

# AMERICAN BERKSHIRE ASSOCIATION

Winimac, IN 46996

2026 ABA Progeny Test Delivery Date is Friday, September 18, 2026

*The Progeny Test was originally developed as a tool for swine breeders to objectively identify genetically superior purebred sires in each breed using thorough and unbiased testing and evaluation. Many of the traits analyzed are generally not available or are cost-prohibitive outside of a forum such as the Progeny Test. The ABA progeny test is designed after the Hormel NBS Progeny Test so that Berkshire breeders can continue building upon the meat quality EPD database that we have assembled over the last 34 years (1991 to 2025).*

## General Information

1. Pigs entered in the 2026 American Berkshire Association Progeny Test must be received at the SDSU SE Research Farm near Beresford, SD on Friday, September 18 (please note that this date is subject to change).
  - a. Test site address:  
SDSU SE Research Farm  
29974 University Rd  
Beresford, SD 57004
  - b. Test coordinators will assist in coordinating trucking arrangements.
2. All pigs accepted to the test will remain the property of the entrant throughout the course of the test.
3. Disposition of all delivered animals will be monitored and updates provided to entrants as warranted.
4. Poor performing and at-risk animals will be treated according to industry best-practices under veterinary supervision. Pigs showing unsatisfactory response to treatment will be euthanized or removed from the test.
5. Each sire group will be started "on-test" when the sire group average weight is approximately 90 pounds. An adjustment time of at least 5 days (or more) will be allotted prior to placing each sire group "on-test".
6. Pigs will be weighed at mid-test (approximately 55-65 days after being placed "on-test") and a progress report will be provided to entrants once all pens have reached the mid-test checkpoint.
7. Pigs will be scored for soundness prior to being taken "off-test". Two independent persons will evaluate structure & movement (soundness) on a 1 to 5 scale for front and rear leg structure/movement. Individual pigs that have an overall soundness score of less than 1.5 (average of front and back leg scores) will be disqualified.
8. Pigs weighing 220 pounds or more will be slaughtered and evaluated. Pigs must weigh 220 pounds by the last marketing date to be "qualified". Final data will be adjusted to a common end-weight of 290 lbs. and will account for differences in sex and "on-test"/"off-test" weight.
9. Sire groups will be evaluated for the following traits: ADG; 10<sup>th</sup> rib fat; LEA; loin pH, Minolta Y (color), Instron (WBSF) (mechanical) Tenderness, percent Intramuscular Fat (marbling); visual loin color, firmness, marbling; percent Cook Loss; and Sensory Panel juiciness and tenderness.
10. These traits will be grouped into 2 "categories": Lean Gain on Test (LGOT) and Consumer Acceptance (CA). The relative weight of each category of traits that determines awards are: 1) **Performance Index** (formerly known as ***SUPER SIRE™***) is 90% weighted to LGOT characteristics and 10% to CA characteristics; and 2) **Prime Pork Index** (formally known as ***PORQUE Award™***) is 10% weighted to LGOT characteristics and 90% to CA characteristics.
11. The American Berkshire Association will publish and report sire summaries for Berkshire pens.
  - a. The top 25% indexing Berkshire sires in each category will be recognized with Performance awards and/or Prime Pork awards.

- b. Data will be reported by sire group, and the sire summaries will be distributed to the public via the ABA website.
- c. Individual pig data will be furnished to the participant who entered the pen on test.
- d. Any sire pens not meeting the minimum criteria will not be eligible for awards. Data on ineligible sires will be published in an appendix to the sire summary with adjusted means for each trait, but indexes will not be calculated and there will be a foot note on why each pen was ineligible. Owners of each pen will receive adjusted individual pig data, and their data will be used in the EPD analysis for growth, carcass, and meat quality traits. Each sire group must meet these standards to qualify:
  - i. The eight pigs must originate from three litters with no more than three pigs from a given litter, six individuals of the group must complete the testing period, having achieved a marketable off-test weight AND have a qualifying overall average soundness score of 1.5.
- e. Sire summaries and EPD generation will be performed by Dr. Juan Steibel and Dr. Ben Smith from Iowa State University.

### Requirements

- 12. A \$400 entry fee is required for each sire group at the time of entry. This will cover the testing costs. The ABA will cover any additional testing expenses beyond the \$400 entry fee. If any profits remain after all of the testing costs are paid, the profits will be equally divided amongst the test pens and will be shared back with the participating producers. \*Please note that test pens will not be reserved without the \$400 payment.
- 13. All entrants in the Progeny Test must have **current PQA+** certification. Entries submitted without proper documentation of current certification will not be accepted!
- 14. All entrants in the Progeny Test must have a **Premise ID number** of the location(s) that swine originate from.
  - a. This must be recorded on the health certificates accompanying pigs on delivery day.
  - b. Pigs originating from 2 or more separate farms with unique Premise IDs should be detailed separately on the health certificate.
- 15. We strongly encourage you to have your premises (farm) assessed in accordance with the National Pork Board's Site Assessment guide and registered to gain PQA PLUS site status.
- 16. All animals delivered must meet Category A labeling standards (U.S. born, U.S. raised) for Country of Origin. Participants may be asked to complete an affidavit certifying animals delivered to the testing station are Category A designation.
- 17. Prop 12 certification is not mandatory but would be beneficial if the breeder already has it completed.
- 18. Each sire group should be of uniform weight.
  - a. Recommend that pigs be born between June 15 through July 30.
  - b. (Ideal breeding window is February 21 to April 7)
  - c. An **average delivery weight of 40-65 pounds** is STRONGLY recommended.
  - d. Delivery weight range: above 30 lbs. and less than 90 lbs.
- 19. Only ABA registered Berkshire sires are allowed to be tested.
  - a. Each group of eight pigs will be sired by a single sire.
  - b. This group of pigs must represent no less than three litters and may be any combination of barrows and gilts. No more than three pigs may come from a single litter.
  - c. If the test is short on pens, breeders will have the option of entering pens out of a single Berkshire sire that does not meet the criteria above (minimum of three litters, no more than three pigs from a litter). These pens will be ineligible for awards as outlined in section 11d above.
  - d. The pigs do not have to come from the same breeder's operation.
  - e. Breed officials will be responsible for determining which sire lines are represented in the test. Due to space limitations and the desire for the broadest possible genetic base, no more than two groups will be allowed per sire. Limited space may also restrict the total number of entries accepted from one exhibitor for this test. Only one group per sire will be allowed if entries exceed capacity.

