

# - The Mangalitsa -

*The perfect pig!?*



Facts you should know before you start raising them!

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[ROYAL.MANGALITSA.COM](http://ROYAL.MANGALITSA.COM)

*Will the Mangalitsa breed meet my expectations  
or would a cross or other heritage pig breed be a better match?*

### **THE SEARCH FOR THE PERFECT PIG!**

Many people contact me and ask where to buy good Mangalitsa breeding stock. When I ask them what the reason is that they have chosen this breed above all others, often they give me this as answer:

*„I have heard great stories about the dark marbled meat, the white creamy silk-like, healthy fat and that Chefs can't wait to get their hands on this pig. That people will pay high prices for the beautiful meat and that you can make good money on breeding stock. So I imagine there will be a good profit in raising them. I also found many articles where it is said that this breed is easy to keep, does not need much feed wise and will mainly forage for their own food on pasture. That they are good mothers, the boars will be docile and that this breed is very social and nice to people. So it sounds like this is the perfect pig to raise?!“*

Only benefits right? Let's have a close look if this is really the „Perfect Pig“ of all pig breeds (or crosses) you can find in the US.



Most people who want to start raising them have never raised pigs before, so everything is new to them. They want to start raising pigs because they want to sell good healthy pork or are looking for good pork for their own family and friends. They started to search Google regarding which pigs would give them the best pork or what breed would be easy to raise on pasture or in the woods.

There are so many News articles written about this relatively „new“, funny looking, furry and delicious pig breed, since they arrived from Austria in 2007 (you almost can call it hype) and there is sadly not much written about all the other old beautiful American heritage pig breeds. So it is only normal that people who are looking into raising pigs would think that Mangalitsas are THE breed that they should start with.

## \_\_\_THE FULL STORY

There is a lot of information out on the internet about this breed that is not the full story (truth). Never forget, most of it is marketing, people want to sell something. Sharing failures is not something people like to do either in the media. That’s a shame as we can learn a lot from the mistakes others made before us. Journalists have written a lot about the Mangalitsa as these furry pigs from Europe make a good story, but often the facts are a bit „twisted“, not because they want to mislead the reader, but because they do not fully understand the insights of this breed.

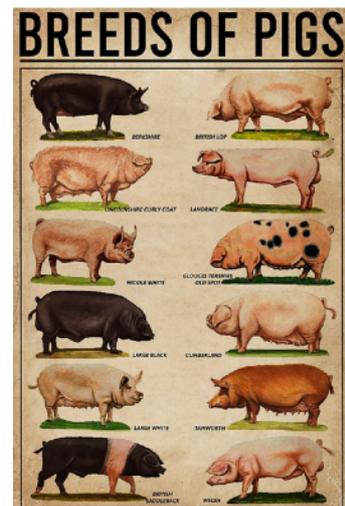


Also have you noticed that most articles are about breeders that just started! My question is always: „How can they tell the whole story, without having several years of experience in raising, feeding, selling the slaughtered animal and creating their market?“ Good question right?

## \_\_\_SO MANY BEAUTIFUL OLD AMERICAN ENDANGERED BREEDS

Another thing I would like to address is that the media made such a hype of this beautiful looking hairy Old World breed from Europe and left all the other, often way better fitting Heritage pig breeds that we have in the US out of the picture. That’s a pity in my eyes, so I am do not write this to convince you to raise Mangalitsa’s, nor I want to discourage you, but I want to help you to find the „Perfect pig“ for YOUR needs.

These other breeds like the Red Wattle, Mulefoot, Old line Duroc, Hampshire and others, are mostly also endangered and need to be bred and raised also. They have amazing meat, which is also way darker than the pork you find in supermarkets. All pork that comes from pastured heritage pigs is healthier and richer in flavour!



We need to make sure we will not lose those beautiful Old American Heritage Hogs genetics. Only by breeding them (and eating them!) will we secure their future.

