

## The Art of Salesmanship

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Do you have confidence in the seedstock you sell? Will your hogs sire and dams reproduce themselves in the areas of economic importance? Are you successful? The ultimate goal of all families is to be successful. Money and self-satisfaction seem to be the two big measures of success.

To be successful in purebred business requires abilities in three major areas: sales, management, and ability of the hogs. My personal belief is that sales and management are about 95 percent of success with a lonely five percent for quality of hogs. This priority should be reversed. Through the enthusiasm, confidence, honesty, and personal integrity of sales, hard work, and organization of management, hog people will be successful. As hogs improve, simultaneously, sales and management should improve.

My personal interest lies with measuring the profitability of the hog. The first step must be to outwardly appraise our industry. We will clearly deduce that we are paid for a 220 pound live hog. We must also classify ourselves into the segment of production we belong--seedstock producers, commercial producers, packers, or retailers

As producers of seedstock, our major goal might be the production of seedstock that will reproduce the most efficient and profitable 220 pound market hog. There are two available tools readily used--mechanical and visual.

The mechanical tool is, without question, the most factual by involving scales, probes, and ultrasonic machines as arithmetic means of evaluation. The visual method is by far the most popular and easiest, but also the most inconsistent because of human judgement. Let's study our visual tools by appraising this hog from front to back and evaluating economic value.

### HEAD

open skull	long head	big soft eye
big ear	deep jaw	wide between the eyes
wide snout	wide jaw	eyes easily visible from
big nostrils		behind

is the economic value of head selection? I don't know, you tell me.

### NECK

long	feminine	thick
lean	short	none

is the economic value of neck selection? I don't know, you tell me

## BODY CAPACITY

slab sided	expandable	deep flanked
shallow gutted	deep ribbed	big bellied
shallow flanked	wide sprung	loose flexible rib
pinched in heart	big fronted	youthful underneath

What is the economic value of body capacity selection? I don't know, you tell me.

## TOPS

long	loose spine	narrow
lean	high	grooved
level	tight	

What is the economic value of tops selection? I don't know, you tell me.

## MUSCLE

long	voluminous	round
flat	tight	without
palatable	bunchy	

What is the economic value of muscle selection? I don't know, you tell me.

## FEET AND LEGS

good cushioning	big feet	knot kneed
long pastern	angle shoulder	over shoulder
flexible hocks	busted	straight legged
even toes	cripple	in a pile

What is the economic value of feet and legs? I don't know, you tell me.

Visual appraisal is essential, but only you can decide its true value. It becomes far too easy to promote something different than the dollars and cents area of production. Would it be progressive to cull first on mechanically collected records, then visually evaluate the hog? Yes, only if the method used identifies the superior individuals.

Production and performance testing's first priority is not to sell, but to give the breeder some factual basis for selection. If your testing program does not identify the individuals that are superior in the reproductive and growth phases, I would question its value. Just to have figures doesn't get the job done.

Today, the testing for sow productivity at the 21 day weight has done a tremendous job of evaluating milk production, disposition, and underline quality. Along with that, it's essential that the reproductive evaluation contains litters/sow/year; pigs/marketed/sow/year and especially litters/sow/lifetime.

In the growth phase, it's a continuous feud. What weight should we test to? Why a weight? Beef industry does not test to 1000 pounds, but to 365 days. Is it perceivable that our industry might follow the pattern. If research findings are true, that a boar at 250 pounds is

equal to a barrow at 200 pounds on backfat thickness, due to testosterone influence, then it's essential that we test to a heavier weight or to six months of age. If we evaluate the boar on what kind of barrows he will sire, we need to remove the effects of testosterone. It is essential for us to change the market hog produced today from 1.4 inches backfat, 4.5 inches loin eye area, and 190 days to market, up to 1.0-1.1 inches backfat, 5.0 inches loin eye area, and 160-165 days of age. I question whether testing to 220 pounds will allow the boars a chance to separate themselves in terms of identifying individuals that will sire lean growth. If not, this testing procedure has no value.

Mr. Orville Sweet told me once, "We should measure livestock for value per day per age." There is no formula for this measurement, but if there was, I'm sure it would include both mechanical and visual means. No matter what method we use, it is our responsibility as leaders to use every available thought and fact in getting our seedstock to generate the most efficient and profitable 220 pound market hog.

The power of selection is only limited by management. As management improves, our limitations are removed and the honest, objective evaluation method, which uses mechanical and visual tools, becomes more valid.

Ladies and gentlemen, it's December 1, 1980. We are meeting here in the gateway to the west, St. Louis, Missouri. We are a group involved in one of the fastest growing, changing industries in the world-- the swine industry. We are meeting as leaders to determine our next step. I ask you, do you have confidence in the seedstock you sell? Will your hogs generate themselves in the areas which are most profitable? Are you successful?

It's a pleasure to get to get to speak at NSIF.