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Featured Story

“By matching the nutrition to the genetics of the pig, you maximize their genetic potential, and that’s how you get winning results.”

THIS QUARTER’S



show tips:

Receiving Show Pigs
Dr. Kevin Burgoon



Product Spotlight

Featured Story | In Indiana, Competing is a Family Affair.



As you look at the roster of championship pigs in Indiana these days, one name crops up again and again—Bennington. Actually, four Bennington names show up in state-wide competition: Cameron, Bryce, Blake and Kayla. But the dynasty started with dad, Kent.

Kent’s interest in pigs actually began with 4-H and FFA in high school. He then went on to college, participating in livestock judging teams and eventually deciding to make a career of it. Today, Kent runs Kilmer Swine Farms, a 250-sow operation in Monticello, Indiana owned by Dave and Jim Kilmer.

Kilmer Farms produces pigs to show and also sells pigs throughout the United States. The Bennington children are enthusiastically following in their father’s footsteps. [> click to read more!](#)

Receiving Show Pigs | Dr. Kevin Burgoon, Honor/Show Chow Nutritionist

Getting young show pigs over the stress caused during the buying/receiving process can be a challenge, but there are ways to minimize potential problems.

- **Vaccination.** At the time of purchase, ask the breeder if the pigs have been vaccinated, how many times, and against what diseases. If the pigs have not been vaccinated, do so, and continue to medicate the pigs for a few weeks until the vaccinations are fully effective. Medication should be delivered in the form of drinking water and medicated feed. The use of electrolytes during this time is also advisable.
- **Water medication.** A sick pig may not consume enough medicated feed to get an adequate dosage. Consult with your veterinarian to determine the appropriate medication to treat the pathogen in question and the best way to administer it. Water medication is not as easy as it sounds. If you have sufficient facilities and equipment to proportion water-soluble medication, that is the preferred method. However, a plastic 55-gallon barrel with a nipple attached is also a viable method. Remember, if a pig is too sick to eat or drink, it will need to be treated with injectable medication as recommended by your veterinarian.
- **Isolation.** An effective method of reducing the spread of disease is the isolation of incoming pigs. Consider keeping them separated from your other pigs for 14 to 21 days after arrival (even longer in a commercial operation). If symptoms appear, the pigs should be isolated for an additional 30 days until the disease has been treated and the pigs have recovered. If possible, locate the isolation facilities at least 100 yards away and downwind from where “old” or current pigs are being housed. Boots, shoes and clothes should be changed when going between the isolation and current pens. Work with the current pens first before working in the isolation pens. Once the isolation period is over, pigs can be co-mingled. Watch them closely for the next 14 to 21 days. Continue to use medicated water and feed during this time. This will help limit the sick days and possible loss of pigs due to disease and stress.
- **Compatibility.** Some people acquire pigs from multiple sources and place them in the same pen with pigs raised at home. When doing this, it’s important to be aware of some common, potential pitfalls. Some of the pigs may have been on medicated pig starters using carbadox, CSP, ASP, CTC and Denagard®, or other medications that control pathogens. When these pigs are suddenly placed on a show pig feed containing a different antibiotic you may occasionally observe what appear to be symptoms of disease, i.e., coughing, scouring and/or anorexia (off feed). In reality, it has nothing to do with the nutritional content of the feed, but everything to do with the change in medication.



- **Medicated feed.** There are many choices, and it’s always a good idea to consult with your veterinarian. However, feeds that contain tylosin, carbadox, lincomycin, or double medicated such as CTC and tiamulin (Denagard®), or a triple combination such as CTC, penicillin and sulfathiazole, or sulfamethazine are effective in some common situations. A feed containing one of these regimens of antibiotics should be fed for the initial 14 days. Tylosin phosphate (Tylan®) is common in show pig feeds. While effective against Illieitis, tylosin is not absorbed from the small intestine and is not effective against respiratory diseases.

If you have a history of battling respiratory pathogens or intestinal diseases that do not respond to feed grade tylosin, look for a feed medication that is effective against the disease in question. Honor® Show Chow® Showpig Grower L200 contains lincomycin and is a feed Purina recommends to help reduce the severity of swine Mycoplasmal pneumonia.

When it comes to receiving show pigs, there is no universal solution that works for every pig, or every farm. But following these suggestions can often stack the deck in your favor.

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A Family Affair - continued

“One by one, they’ve all joined 4-H,” says Kent. “They’ve always shown a strong interest in show pigs and always loved spending time with and being responsible for their own animals.” These days, that dedication is being rewarded with a wealth of trophies and blue ribbons.

Cameron, 13, showed the North American International Grand Champion Market Hog in 2006.

Recently at the 2008 Indiana State Fair, 10-year-old Bryce showed the Champion Chester White, and his Champion Crossbred went on to take Grand Champion Barrow honors.

At the same fair, Bryce’s twin brother Blake showed the Chester White Gilt Champion.

This year the Bennington family also produced the Grand Gilt and the Reserve Grand Barrow at their county fair.

Up-and-comer Kayla, 7, has been competing since age four. She has always spent a lot of time working with and helping her brothers, but she is currently having fun raising what could very well be the next champion Bennington pig.

Of course, behind every champion is an unsung hero working behind the scenes. Kent is quick to share credit for their competitive success with his wife. “Kelly doesn’t have a lot of hands-on involvement with the pigs,” says Kent, “but she’s there for a lot of support and a lot of the organizing that goes along with top-level competition. We simply couldn’t do what we do without her.”

Kent also relies on Purina® Feeds. He uses a number of Honor Show Chow® formulas including Showpig Base, a lot of Show Pig 16, Powerfill® and Honor Show Chow® High Octane® topdresses including Champion Drive™ and Power Fuel™.



“There’s definitely a competitive advantage with the topdresses,” claims Kent. “You have a lot of flexibility within the Honor Show Chow® line—you can mix and match the topdresses with a complete feed like Show Pig 16. By matching the nutrition to the genetics of the pig, you maximize their genetic potential, and that’s how you get winning results.”

There’s another reason why Kent Bennington says he swears by Purina® Feeds. “Over the past 14 years, I’ve gotten to know the people who formulate the feeds at Purina, like Dr. Kevin Burgoon, and I have a lot of trust in what they’re doing,” says Kent. “I’m in a unique situation in that I have people buying pigs from us here at Kilmer Farms, and they’re always asking me for feed recommendations. After all the success we’ve had, I feel confident recommending Purina® Honor Show Chow® feeds.”

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