Often I get told: „*I want to help save the Mangalitsa, I have read there were only 200 left in 1990's*“ That isn't quite the truth as there were only 200 REGISTERED Mangalitsa's in Hungary. There were way more unregistered and in all the eastern European countries there were way more in total for sure. Nowadays in Hungary alone are again over 200 Registered Mangalitsa farms. Over 15,000 Mangalitsas alone get slaughtered per year for the Mangalitsa ham production, which is in Spain. Worldwide there are over 100,000 Mangalitsas. Compared to the other American heritage breeds, the Mangalitsa isn't endangered anymore.

In this link from the [Livestock conservancy 2020](#). you can find the American Heritage breeds.



These breed's also forage well and can be raise outside all year round. Maybe when you are in very cold climate like Alaska, Canada, Northern Michigan a Mangalitsa will cope a bit better with the cold, but Mangalitsa's also need good housing (huts) with straw bedding to stay warm and Mangalitsa pigs require quite an amount of feed (good hog feed, not hay!) to stay warm in these cold areas in winter.

In hot humid weather like Florida or the states in the south of the US, other breeds will suit way better to be honest. Hot humid weather is a challenge for this breed as they come from central Europe (Austria, Hungary, Romania, Serbia) where you have cold dry winters and hot dry summer. These countries do not have the humidity which we have in the US. And the breed just arrived in 2007 to America!

They are lard pigs and the fat is like an insulation, you can easily figure out that they will get lazy and do not want to move much when it's hot and humid, which isn't great when you want to build muscles/meat on them.



I do not want to get in detail here about husbandry, housing and the correct diet of pigs. These part I will cover in other articles. Now we want to look at the „inside“ of the pig breeds and see what fits with what you expect from a breed.

### EDUCATE YOURSELF WELL

*I* always try to help people to find out if this breed is THE pig for them or maybe a cross or one of the other great heritage breeds. So I am here not to sell you this breed but I am here to help you understand the breed and show you some options that other breeds or crosses would give you.

Sadly I have seen way too many passionate people starting and failing because they were not prepared well enough. They did not know what they would harvest after slaughter and they did not have the right market for this fatty slow growing pig breed. 95% of the people at the end figured out after 3 - 4 years, that this breed was not the pig they should have started with. All these years (and money) are lost and they have to start over again..... I want to try to avoid this if possible, by first educating people on what could save you a lot of time and money to find the perfect pig.



## WHAT ARE THE QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK?

Ask yourself questions before you start and try to find the answers. I assume you looking to raise pigs for meat?

1. Is the meat/fat for your family and maybe for some friends or do you want to sell it to customers?
2. Are you aware that there are two types of pig breeds, Meat breeds & Lard breeds and do you know the differences between them?
3. When you want to sell to customers, what do you think would be your market? Are you planing to sell to restaurants or direct sales, from your farm and on farmers markets?
4. For how much can you sell the meat & fat? For how much can you sell half or a whole pig? What would be the \$ per hanging weight (lbs)? Make sure you ask other farms that raise pigs in your area outside so you will know what to expect.
5. When you want to sell to customers, your pigs would need to get slaughtered at a USDA certified slaughterhouse. Where is such a facility in your area and would they be willing to slaughter Mangalitsa's? These pigs have a lot of hair and most slaughter plants do not want them or they only skin pigs and you loose a lot of fat when they do that.
6. As the Mangalitsa is a lard breed you will have a great amount of fat. What will you do with it? Do you have a market for it in your area? You will need a market for it or you will lose money!
7. Have you ever seen a Mangalitsa pork chop (loin)? Are you aware of the size of the meat from a 18 month old Mangalitsa?
8. Have you seen the belly/bacon from a Mangalitsa?
9. Have you tasted the meat and fat?
10. How much is the meat to fat ratio in the Mangalitsa compared to other breeds?
11. Have you done some research in your area to find out who else is selling pasture raised pork and what kind of breeds or crosses and for what price they are selling their meat and piglets?





