



**Leaving Cert Agricultural
Science**

Free Notes

Animal Production - Pig



Animal Production
Topic: Pig Production:

Important terms:

Sow: Mature female pig

Boar: mature male pig

Bonham: baby pig (piglet)

Weaner (Bonham) one month old – no longer suckling its mother

Fattener/Finisher – young fattened pig ready for slaughter

Gilt – female pig that hasn't had her first litter.

Farrowing – term for giving birth

Dam – female parent of animal

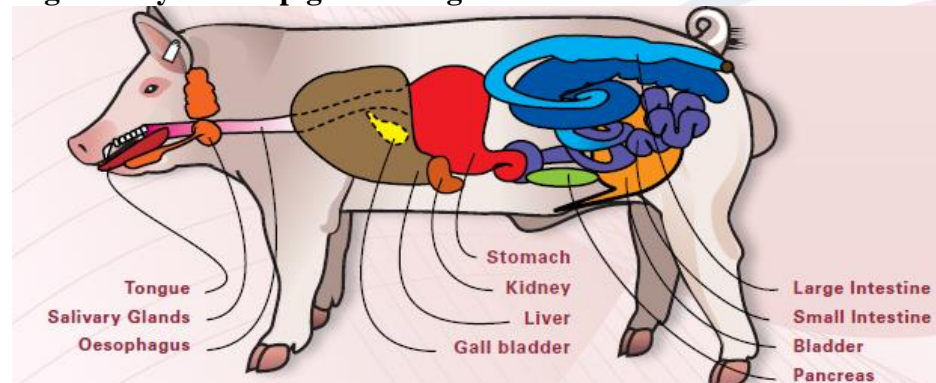
Sire – male parent

Dental Formula:

3143

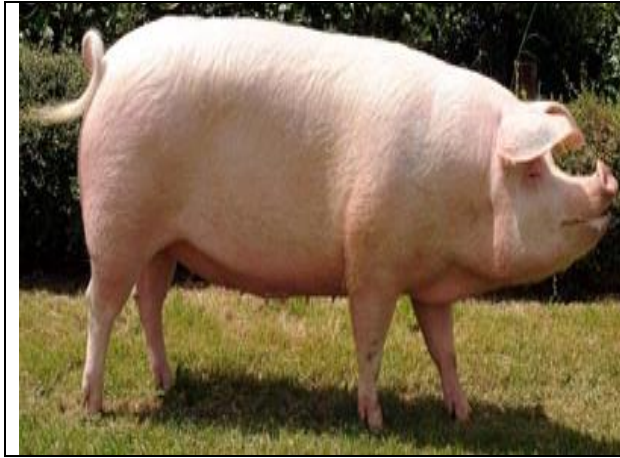
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Digestive system of pigs – Monogastric Animals

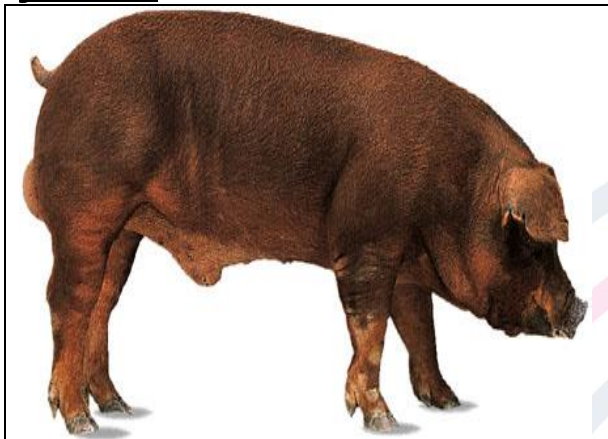


Q) Name 2 common pig breeds used in Ireland

<p>Landrace</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danish – Scandinavian breed • Small head, long lean body, small shoulders, lean large ham • Good conformation • Good prolific breed 	<p>Large white</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British breed • Upright ears, large body, large head • Good meat quality • Fast growth rate • White skin • Highly prolific
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Note: other breeds used in Ireland are the **DUROC** and **saddle – back** used in outdoor pig production



Breeding strategy:

(a) Ideal Breeding Strategy

- Pure bred sow is crossed with a pure bred boar either of Landrace or Large White – Usually the sow and boar are not the same breed.
- Half of the genes from each breed are given to the offspring who will then exhibit hybrid vigour, which is excellent combination of desirable characteristics.
- However this system isn't economically feasible since it is expensive to have both pure bred sows and boars, therefore mostly cross breeding system is used.

(b) Criss – Cross breeding

- This greatly reduces the cost of producing quality pigs with characteristics from both breeds while maintaining hybrid vigour.

Q) Outline the purpose of AI (Artificial Insemination) used in pig production

- Reduces the number of boars needed on farm
- Gives wider choice of boar genetics

- All AI boars are fully proven and top quality
- More cost effective
- Disease resistance

Birth, growth rates + puberty:

Bonham (piglet) weight: 1 – 1.5 kg at birth

Average litter size – 11

Number of sow's litter in lifetime – 7 to 9

Reach bacon slaughter – 82 – 90kg – 6 months

Mature pigs weigh – 140 – 200 kg

Oestrous Cycle – 21 days

Length of heat period – 2 – 3 days

Gestation length – 114 days (3 months, 3 weeks, 3 days)

Lactation period – 28 days

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