest challenge the Berkshire breed faces and how do we navigate that challenge?

The biggest challenge the Berkshire breed faces today is maintaining market relevance and competitiveness in a commodity-driven pork industry, where efficiency, cost, and lean yield often outweigh flavor and heritage quality. The Berkshire breed is on a roll and needs to continue practices that Berkshires excel in.

What previous leadership experience do you have (church board, school board, pork producers, etc), and how will those experiences make you a good board member?

Active earlier in GA Pork producers, member of Lauren's County School Board for 12 years- chairman 3 years. This helped me to communicate with breeders and the general public. I was also Sunday School director for several years at Dexter Baptist Church.

Why should ABA members vote for you?

I have experience with over 50 years of continually raising hogs.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINEE

Austin Lane

Preston, Iowa

What is the best time and method to reach you with questions about your candidacy?

By call or text, preferably after 4:30pm

Background and Personal Info:

How many Berkshire litters did you record last year?

Around 70-75

How many years have you been raising Berkshires?

18 years

In what ways are you actively involved in the Berkshire breed (local, state, national level)?

I currently serve as an ABA Board of Directors member, show and sell Berkshire at the national level, and promote Berkshires through online sales and marketing Berkshire pork.

Give a brief narrative of what motivates you to be an ABA Board member and your goals for the board:

To me, it is about being able to help give back and support the breed and its members. I have enjoyed my current term being on the board and I think I bring a different perspective to the group. I can understand both facets of the Berkshire breed and industry which can be tough to do. There are about to be a lot of changes coming in the future within the breed and I would like to be able to be a part of the decision making and help maintain the integrity of our Berkshire breed.

As a member-driven organization, how do you envision increasing member opportunities, in addition to increasing member involvement in current ABA programs?

I think we have to continue to promote our youth and get the youth involved in our breed as much as possible. We also need to continue to think of innovative ways to make a Berkshire pedigree more

valuable for the commercial Berkshire hogman. The more we can incentivise litters being registered, the greater our breed and association can be.

If someone new asked you why they should raise Berkshires, how would you respond?

Because they're the best breed of pigs out there! They are always in the hunt at the major shows and on the flip side, they taste incredible. They are a challenge to breed and feed and that makes it even more enjoyable!

What do you think is the biggest challenge the Berkshire breed faces and how do we navigate that challenge?

The ever changing industry and the sheer pressure of losing our identity as the ABA. We have to continue to do what is right for our breed and keep the outside chatter out of the decision making. We have to become as independent as we can, while still being involved with the other breeds to keep the junior scene alive and well.

What previous leadership experience do you have (church board, school board, pork producers, etc), and how will those experiences make you a good board member?

I am currently on the ABA board and have done many different leadership things through the Pork Board. I am a young mind that is eager to make the ABA as strong and great as it has ever been!

Why should ABA members vote for you?

Vote for me because I truly care about the future of the Berkshire breed, both the show and commercial sides. There is a tremendous use for both sides and we need to embrace that. I will advocate for

the Berkshires when it comes to shows, and I will try to always vote with integrity and honesty when making decisions about the future of the ABA.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINEE

Troy Seybold

Wilcox, Nebraska

What is the best time and method to reach you with questions about your candidacy?

I would prefer a phone call, but text, email or messenger will work. Please leave a message if I do not answer I will get back to you ASAP. Time wise between 7 am to 9 pm. Phone: (308) 627-3362 email: seyboldberks@gmail

Background and Personal Info:

I am 55 married to Gina with 2 grown children Dalton and Tyla. I have lived in the Wilcox area my entire life and graduated high school there. I went to Central Community College in Hastings, NE where I got an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Biotechnology. I worked on a construction crew after High School and during college where I worked my way up to become a foreman and a crane operator building bridges.

How many Berkshire litters did you record last year?

40, I have been the largest recorder of Berkshires in Nebraska for several years.

How many years have you been raising Berkshires?

I have been around the Berkshire pigs all my life. My parents raised Berks from the 60's to the early 90's. About 15 years ago I got more involved with starting my own herd.

In what ways are you actively involved in the Berkshire breed (local, state, national level)?

