

Hems and Hogs! - by Bridey Greeson

In the past year, I experienced two firsts. In February, 2003, my son showed his first pig at the Victoria County 4-H show. Three months later, I showed my first daylilies in the San Antonio Daylily Society Show. Looking back, I have realized that if you can show a pig, you can show a daylily.

The best time to buy a daylily and a pig is in the Fall months. You want both to be from great parents and they have similar purchase prices as they are new introductions. Soil preparation is critical once the purchase arrives at your home/barn. I used a Clorox bleach solution to sanitize the barn pens and sanitize the fans of my new daylilies - you can use the solution for soaking the daylilies as the solution to wet down the pen and save time and money. During the months from November until January, you can pretty much rest and not worry about your fan/pig. Once February arrives, proper maintenance of your "investment" is critical to a successful show experience.

There are differences in show dates, and therefore, the feeding practices will differ due to the time of the year. With your pig, you will feed it such things like raw eggs, wet oatmeal, stride-n-flex, paylean and pig feed that is hand mixed (yuck) and fed twice a day. You will also weigh your pig on a scale once a week and then every few hours the day or two before the show. While you are trying to convince the little porker to get in the scale, your daylily is nice and quiet in the garden and doesn't require any feed like raw eggs.

Peak bloom for the pig should be the day of the show - just like the daylily. And, amazingly enough, pig farmers refer to a great show pig as having great bloom on top. If the pig is not fresh and blooming, you will lose points in the ring. The same theory goes for your show daylilies. You don't want to arrive at the show with a worn out bloom that is past its prime.

Showday arrives for both and you bring the freshest "bloomer" that you can find to show that day. If you weigh your pig that morning and it is too fat (over 270 lbs.) or too light (under 230 lbs.), you need to have a spare pig to show that day. If your best blooming daylily doesn't open the morning of the show, you have to go with a different choice for the show.

Even though showing a daylily or pig is hard work, it can be a lot of fun. If you beat your best friend at the daylily show with the same cultivar, you can rub it in by signing your e-mails with "Inner Destiny" champ. And pigs are so cute that they are worthy of e-mailing pictures to friends. When my son named one of the girl pigs, "Bob," I had to e-mail Bob Carr and show him the picture of "Awesome Bob." The picture of "Bob," the pig, that I sent depicted the pig sitting on her rear end with her snout covered in dirt. He thought it was a picture of the registered daylily cultivar, AWESOME BOB. Wish I could write what his response was to the picture, but it might offend delicate ears. I will say that I had tears from laughter running down my cheeks after I received his response.

Have to run and plant my new Fall introduction daylilies in the garden. After I finish planting, I will go by the barn and feed the new pigs that just arrived. They are both girls, but I convinced my son to name one of the pigs with a boy's name - Rich sounds like a good name to me!

