

Red Wattle Hog Association

Elections

The RWHA Board of Directors elections will be upon us soon. The RWHA has 5 positions. President, Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer, all serving 3 years with terms expiring in alternate years to allow at least 2 positions with experience to remain at all times. There are also 2 Board Member at Large positions that expire annually. This year our Vice President position will be open as well as our 2 Board Member at large positions. The members elected will officially take office on November 1, 2016. You must be a RWHA member to hold office. You must be dedicated to the preservation and proper propagation of the breed as a heritage hog and with the RWHA official breed standard descriptions, and rules. Decisions must always be based on the preservation and/or betterment of the whole rather than individual hogs, members, or groups. Courage is sometimes needed to make difficult decisions. You must be available for assistance to the membership when requested or required. Moderator of the official RWHA face book site is required. Board member meeting attendance is required and is scheduled based on members' availability. Meetings are held by Skype, and there's usually 3 to 4 meetings per year. Most communication is done thru email and phone calls. You must have the ability to negotiate and work well with others and to see the long term effect of decisions you and others make.

If you're interested in holding office you need to write a brief description on who you are, what are your goals for your own herd, what are your goals for Red Wattles as a whole, and what are your goals for the RWHA. You will need to send it to me by end of day Sept. 19, 2016. This allows time to have all submissions printed and mailed out to our membership for elections. Snail mail or email both work fine. Send to: Kathy Bottorff, 41 Jones Rd., Horse Cave, KY. 42749, or redwattles@hotmail.com.

DNA

The RWHA making your membership work for you.

The RWHA will reimburse \$30.00 each for DNA completed on one boar and one sow or gilt thru March 31, 2017. UC Davis will not direct bill the RWHA so you'll need to pay upfront first. The results are normally quick and your reimbursement check will usually be in the mail to you around 2 weeks later. Most other associations are now requiring DNA on file for registrations. The RWHA does not at this time but it may be necessary in the future in order to protect the integrity of the breed and you as a breeder.

Every member is encouraged to take advantage of this free offer. It can be a great marketing tool for you as well as helping the breed and the RWHA. If you need help with UC Davis site or getting your DNA (hairs) collected and submitted just let any board member know. We'll be happy to assist.

Membership

The RWHA membership is annual. Membership expiration is March 31-end of day-every year. Keeping your membership current assures that you are kept up to date on any happenings, changes, updates, educational materials, or alerts. Our membership forms can be found on the website by clicking on the RWHA tab. The next screen shows the forms and we also have a paypal option there if you choose to use it. Payments are made to RWHA.

All payments, charges or fees must be paid in amounts equal to U.S. currency. We welcome and are excited to have RWHA members outside the United States but in order to be fair to all our members we must also be mindful of the dollar exchange rate and additional banking charges of managing foreign currency. At this time the RWHA can-not except personal checks drawn on financial institutions outside the U.S.

Registrations and transfers go to Mountain Niche Registry in Chehalis, WA. The address is on the form. Payments are made to Mountain Niche Registry.

Scholarship program and badges

We are no longer able to produce or provide RWHA badges or patches. The RWHA began this endeavor to show our Red Wattle pride and to help fund a scholarship program for our members or immediate family. Due to low participation for badges and the scholarship, the decision was made to end the program. It may be taken up again sometime in the future as we all know further education is expensive and the RWHA is dedicated to helping our members in any way we can.

Website

All members are encouraged to use the RWHA website. Redwattleproject.org. There's lots of helpful information throughout the site, from pedigrees to COI's, to current members and contact information, newsletters, forms, rules, breed standards, our tutorial and much more. Review those older newsletters too. There's lots of good information there.

Our tutorial is our newest addition. It's there to help provide basic information and pictures to help. It's not meant to take the place of professionals or veterinary services. We hope to see it grow and to become a go-to place for assistance or to answer questions. We need your help though. Please send in your pictures and your questions. We'll do the research and publish it in the tutorial for everyone to enjoy or learn from.

New Membership form

Please go to the website and review our new membership form. We've eliminated a few unnecessary things and added a few that will help. If you have other suggestions, please let us know.

Purpose and a little history

The Red Wattle Hog Association was begun for several reasons. Most importantly it was established to keep this great hog as nature made. It helps to bring together breeders, keeping them informed and assisting when needed. It provides a resource and avenue for official pedigrees, registrations, and other information. As far as associations go, we're very young but we're also very strong.

We all know some breeds have changed drastically from what they originally were. Much of it was done thru human manipulation, breeding and genetic altering. The utmost goal in the Red Wattle Hog Association is to keep our breed a true heritage hog with all the traits and characteristics that nature provided. For the RWHA registration is key, not to down play the importance of pork products. We all know they must be eaten, enjoyed, and there must be a demand or need for the breed to survive. That demand or need is thru their pork quality, (which stands far above all others!). The goal is to protect the hog, from fads and farmyard scientists, and to increase the population with true Red Wattle Hogs.

The Livestock Conservancy description of a Heritage hogs is:

True to the genetic Breed. The breed is a true genetic breed of swine. That is, when mated together, it reproduces the breed type.

