

Mitchell Grossen - Mitch's Hog Heaven

Business Phone: (608) 214-1030

Background:

My business is owning and successfully breeding crossbred and purebred pigs. My dad helped his Grandpa raise hogs for market when he was my age. After he passed away my dad and mom took over the hogs and started raising show pigs. When I was three years old, I always wanted to be out helping with the pigs. As I continued to grow, I have started my own show pig business, Mitch's Hog Heaven along with continuing our family's business, Grossen Hogs.

I also think giving back to the community is huge for today's youth. I was asked by my ag teacher how I could step up in my community. I thought long and hard about what I could do for those in need within my community. When I was doing chores, I decided I could donate nutritious pork from my pigs to the local food pantry. I have donated 269 pounds of pork and delivered it to the Green Cares Food Pantry in the past two years. I have never experienced a greater feeling in life than when I deliver the pork and learn how many people I am helping feed. I feel it is important to donate such a healthy nutritious product so others less fortunate can have a healthy meal.

Overview:

I feed, clean, vaccinate, artificially inseminate, and manage my pigs. My brother also helps with chores and in return I help him with his poultry operation. My daily chores consist of scraping out the pens, feeding my pigs a healthy diet, and checking them daily for any health concerns. In August, I start tracking their heat cycles and breed them in September. I artificially inseminate the sows and gilts. I currently own seven sows and gilts and I own a boar. I study blood lines and purchase semen from the best boars that I can afford. I use a vaccination program that my veterinarian helped me setup to keep my pigs healthy. Healthy pigs grow faster. If I can finish a market hog in five or six months versus seven or eight months, it will be more profitable. Healthier pigs will cost less in veterinary fees and feed costs. That all means a bigger profit for me that I can use towards bettering my hog business and my college education.

I sell my piglets in March of every year to younger youth as their FFA and 4-H projects for their County Fairs. I also help younger youth with how to care for their fair project daily until fair time and help them with showmanship skills. I then sell the remainder of my pigs as feeder pigs and market pigs to local community members for consumption.

My first goal is to breed and raise the best show pigs. My second goal is to raise the most nutritious and healthy pork for people to consume. My third goal is to maintain a successful business that I can make a profit from.

Personal Qualities:

Dependable/Reliable-If I am signed up to do an activity or work, I will be there. I am always to work on time. I'm not afraid to work and help where and when needed.

Leader-I feel at my age of 17, I am a great leader. I like to listen to others and then give my input. I am always easy to talk to if someone needs to talk.

Role Model-I am a person that leads by example.

Community Leader-I have participated in many community service activities through FFA and 4-H. It is important to help my community out. I have also donated 269 pounds of pork in the past 2 years to my local food pantry.

Honest-I am an honest person in everything that I do. If I make a mistake, I take blame for it, hope to learn from it, and move on.

I feel I am experiencing how important it is to be responsible. My pigs need to be cared for at least two times each day. If I don't feed my pigs they aren't going to get fed. My parents both work full time jobs and it is up to me to care for my swine operation along with my younger brother helping me. By having to get up early in the morning and taking care of my pigs, I feel I will be well prepared for the future when I have a full-time job. There are times that I have an event I want to attend but I either can't attend or need to make arrangements for my parents or brother to take care of my animals before I can leave. If they aren't available, then I can't go because my pigs come first. I feel this experience is a life lesson.

Some of my achievements:

Lamp of Learning High School Student of the month

Top Freshman and Sophomore Ag student

Premier Exhibitor at County Fair

Champion Swine showman (4 out of the last 5 years)

Intermediate Champion cat showman

Green County Fair Reserve Champion Hog

The Future:

My plans after High School is to further my education at a Technical School. Presently I work part time as a welder/fabricator after school at Monroe Truck Equipment and during the summer I work full time at Monroe Truck Equipment. I start my welding job at 6:30 in the morning Monday through Friday. I take care of my pigs before and after work every day of the week. I will continue running my show pig business, promoting my genetics and educating people on the wholesome nutrition of pork and importance in their diets.