

How the Idaho Pasture Pig Registry (IPPR) came to be:

We met Shelly thru the Kunekune pigs that we both owned at the time. We loved the idea that she had to develop a faster growing meat pig that still had the same disposition and grazing ability of the Kunekune pigs.

The development of the pigs themselves took the Farris' years to complete and when Shelly let us know that they were ready to start selling them, we purchased our first breeding trio. It was 2012 and little did we know how our lives would change with the addition of Idaho Pasture Pigs (IPP) to our farm. Their disposition, growth rate, and grazing ability was everything we had been hoping for and everything Shelly had talked to us about and envisioned years earlier. As our love for the breed grew, we decided to grow our herd and added some additional lines in the spring of 2013. We had hopes of Shelly starting a Registry to keep track of all of the lines she had developed, but instead she let us know that she was getting out of pigs completely and that if we wanted to pick up the work of starting a Registry, that was up to us. We had no intention of ever starting or running a Registry and had only pictured us raising quality pork for years to come, BUT, we knew that the only hope of preserving this amazing breed that the Farris' had spent countless years and time developing was to do that exact thing. So, we purchased what we could and thru a collaborative effort with the Farris' we got the information on the start of specific lines for both the boars and the sows and started a sometimes exhausting effort to put it all together. We did it for the love of the breed and the desire to not lose the lines and everything this pig had become. Without the start of the IPPR, all of the work they had put into developing this amazing breed would have been lost and except for a few of us lucky people who already owned them, most people wouldn't know what an Idaho Pasture Pig was let alone how amazing and delicious the pork is.

The vision that the Farris' had for the Idaho Pasture Pig included developing a hearty, medium-sized pig with a good mothering ability, a good disposition, and the ability to graze well on grass and thereby produce quality pork. This vision is what the IPPR tries to uphold and what has become the breed standard for the IPP. Countless conversations and time went into getting the full vision that the Farris' saw for the IPP. The medium length of the snout with the slight upturn as well as the medium build of the pigs themselves were two of the main points both Shelly and Gary stressed. Such things as the carriage of the pigs themselves and the structural soundness of the legs, feet, chest, and hind quarters are traits that are shared with all breeds and is important when having breeding stock. The three breeds that went into the development of the Idaho Pasture Pigs are the Duroc, old Berkshire, and the Kunekune pigs, for many different reasons. Each breed brought something to the mix that was desired, such as the temperament and upturned snout of the Kunekune which was important in the grazing ability of the pigs. The Duroc added the quicker growth and longer length of the pig when compared to the Kunekune and the Berkshire added a nicely marbled meat and good mothering ability. These are just some of the reasons that each breed was chosen, but each of their attributes went into the development of the breed and had to be considered when noting a standard for the breed. Such things as the presence or lack of wattles or the color of the pig vary immensely and do not contribute to the overall conformation of the IPP.

When it came time to put all of the information into a software program we had purchased to run the Registry, we had a combination of names. Some of the line names we

carried over from the names Shelly gave us when we purchased the stock, while the rest came directly from us. Some of the lines were just noted as new boar or new sow lines and we were told to just put our own name on it. One fun example which I am sure people have wondered about over the years is the Love Pig name. When naming this line, we asked our sons for some ideas and our then young son was adamant that we use Love Pig because Dad loved pigs! Looking back, we probably should have used something simple like Love or picked a more sensible name completely, but it is unique – just like the Idaho Pasture Pig breed, so I guess it fits!

Early on we used the estimates the Farris' had provided to put together such things as the growth chart to assist new owners. We based the growth chart on the pigs from birth to adult. Years of developing the breed meant that the Farris' had many different lines of all three of the breeds as well as crosses of each breed and couldn't always feed minimal grains, but having a pig that had a good grazing ability was important to them. The mature weights of the pigs are a key factor in maintaining a medium sized pig, so that became a major part of the breed standard. The growth chart of the younger ages was based on the feeding regiment that we used as we didn't have any other crosses, Berkshires, or Durocs on our farm to feed and could feed all of our Idaho Pasture Pigs the same while having them on good grassy pastures. The growth chart is an estimate and will vary slightly based on the feeding regiment of each farm, but the mature weights of the boar and sow lines are important in upholding the medium size of the breed as it was developed to be.

Over the past few years the IPPR has undergone some important changes with the formation of an Advisory Board and an overall upgrade to the software system that it uses. The upgraded system has allowed for the online submissions of litter notifications and registrations that so many people had asked for. The entire upgrade has taken time, but is worth it in the end as everything is faster and streamlined. The final upgrade is the addition of the herd book which will be implemented in the Registered Breeders accounts this year.

After ten years of raising these amazing pigs, preserving the lines and lineages, and working relentlessly to maintain the Idaho Pasture Pig breed, the vision that the Farris' had has also become our vision. It never ceases to amaze me how often I hear "this pig is perfect" or "I hope no one ruins this breed like has happened to other breeds.". That is the goal of the Idaho Pasture Pig Registry. The mindset of some people is that bigger is better, but that isn't the case with the Idaho Pasture Pig and it is the job of the IPPR to maintain the integrity of the breed. There are always other breeds available for those that don't appreciate the quality, size, temperament, growing ability, grazing ability, and overall Idaho Pasture Pig. The Farris' developed this amazing breed of pig and it is what it is today because of the dedication, education, and love we have for this breed and the continual work of the Idaho Pasture Pig Registry.