

# Red Wattle Hog Association Newsletter

## Winter 2020/2021

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What a year this has been! COVID has seemingly altered every aspect of our lives. Its far-reaching effects have reduced capacity in the larger hog processing plants putting an additional burden on local smaller shops. This has put processing appointments a year or more away in most places. Some smaller shops cannot find help or are closed down due to employees having to work in such closely confined spaces. I know of a few that will not be reopening. When you can't get your animals to the processor, your sales stop when the inventory you have on hand is sold. If you only sell by the carcass, your sales come to a grinding halt altogether. Prices of livestock drop as people sell off animals to reduce feed costs, some sell out altogether. My heart hurts for those that struggle to balance their love for their animals and what they do, with that old "bottom line". Most of our members could be categorized as "hobby farmers" and still work full time jobs off the homestead in order to make ends meet when it is a good year. Now people are losing their jobs and still have animals to feed. While this may alter circumstances, it can also force us to alter how we react to this change in circumstances.

I know that these times have created an increased quest for knowledge of the "old ways". A search for these bits of information invariably leads to people wanting to know how to produce and process their own food. I know of people that have opened up their land to on farm processing. This means that you sell the live animal to a buyer or group of buyers and either allow them to process their own pig, or you guide them through the process yourself for a price. Not only are some farmers selling the animals but they are setting up their own classes with either themselves or a professional brought in to teach the class. This yields them the price of the animals and the cost of the class and equipment. One farmer that I found made it a series of classes that butchered rabbits, chickens, a pig and a steer. Every paying student took home their portion of the meat. They also learned about rendering lard, making soap and other homesteading projects. He hired a teacher that was well versed in their art and he was not only able to pay the teacher but to make enough money to tide him over as well. It was a win/win for both he and his students.

There are people who have talked about joining with neighbors and building their own processing sites as well. This might be a great time to get in touch with the other breeder members in your Red Wattle region. I will include a copy of the regions at the end of this newsletter. Please reach out to others in your region and see if you can brainstorm to find answers in meeting the challenges of your area members together.

I would strongly suggest that you do some research before you start any "out of the box" ideas including talking to your insurance provider and checking with your local officials about additional permits that may be needed but may be worth it to you.

We hope that you share your adventure and ideas with the rest of the membership!

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Just a reminder that your membership will need to be renewed before March 31st. You can send your membership dues of \$25 for a single membership and one vote, or \$40 for a farm/family membership and 2 votes. You will find the membership forms on the website under the RWHA tab, anyone may transfer the registration of a pig but you must be a member in good standing in order to register any pigs. The Red Wattle hog is only as strong as our membership's dedication to their preservation as a unique and distinct breed. Please consider recommending to your buyers that they become members of the association. You might want to even go so far as to pay for their first year as a "thank you" for their purchase. The more active members we have, the more we can do to further expand the marketability of our Red Wattles!

\*\*\*Please note: Your membership forms must be mailed to me at RWHA c/o Theresa Schieffelbein PO Box 275 Wykoff MN 55990. Make your checks payable to the RWHA and include them with your membership form.

If you are renewing your membership through PayPal and none of your information has changed, there is no need to send me a form as I will just renew with your information already on file. If at any time during the year, your information has changed, contact information or address, please let me know so I can make changes on the site.

Registration forms go to Doug at Mountain Niche Registry Services - RWHA 397 Deep Creek Road Chehalis WA 98532, where you will send the registration forms and the money for registrations. Your checks and money orders need to be made out to Mountain Niche Registry.

Doug runs the websites and registries of multiple associations and is very busy. He is processing the registrations and transfers as quickly as he can. Most are arriving within 8 weeks or so. PLEASE do not call or email him to find out where your papers etc. are. If you have any questions about your paperwork or anything that has to do with your registrations or transfers, you can feel free to contact any board member and we will do some checking for you.

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The Red Wattle Hog Association is happy to report that another boar has been approved for use in the AI program! General Granite #5340 will be available for semen collection. This gives another option of genetic input to members who would otherwise find it hard to find another source. Those of you who wish to check out the possibility of adding his genetics to your herd, please contact RWHA member Jim Myers at 419-629-3245 for more information.

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If you haven't had a chance to look through the tutorials on the website yet, you are missing out on a wealth of information. The tutorials were put together over the 9 years that Kathy Bottorff was secretary and the information is second to none! Our association owes her a huge debt of gratitude for all of the hard work and countless hours of research that she put into those tutorials. We are lucky to have had her. Kathy's dedication to the breed is a large part of the reason why Red Wattles are becoming more known and sought after. If you have any questions or are having problems with your herd, the tutorials that she worked so tirelessly on, are a great place to start any of your research.

