



Show Pig Projects Offer Lifetime Learning Experiences For Youth, Breeder



Claims of people again want to have more solid work ethics, hands-on experience, and to understand where their food comes from.

"There is no better way for a young person to learn this than having a pig project and being responsible to care for that animal two or three times a day. There are no excuses or exceptions."

An advertiser on 580 WIBW, Mark Flory of Flory Swine Genetics at Overbrook is most emphatic about the importance of youth swine projects.

"There has been increasing interest among young people and their families in growing, fitting and showing pigs. I think we've just seen the beginning of what's to come for the show pig industry, and all it offers our society," Flory predicted.

A contagious optimism is most apparent as Flory talked about his lifelong enthusiasm for raising pigs and his part in that inspiring future.

"I got my first hogs to show before I was in 4-H. Then, everyone got more interested, and we started farrowing our own sows when I was nine. We have continued to grow our operation," related Flory, who's in partnership with his dad, Roger, and brother, Brian. Shown are Mark, Cole, Roger, Brian and Piper Flory.

"We have about 20 sows now, but we hope to have 30 sows in the next five years," Flory tabulated. Hampshire, Duroc, Yorkshire, Poland China, Chester White and crossbred sows are represented in the operation.

"Our first objective is to produce a safe, flavorful product for consumers, which is the reason we have done well with our retail meat business," Flory contended.

"Still, we produce good conformation pigs that compete successfully in the show ring," he emphasized.

Pigs have been sold at consignment sales until last year when Flory Swine Genetics hosted their first personal sale at the farm. This year's sale is Saturday, March 30.

"I try to go to most of the breed events to see firsthand what others producers have, and where the industry is headed," said Flory, who judges more than 30 hog shows annually.

"Relating to cost of pigs, Flory said, "Whether a family wants to spend a lot or a little, the important thing is the learning experience for the youth in the project.

"The young people have to ask questions and do the work themselves to get the best results," Flory summarized.

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Padre says:

"Spring fever is not just a myth. The body may experience physiological changes due to changes in diet, hormone production and temperature."