I have been sending pigs to the NBS/ABA Progeny Test since 2013. I also show at the Iowa State Fair. Actively promote Berkshire meat to local consumers through direct sales.

Give a brief narrative of what motivates you to be an ABA Board member and your goals for the board:

I believe the Berkshire breed is the best breed in the industry with great opportunities in front of it. As a breed we need to keep the meat quality and performance at a high end and looking for better ways to identify superior genetics

through DNA markers and making EPD's that will help all producers' select better stock. We also need to keep the show industry growing because the youth are the future of the breed's success.

As a member-driven organization, how do you envision increasing member opportunities, in addition to increasing member involvement in current ABA programs?

To increase the member opportunities and involvement in ABA programs the members need to be better informed about what is going on. I would start with minutes of board meetings being sent to members to get them more involved with what is being discussed to improve the breed and the programs within the ABA.

If someone new asked you why they should raise Berkshires, how would you respond?

There is great opportunity in the Berkshire breed. Whether you want to raise production or show pigs you can find your own niche.

What do you think is the biggest challenge the Berkshire breed faces and how do we navigate that challenge?

I believe some of our biggest challenges have to do with making sure DNA rules and regulations going forward do not cut into a shrinking genetic base of the Berkshire breed. With this in consideration, the more pigs with data behind will make the DNA makers better to detach outliers in the Berk breed.

What previous leadership experience do you have (church board, school board, pork producers, etc), and how will those experiences make you a good board member?

I was an officer in FFA and 4-H when

in high school and being a supervisor on a construction crew for 10 years gave me the ability to learn to navigate difficult situations that needed to be resolved in a hurry.

Why should ABA members vote for you?

I have a love for the Berkshire breed. With this passion, I will make sure to do my best to improve the breed.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINEE

Ben Smith

Ames, Iowa



What is the best time and method to reach you with questions about your candidacy?

Afternoon or evenings are best, call/text 515-620-9540 or email at hoffmanberks@gmail.com

Background and Personal Info:

I graduated from Iowa State University with a B.S. degree in Animal Science and Ag Systems Technology followed by a M.S. and Ph.D. in Industrial and Ag Technology. I was initially exposed to swine through FFA in high school and have never looked back. I came to Iowa from western Colorado for college and started working for the Hoffmans at Phenotypic Acres immediately. I spent a few years working at Iowa Select Farms as a swine research and engineering associate. I had opportunities that led me back to graduate school and Phenotypic Acres. Following the completion of my doctorate I worked in a start-up company and a larger management role at Phenotypic Acres. My wife Sarah and I have been owners of Phenotypic Acres Berkshires since March 1, 2024. I currently work as a staff engineer at Iowa State University in the Digital Ag Innovation Lab, I oversee research and development related to ag sprayer nozzles, Sarah also works at Iowa State University in Agriculture and Natural Resource Extension and Outreach. We also raise purebred Limousin and Limflex cattle seed stock with Sarah's parents and are active in the Iowa Limousin Association.

How many Berkshire litters did you record last year?

Last year we registered 80 litters.

How many years have you been raising Berkshires?

I have been involved in raising Berkshires for about 10 years. My first Berkshire experience came from a great mentor through FFA in Colorado. I started working at Phenotypic Acres as a college student performing basic chores.

I later returned to the farm to assist with managing the swine operation and eventually transitioning into ownership of the business. Since transitioning our vision has been to sustain the Berkshire herd based on longtime data collection methods while growing all facets of our business. We raise Berkshire breeding stock and are expanding our direct meat sales and have launched a local meat in food pantry program. We work with local business partners to donate meat we raise to local food pantries. In our first year of ownership, we donated over 500 pounds and with this program hope to increase our donations exponentially.

In what ways are you actively involved in the Berkshire breed (local, state, national level)?

I am very active in the promotion of the Berkshire breed and the Registered Berkshire Pork program locally and across the country. I have been fortunate to sell breeding stock to producers across the country. I have been serving on the ABA Breed Improvement Committee for 2 years, assisting with the progeny test and visionary ways of improvement. Phenotypic Acres has been actively involved in the ABA Progeny Test. All ten of our sire lines have been tested and we continue to plan to test each line in the coming years.