Endangered Breed. The breed is or has been endangered, as defined by The Livestock Conservancy, and appears on or has recovered from the Conservancy's Conservation Priority List in the Critical, Threatened, Watch, or Recovering categories.

Long History in U.S. The breed has an established and continuous breeding population in the United States since 1925.

Thru the years Red Wattles have gone from critically endangered to being on the watch list. This is due to wise leadership and the devotion of our members. Our population still needs to be monitored to ensure we're on the correct path. The population is measured by the amount of hogs registered. This is why it's important to report any registered hog that is no longer producing offspring. The hog may be deceased, retired, injured, or sold or given away without a registration transfer. Reporting never removes the hog from the registry but it allows the RWHA and The Livestock Conservancy to correctly monitor the current producing population. Please review your records and report any registered hog that is no longer breeding for any reason. You can contact any board member to have the current production list corrected. We need hog name and registration number. Dates and reasons would be helpful but not necessary.

We all see and hear stories of breeders that are unhappy with the litter count, the loin length, the growth rate, or whatever their reasoning is. Thru many years of research and record keeping the RWHA and The Livestock Conservancy have established the basic standards of Red Wattles. They are what they are. They probably won't give you a litter of 20 like some breeds. They're a heritage hog that grazes exceptionally well, are easy keepers, have great mothering skills, and are hardy. Heritage hogs grow slower. Red Wattle bodies have adapted thru centuries to accommodate particular litter sizes and they do it well. Those adapted bodies will only give so much loin, depending on the age of the hog. It would seem that those unhappy breeders didn't study the breed well before their choice or their goal is not preserving the breed as a true heritage hog.

If you've done research on Red Wattles you've probably seen the older stories that are out in the public. Thru research and interviews we've found some are not quite correct, no matter how romantic they may sound. We now know that Red Wattles were raised on farms and roaming the country at least more than a century than previously thought. Most owners were farmers who released their hogs to the woods and brought them back in for processing time. They were not "invented" or "found" in the 1970's. The hogs were food and to some, an additional source of income. Records were not kept. They weren't necessary. That also means there wasn't a RWHA. Many of these stories grow or are embellished to the point that there's no resemblance to the facts. They get repeated by other breeders, and groups and printed in articles in widespread magazines and publications.

In 2001 with the help of ALBC the RWHA was established and remains a strong association that has successfully helped to drastically increase the population while safeguarding the heritage qualities and traits of Red Wattles. This was accomplished by the knowledge and leadership of ALBC as well as the dedication of all Red Wattle breeders. Many newer members don't know but ALBC held and recorded our registry until mid 2012. They assisted and guided the RWHA but never interfered with decisions. The RWHA stumbled a few times but with more time and experience it's grown into a highly respectable association. Beginning early 2012 ALBC felt the RWHA was strong enough to be on our own so hard and

diligent work was begun to make that happen. As of Sept. 1, 2012 the RWHA stood on it's own, but always thankful that The Livestock Conservancy (ALBC) is available with their expertise and encouragement if needed.

Much of our history can be found on our website in the forum section.

Google Map

The google map on the RWHA website was created by Mike Ohlhausen and monitored by him. If you're a RWHA member be sure to contact him to be placed on the map. Just click on the link on the website.

Volunteer Help Needed

We'd like to establish a committee to correct and write our history as it's now known. We know that as more is discovered there could be changes. We need searches in old newspapers and library archives, processing plants, interviews with people and anything else that may help fill the gaps and tell us more about the past lives of our hogs. Soon we hope to give a condensed version and place it on the website. If you might be interested in this project please let me know.

RWHA FACEBOOK

If you haven't already discovered it, the RWHA has an official Face Book site. It's a comfortable place for our members to go to share, ask questions, give advice, brag, post pictures, and get to know other Red Wattle breeders. There're people from the novice to the very experienced and no question is ever a stupid question. If you don't know or need help, then this is where to go. We all start with a beginning and blank slate. There's no judging or put downs and it's kept family friendly. It's also kept about our hogs and anything that may affect them, both the good and the bad. You can find it by googling: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/163024997085878/>. Your Board of Directors are the moderators. It's a closed group to keep off spammers who could ruin our site but you can click there to become a member. You can just read and get to know people, or jump in on some of the conversations and let us get to know you too.

I'm very pleased to say that most of the calls or emails I receive are from people who've studied our website and are basically informed of the RWHA and our purpose, Red Wattles, the breed standards, and the rules. They are complimentary of our accomplishments and understand our purpose and why. This means we're all doing a good job of protecting, propagating, and educating. This also helps newer breeders with less experience to begin with more confidence.

The RWHA is looking for ways to give back to our members. How can we help? We welcome all your suggestions. Critics and complaints are also welcome. We can't improve what we don't know and stewing or gossip circles don't make improvements or solve problems. Is there something we can add or change to the website that will work better? The RWHA and the website are designed to change and grow as needed. The only thing that should never change is our hog. You can be assured that everything will remain anonymous unless you request it be made public.