12. Have you looked into other Heritage pig breeds so you know what choices you have?
13. Are you aware that Mangalitsa's need 14 to 18 month to reach slaughter weight compared to 9 to 12 month for most other breeds or crosses? That is double the time!
14. How many acres does a pig need when you want to pasture raise them? When I say pasture I mean grass and not a dirt lot.
15. Do you have a good idea how much feed (hog feed) a piglet, feeder and adult Mangalitsa will need?
16. When you want to start breeding, do you know how to make sure you buy a Pure Mangalitsa and not a cross? Not all pigs with curly coats are Pure Mangalitsa's!
17. Are you aware that there were only a few animals imported since 2007 and that inbreeding is a real problem with all the various consequences involved? Like birth defects, such as borne with no anus, small pelvis (it results in the death of the sow and the litter), fertility/reproducing problems, smaller pigs, leg deformities, twisted noses and more!
18. Is there a large animal vet in your area, ask them if they are familiar with pigs.

There are many other questions that are important to ask and get answers on before starting to breed a certain breed or cross. The ones above I would ask myself and try to find an answer.

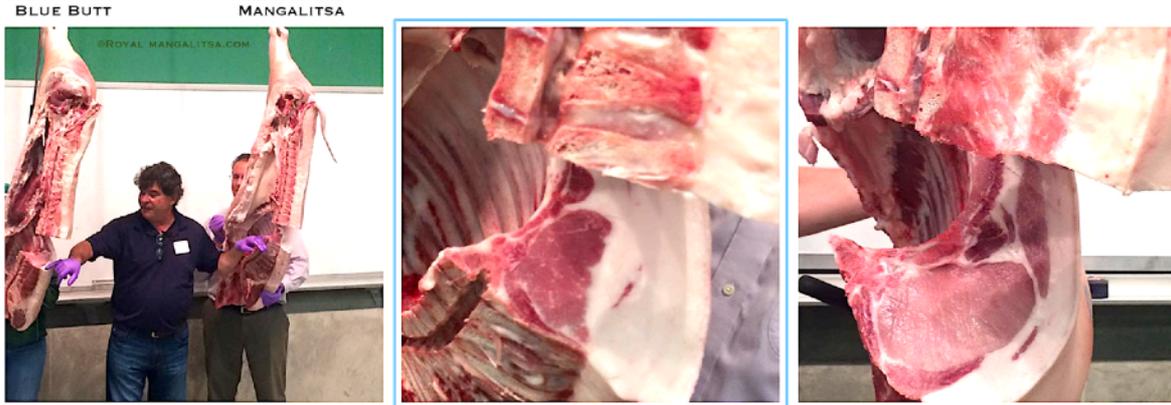
You might say: I only want to raise 2-3 barrows (castrated males) to finish and see how it goes and try the meat, calculate my costs and figure out bit by bit the answers on the questions above. If you want to do that, you are safe and there will not be a big risk of losing money and time, BUT when you think of starting buying breeding stock and setting up something way more costly and time consuming I strongly advise you to do your homework well, and know the answers of the questions above!

# MEAT / CARCASS COMPARISON

AT MSU MEAT LAB

16 MONTH OLD MANGALITSA

8 MONTH OLD BLUE BUTT  
(HAMPSHIRE X YORKSHIRE)



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## WHAT TO EXPECT

The Mangalitsa is a very slow growing Lard breed (14 - 18 month to slaughter) and will have 60 - 70% fat in the carcass and only 40 - 30% meat. With most other breeds (meat breeds) these % is the other way around! People that are not used to raising and slaughtering pigs, these numbers will say nothing to them. I would strongly advise to look at the video I made to educate about this. Even when it's in Dutch, you will get an idea how an 70% fat & 30% Mangalitsa carcass will look like. It was the carcass of one of my Mangalitsa, 18 month of age. The barrow was finished the last 8 weeks, on a rye diet, to get clean, bit firmer beautiful fat.