Give a brief narrative of what motivates you to be an ABA Board member and your goals for the board:

I am very passionate about the Berkshire breed and its continuous improvement. I want to play a role in the Berkshire breed, continuing to grow both in numbers and popularity among consumers. I have a few specific goals that motivate me to serve

on the ABA board. They are as follows:

1) sustain and expand the ABA Progeny test as it provides the Berkshire breed data provides quantification of breed characteristics in a uniform environment which no other purebred breed has done, 2) educate consumers about Berkshire meat eating quality, 3) promote the ABA and the value of registered Berkshires in both show and production settings, 4) continue research efforts on the integrity of the Berkshire breed and tools for genetic improvement.

As a member-driven organization, how do you envision increasing member opportunities, in addition to increasing member involvement in current ABA programs?

The ABA is a diverse member organization with a range of member's goals including, production, direct consumer sales, shows, and youth focused events. In this context all members must be heard. I understand that all ABA members play a vital role in the continued success of the breed and by intentional communication and teamwork the board can address the needs of each member, so the Berkshire breed continues to grow and expand.

If someone new asked you why they should raise Berkshires, how would you respond?

My response when someone asks this is "Why not raise Berkshire pigs?" The Berkshire breed offers the best meat eating quality, the ability to thrive in so many environments, so why not raise a breed of pigs that offers you so many advantages when starting out? The Berkshire breed can also compete in the show ring for youth starting their exposure to the industry. The Berkshire breed has so many

unique advantages for someone starting out that no other breed can compare to. These advantages include world renown meat eating quality, hardiness, and performance.

What do you think is the biggest challenge the Berkshire breed faces and how do we navigate that challenge?

The biggest challenge I see the Berkshire breed facing is the value of a registered Berkshire pig. As an association we must work to continue to develop value in registering Berkshire pigs so that it promotes members registering their litters. The ABA needs to listen to members that sell direct to consumers and through shows to develop value that addresses each members need. As a breed we have had a strong history of evaluating Berkshire genetics and we must continue this while providing more value to our pedigree whether it is more data or programming that comes with registering Berkshires.

What previous leadership experience do you have (church board, school board, pork producers, etc), and how will those experiences make you a good board member?

I have served in various leadership roles including the Story County Extension Council and on committees within the American Society of Ag and Biological Engineers (ASABE). I have led committees while serving on the Extension Council including Personnel and Building Committee and navigated through various challenges to pursue a stronger County Extension service. In my roles in ASABE I serve on guiding committees to develop new testing standards for adoption across multiple industries and government agencies. These experiences have taught me the value of actively listening to diverse views as there are many ways to address issues, and the importance of building relationships between groups with common goals in mind. These experiences have also shown

me the importance of considering all constituents, no matter what organization I represent the optimal solutions must address all their needs.

Why should ABA members vote for you?

I am very passionate about the Berkshire breed and the multitude of opportunities the breed has to offer to its members and potential new members. I will actively listen to all members and make decisions that help the Berkshire breed move forward. I want to see ABA continue to grow and succeed in seeing many more milestones accomplished in the future. I would be humbled and honored to have your vote to represent you on the ABA board of Directors!

ABA ONLINE BILL PAY

With ABA's online bill pay, you can keep your account current from anywhere at anytime.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL bar displaying "ONLINE BILL PAY · SIRE DIRECTORY · BREEDER DIRECTORY · REGISTERED BERKSHIRE PORK". The page header features the American Berkshire Association logo and a navigation menu with links: ABOUT, MEMBER SERVICES, PRODUCTION, EVENTS, MEDIA, and COMMUNITY. The main content area is titled "Online Bill Pay" with a sub-header "Please read all instructions before continuing." Below this, a numbered instruction states: "1. Complete a separate payment form for each breeder number and account number. All fields on the form must be completed before payment will be processed. Breeder numbers are located on customer statements." A form field labeled "Breeder Number" contains the value "80004890".

Scan the code or visit
americanberkshire.com
to get started.

