

## Breed Standard

### The BPA Standards of Excellence

The GOS is a large breed, white in colour with a minimum of one distinct black spot. It has lop ears which will almost cover the face of a mature pig.

**Head:** Medium length.

**Nose:** Medium length and slightly dished.

**Ears:** Well set apart, dropping forward to nose, not at the sides, nor thick nor coarse, not longer than nose.

**Neck:** Medium length with jowl little pronounced.

**Shoulders:** Fine but not raised.

**Back:** Long and level; should not drop behind shoulders.

**Ribs:** Deep, well sprung.

**Loin:** Very broad.

**Sides:** Deep, presenting straight bottom line. Belly and flank, full thick. Well-filled line from ribs to hams.

**Quarters:** Long and wide with thick tail set well up.

**Hams:** Large and well filled to hocks.

**Legs:** Straight and strong.

**Skin:** Must not show coarseness or wrinkles.

**Coat:** Silky and not curly. No mane bristles. Not less than one clean decisive spot of black hair on black skin. Black should not predominate.

**Underline:** Straight with a minimum of 14 sound, evenly spaced and well-placed teats starting well forward.

### OBJECTIONS

**Ears:** Short, thick and elevated.

**Coat:** A rose disqualifies. A line of mane bristles is objectionable. Sandy colour may disqualify.

**Skin:** Serious wrinkles. Blue undertone not associated with a spot.

**Legs:** Crooked.

**Neck:** Heavy jowl objectionable.

*A rose or 'whorl' on the back of this pig where the hair is growing in different directions.*



*This gilt's tail is set well up. Some pigs' backs' slope away down to the tail, an undesirable trait.*

As well as the points raised in the Standards of Excellence, there are other things to look for. In a boar, ensure both testicles are fully in place and are firm and roughly the same size. Do **not** register runts or deformed pigs or those with hernias. Reject pigs with any genetic fault such as an extra toe.

*In the words of Anne Petch, "No pig is totally perfect, if you do find one then shoot it and stuff it as you may never find another!"*

*An example of a blind teat.*



**Gloucestershire Old Spots Pig Breeders' Club**

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## Selecting Stock for Pedigree Registration



**Helping you make the  
most of your pigs...**

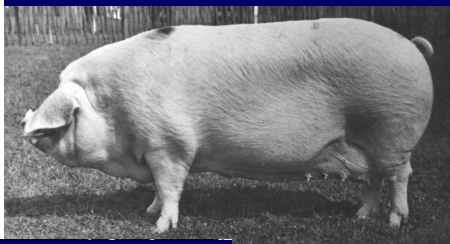
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## The Perfect GOS Pig

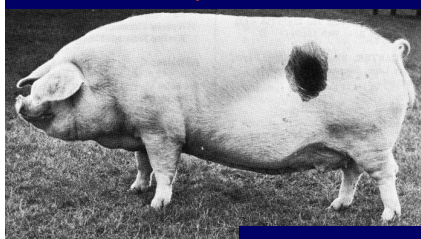
It is vital for the long-term interest of the breed that only the very best examples are kept or sold for breeding. That's not simply theory - in the 1920s the GOS was the most populous breed in the UK and unscrupulous breeders bred from unsuitable pigs to meet the demand; the resulting pigs were so poor that demand plummeted and the breed came close to extinction within a decade. Please therefore be rigorous in selection and **ONLY** register the very best examples.

Of course, everything is subjective but these are photos of pedigree GOS pigs from various periods which are generally considered to be very high quality.

**Poundbury Muriel 3**



**Bixbury Muriel 3**



**Maidenbradley General 2**



### What makes these pigs so good?

These are high quality breeding animals; long, deep bodied with strong, straight legs and near perfect underlines. The hams are well filled and the shoulders and jowls are light. They have a 'traditional' GOS head of medium length and the ears are the same length. Just compare each area with the points in the Breed Standard and you will see that these pigs are close to perfect.

### How to spot faults in your pigs

The most important aspect in both sexes, (as boars can pass a poor underline onto their daughters), is the teats. On the GOS there must be minimum of 14 evenly spaced, functioning teats. Inverted or blind teats (see over) are a fault.



*This piglet has 14 evenly spaced teats.*

The best teats are as long as possible and where the sphincter, (visually a black dot at the end of the teat), is discernible. An inverted or blind teat is one where the end of the teat is concave and the sphincter cannot be seen.



*This gilt shows the level of prominence of teat that is desirable.*

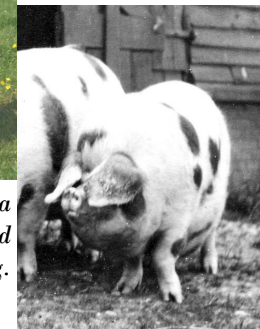
The next most important aspect is the quality of the legs. We are talking about breeding pigs; boars that may have to mate hundreds of times, sows that may have to carry 12 or more litters during a lifetime. Good strong, straight legs are essential in order to carry out these activities.



*This pig is well up on its pasterns, the hind cleats clear of the ground.*



*This pig's front legs are too splayed out when she walks.*



*An example of a very knock-kneed pig.*



*This sow's feet are splayed apart; she is down on her pasterns and the hind cleats are touching the ground.*

Many who have come recently to keeping GOS put great store in the pig's 'spottiness'. However, the Breed Standard calls for just one clearly defined spot as a minimum and that black should



*not predominate. Here are examples of pigs showing too much colour.*