

Pig Breeds and Characteristics

Pig Breeds & Their Key Characteristics

(A quick-reference guide for students, farmers, and anyone interested in swine genetics)

1. Overview

Category	Typical Use	Notable Traits
Commercial/Market	Pork production (lean meat)	Fast growth, high feed efficiency, uniform carcass
Heritage/Traditional	Specialty meats, breeding stock, conservation	Strong foraging ability, hardiness, diverse flavors
Miniature/Pet	Companion animals, exhibition	Small size, docile temperament, distinct coat colors

2. Major Commercial Breeds

Breed	Origin	Size (adult boar)	Growth Rate	Meat Quality	Special Notes
Yorkshire (Large White)	England	600-700 lb (272-318 kg)	Very fast (120 lb at 90 days)	Lean, mild flavor	Excellent mothering; dominant in U.S. sow farms
Landrace	Denmark	550-650 lb (250-295 kg)	Fast, excellent feed conversion	Tender, well-marbled	Long, floppy ears; high prolificacy
Duroc	United States	600-800 lb (272-363 kg)	Moderate-fast	Rich, reddish meat, good intramuscular fat	Strong, good for crossbreeding
Hampshire	England	600-700 lb (272-318 kg)	Fast	Dark, firm pork with good marbling	Distinct black body with a white belt

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Berkshire	England	500?600? lb (227? 272?kg)	Moderate	Highly marbled, buttery flavor	Premium “heritage” market; prized for dry ?cured products
Pietrain	Belgium	500?600? lb (227? 272?kg)	Very fast, lean	Very low fat, high protein	Muscular; prone to stress?related meat quality issues (PSE)
Tamworth	United Kingdom	400?600? lb (180? 272?kg)	Moderate	Strong pork flavor, good fat	Often classified as heritage but also used in niche markets

3. Heritage & Specialty Breeds

Breed	Country of Origin	Distinguishing Features	Typical Uses
Mangalitsa	Hungary	Thick, curly wool?like hair; “hairy pig”	Specialty pork, high?fat products, charcuterie
Large Black	United Kingdom	Black coat, floppy ears, robust	Outdoor/forage systems; flavorful meat
Gloucestershire Old Spots	England	White spots on black coat; good mothering	Traditional cured hams
Red Wattle	United Kingdom	Red coat, prominent wattles on neck	Small?scale pork, heritage markets
KuneKune	New? Zealand	Short, stout body; docile	Small?holder farms, pet? type pork
Muensterlander	Germany	Black with white “saddle” marking	Small?scale meat production
Vietnamese Pot?Belly (Vietnamese Pot-belly pig)	Vietnam	Small, pot?bellied, black skin	Specialty pork, cultural dishes

4. Miniature & Pet Breeds

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| Breed | Adult Weight (boar