- f. Each individual pig delivered must be accompanied by a valid and documented three-generation ABA pedigree that establishes and documents “pure line” status. Pedigrees must be received by the breed association office by November 15, 2026 to qualify for awards.

20. Health requirements:

- a. Entries delivered to the test station must be castrated and free of lice and mange. Tail docking is encouraged, but not required.
- b. All participants need to provide the contact information for their herd veterinarian so SDSU can have a vet to vet consultation about your herd’s health by August 30. This consultation will help SDSU to determine what antibiotics should be used at the start of the test to prevent common health challenges seen in your herds.
- c. All entries are required to have a PRRS PCR negative test result within 3 weeks of delivery date. Producers are allowed to pool blood samples or use rope saliva samples that represent all of the test pigs and then test one pooled sample per farm.
- d. All pigs must have a Health Certificate signed by an accredited veterinarian. Pigs must be individually identified with ear notches and standard plastic swine ear tags (**numbers need to be easy to read when standing directly behind the pig**). Both forms of ID should be recorded on the health certificate. Pigs with metal ear tags will not be accepted.
- e. **It is required that all pigs be treated for blood feeding/external/internal parasites (e.g. ivermectin) AND be vaccinated for PCVAD/PCV2, Erysipelas, and Mycoplasma pneumonia at least 2 weeks prior to arrival at the test station.** Health certificate must include statement noting treatment and vaccination status.
- f. Test veterinarian has the discretion to refuse entry to any animal that displays any clinical sign(s) suggesting illness that may pose a risk to the other animals in the trial. Animals exhibiting the following will not be accepted:
  - i. Coughing, fever, scours, vomiting, external parasites, or lameness.
  - ii. Animals with open wounds, abscesses, and umbilical or scrotal hernias.
- g. All hogs must originate from a herd that has shown no clinical signs of PEDv for 35 days prior to delivery.
- h. All federal regulations regarding interstate shipment of feeder pigs, as well as all South Dakota regulations regarding the import of feeder pigs from other states must be met. Meeting these requirements is the responsibility of the owner.
- i. After all test pigs have been delivered to the SE Research Farm, the staff at SDSU will vaccinate each pig for ileitis.

21. DNA samples/HD50K testing

- a. Each test pig will have DNA extracted using a TSU at the testing facility to be used for HD50K genomic testing.
- b. (It is recommended that each participant collect DNA from each pig using TSU’s and bring the TSU’s along with the pigs at delivery to the test site.)

**\*\*\*Entries due by August 28, 2026\*\*\***

**\*\* All sires must be tested negative for stress and Napole.\*\***

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Questions regarding the ABA Progeny Test in general should be directed to:

**Dr. Ben Smith**

ABA Board Member

ABA Breed Improvement Committee, Co-Chair

515.620.9540

[hoffmanberks@gmail.com](mailto:hoffmanberks@gmail.com)

**Lane Bennett**

ABA Board Member

ABA Breed Improvement Committee, Co-Chair

770.881.6138

[Lrbennett83@gmail.com](mailto:Lrbennett83@gmail.com)

**Rose Criswell**

ABA Director of Operations

574-200-0667

[rose@americanberkshire.com](mailto:rose@americanberkshire.com)

Questions regarding swine health or veterinary-related items should be directed to:

**SDSU**

SE Research Farm

Brad Rops

605.659.4505

[Bradley.Rops@sdstate.edu](mailto:Bradley.Rops@sdstate.edu)

# AMERICAN BERKSHIRE ASSOCIATION

PO Box 122 Winamac, IN 46996

2026 ABA Progeny Test delivery is Friday, September 18, 2026

**\*\*\*Entries due by August 28, 2026\*\*\***

[Please print]

**ENTRY NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTACT NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP CODE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TELEPHONE NUMBER(S):** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-MAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**HERD VETERINARIAN:** \_\_\_\_\_

**HERD VETERINARIAN TELEPHONE NUMBER(S):** \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the following information on the sire groups you are nominating for testing:

**SIRE'S (complete) NAME**

**SIRE'S REGISTRATION NUMBER**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

If space allows I am interested in bringing additional pens:      YES    |    NO

## 2026 ABA Progeny Test Entry Checklist:

- Above information fully completed and legible?
- Included \$400 per group entry fee payable to American Berkshire Association?
- Included a copy of your up-to-date PQA+ certification?
- Have a Premises ID for use on health certificate during delivery?
- Prop 12 certification number (if available).
- Proceed by emailing information to [office@americanberkshire.com](mailto:office@americanberkshire.com) or mailing this completed form to:

American Berkshire Association  
PO Box 122  
Winamac, IN 46996