The 8th video is in Hungarian but take your time to look at it as you can learn a lot by looking at it!! You will see in what body condition this breed should be kept. At 17 minutes into the video you can look at the the slaughter process in Hungary and have a close look at the carcasses and meat cuts. It should give you some idea of what to expect and how this breed should be raised, body condition wise. Here the link [Royal Mangalitsa / Videos](#)

Keeping Mangalitsa's „lean" would not be in the benefit of the animal, as they are created to produce lard, so they always should have the minimum of 2.5 inch of fat on their back to be happy and healthy, and that's what you want to raise on your farm. Happy and healthy animals! You never should be able to feel their spine when you push softly on their back! Especially in winter when have a thick curly coat you always should examine your Mangalitsa pig with your hands and feel their actual condition.

They need 14 - 18 month to reach slaughter weight, when they do not get the correct feed it might take 24 month!! For people that start raising pigs I always advise to start with normal hog feed 16-18% protein where all minerals and vitamins are added. You already have a lot of new things to learn and when you want to raise a healthy animal, good feed is very important. Especially when you have breeding stock!

## THE „KOBE BEEF OF PORK“ STORY

The Mangalitsa meat is called in many articles „The Kobe beef of Pork“, this wording was first used by *Devin Knell*, executive sous-chef at the French Laundry in an article in the New York Times in 2008: *“Unlike workaday pork,”* Mr. Knell said, *“Mangalitsa is marbled, and the fat dissolves on your tongue — it’s softer and creamier, akin to Wagyu beef.”*

### Read again carefully what he really said!

Was he talking about the Mangalitsa meat and referring to the Wagyu meat, or is he talking about the fat of the Mangalitsa, that is similar to the fat from the Kobe (Wagyu) cow’s?

*“Unlike workaday pork,”* Mr. Knell said, *“Mangalitsa is marbled, and the fat dissolves on your tongue — it’s softer and creamier, akin to Wagyu beef.”* He was talking about the amazing fat of the Mangalitsa!



Has the Mangalitsa meat always a lot of marbling, like people assume? NO it has not! (Marbling is the flecks of intramuscular fat in meat)

Often there is not as much visible marbling in the meat as "marketing" wants you to believe. Only a few animals will have the extreme marbling in their meat and it is not in certain lines. It is sometimes in a certain boar/sow combination, but it might not be carried to the next generation! Nobody can give you that guarantee here!

I think it is very important that you understand why Mangalitsa meat is different to most pig breeds and crosses and how this works. As when you start raising them and you build your ‚marketing‘ around the *„visible marbled meat“* story, you could get in trouble when at the end your meat will not show this extreme marbling. Chefs and customers will ask you: *„Where is the marbling I expected to see in the Mangalitsa meat? I see a lot of fat around the meat, but I do not see it in the meat, where I expected it to be!“*

In the picture below you see a normal marbled Mangalitsa pork chop at the upper left corner and 3 extremely marbled pork chop. The very marbled ones are from a 6 year old Mangalitsa sow. The other one is from one of her daughters, of almost 2 years, raised together on the same diet.



Does Mangalitsa meat need the visible high marbling in the meat? NO! Why not?

Meat doesn't need to have marbling which we can see (visible marbling) to be juicy and succulent after frying. It would be too much to ask of you to know enough meat science to understand this. But some basics are important, let me try to explain:

There are 2 things important in meat to make it juicy and succulent:

1. The water/moisture holding capacity of the meat cells during frying
2. The fat in the muscle and that can be VISIBLE or INVISIBLE

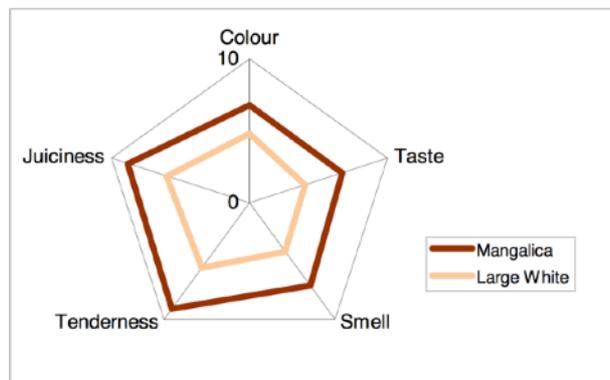


Fig. 2: Sensory evaluation of grilled meat

I think it is important to have some scientific facts on what I say:

