

THE CANADIAN SWINE INDUSTRY

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The five major breeds of the Canadian swine industry are the Yorkshire, Landrace, Duroc, Hampshire and Lacombe. Also of importance are Berkshires, Chester Whites, Large Blacks, Tamworths, Spotted Poland Chinas, British Saddlebacks and Managra.

Each breed has its own performance characteristics in

terms of litter size, growth rate and feed conversion efficiency, and yields a carcass unique in structure and composition. In most modern enterprises, some set and repeatable combination of these breeds is used to achieve maximum efficiency in live performance and to produce carcasses that best suit the market served. The objective of the purebred industry is to provide

these enterprises with high performance breeding stock that will reproduce predictably - - whether used in a single-bred or crossbreeding programme.

The Yorkshire breed is the most numerous in Canada. It is noted for its prolificacy and efficient food conversion. Good Yorkshire brood sows consistently farrow more than ten pigs per litter. In certain strains, Canadian breeders have produced a more heavily muscled animal selected on the basis of loin and ham weight.

The Landrace has been developed in Canada since its introduction since 1950. It is used extensively as a crossing breed and is noted as a bacon pig; the carcass is lean with a high proportion of ham.

The Duroc Jersey is a meat-type animal noted for its carcass characteristics and feed efficiency. It has strong feet and legs making it an excellent choice for rugged, commercial-feeding conditions. The Duroc is also noted for large litters, a characteristic retained even when used in a crossbreeding programme.

Worldwide efforts to produce lean pork have placed emphasis on the Hampshire as a crossing breed. When half-Hampshire boars are used in a final cross, there is evidence of superior carcass quality in the offspring.

The Lacombe was developed in Canada. As the breed was developed, selections from each generation were based on litter size, weaning weight, growth rate, and carcass quality. Above-average performance in growth and carcass of the parents, litter mates or the individual animal is a requirement for registration of Lacombe pigs. Rapid growth rate and high lean content characterize the progeny for crossing Lacombe with other breeds. ■