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In case of emergency:

It isn't just death and taxes that are a surety. The other is the timing of an emergency. It never fails that a veterinary emergency happens at the least opportune time, generally a holiday, a weekend, the middle of the night etc. To help enhance your chances of a good outcome, it sure helps to have a few items on hand. These are a few of the most recommended items to have in your kit:

1. A medical "cheat sheet" that includes the normal vitals for every type of animal on the farm. This sheet should also have any medical conditions that each animal may have had and medications used.
2. Phone numbers of your veterinarian or other knowledgeable neighbor that you trust to help if needed. This cheat sheet should be laminated or kept in a waterproof baggie.
3. Notebook and pen or pencil
4. Vetrycin, Banixx or some similar antiseptic
5. Hydrogen peroxide
6. Gauze rolls and pads
7. Vet wrap
8. Tweezers
9. Iodine
10. Syringes of various sizes (with common needles)
11. Cornstarch or wonderdust, this keeps flies off of a superficial wound until a scab forms.
12. Neosporin
13. Q tips
14. Blue or Red Kote
15. Paper towels
16. Vaseline
17. Electrolyte powder
18. Nutra drench
19. Old towels
20. Sharp scissors
21. Flashlight and extra batteries
22. Treats, good to have if you need some cooperation
23. Rubber gloves
24. Lubricant
25. Rectal thermometer with a long string attached and an alligator clip attached to the end of it.
26. Liniment
27. Probiotic paste

Become familiar with the clinical signs of a sick pig (such as fever, off-feed, lethargy, nasal discharge, cough, "thumping" or hard time breathing, and diarrhea).

The normal temperature of a hog between 100.5F and 102.5F although this fluctuates depending on sex, age and activity of the animal as well as environmental influences such as hot, humid weather etc.

Always try to take a temperature as the animal is resting or restrained, a hog scale or crate is useful for this. Always make sure the thermometer is inserted its full length into the rectum and rests against the rectal wall. Use the alligator clip to secure the string that is attached to the thermometer to the hair of the animal as you wait for the temperature to register. If you are using a mercury thermometer, the thermometer should remain in the anus for at about 10 minutes. If using a digital thermometer, wait for the beep. For a sow, 101F degrees pre-farrowing and 103F degrees or less post-farrowing. Temperatures may rise due to milk production, tissue breakdown during farrowing, trauma to tissue or bones, or infection. An elevated temperature in a sow that has not farrowed is anything greater than 102.5 degrees Fahrenheit and for a sow that has farrowed it is anything greater than 103.5 degrees Fahrenheit.

Respiratory and heart rates:

These rates vary depending on the age of the pig. Below is a list of the rates for various ages:

Newborn 50-60 Respiratory rate (RR), 200-250 heart (HR)

Weaned pig 25-40 RR, 90-100 HR.

Growing pig 30-40RR, 80-90 HR.

Finishing pig 25-35 RR, 70-80 HR.

Adult pigs 13-18 RR, 70-80 HR.

I hear quite a few comments about people that say that there are no livestock veterinarians near them. I would like to suggest that people contact their local extension agent. If they cannot help you directly, they can offer suggestions as to where you can find help. Your state's veterinary universities might also be of assistance. Have these numbers within easy access so that you are not scrambling when you really need them.

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In the last 2 quarters, the Red Wattle Hog Association has added 43 new animals to the registry! Please help us keep the numbers current by going to the association website and checking which animals are listed for you. If you have any that have been processed or otherwise taken out of the breeding line-up, please let me know so that I can mark them as no longer active. This doesn't take them out of the herd book but will give us a more accurate count of actual breeding animals that we have in the herd book.

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Finally, if you have any comments or suggestions for the board, we are happy to hear from you and put your suggestions up for board consideration. You will find our contact information on the Red Wattle Hog Association website under the "Contact Us" tab!

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## Red Wattle Regions

The regions were chosen for their areas based on square miles. If you are closer to another region or members of another region, by all means feel free to connect with them! Within these regions you might start charter groups, host tasting or BBQ events, hold hog shows or band together to provide larger quantities of pork to consumers. The possibilities are endless!

WA, OR ID

MT, WY, ND

CA, NV, AZ

UT, CO, NM

TN, KY, WV, NC, VA

TX (a small country on its own 😊)

KS, NE, MO

MN, IA, WI, SD

IL, IN, MI, OH

FL, GA, AL, SC

If you decide to meet up, please let the association know and share your experiences!

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