**From:** Quality traits of loin muscle from White Mangalica /WM (Blonde), Duroc × White Mangalica and Large White pigs reared under intensive conditions and slaughtered at 150 kg live weight: A comparative study

*„Meat from WM pigs had the highest intramuscular fat content and darkest and reddest colour; crosses were at an intermediate position, with significant differences among all genotypes. In addition, ultimate pH, water-holding capacity and iron content were significantly the highest in meat from WM pigs (Mangalitsa), compared to the other two genotypes....“*

Link to the study [www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net)

Mangalitsa meat has a great water-holding capacity and has visible and/or invisible marbling, the fat is woven into the meat, if we see it or not. How does that work? Here a very good read about this in beef, it is the same in pork.

Link to an article that explains this in a nice way: [About marbling in meat](#)



**MORE ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES**

In the picture at the left you see a x-ray of a Meat breed and a Lard breed. You can see the big difference in the roundness of the hams, the amount of the meat and fat very nicely. The coloured picture is a 16 month old Red Mangalitsa gilt. When you look closely you will notice the 'flat' ham's. That's typical for Mangalitsa pigs. Crosses with other (meat) breeds will have rounder hams as these pigs will have more meat/ bigger muscles. When you would slaughter a pure meat breed or cross the amount of meat will be way more than in Pure Mangalitsa's or in Mangalitsa crosses. You should be aware of such things when you are looking into raising this breed.

Their loin (muscle of the pork chop) is at 12 month only 1/2 of the size from a pork chop you can buy at a grocery store. But it will have way more fat, as you can see on page 8. If you don't want so much fat on your pig, this is not the breed you should start raising Mangalitsa's. Consider raising a cross or another heritage breed.

I will provide pictures of other breeds meat at the end so you get a better idea.



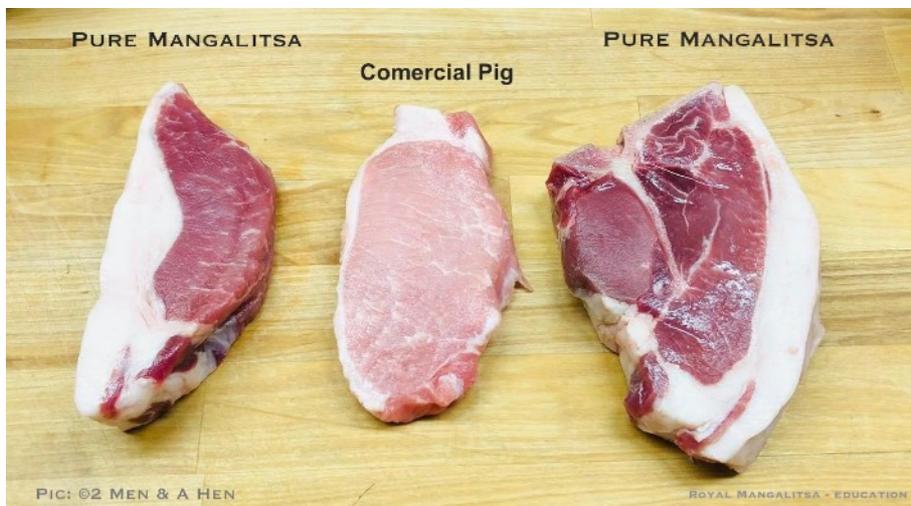
Mangalitsa cross, 13 month - Old line Duroc, 9 month - Mangalitsa, 15 month  
 (3/4) Mangalitsa & (1/4) Hampshire



THE MANGALITSA MEAT it is dark red in color and has a nutty flavour, more like beef than pork. The meat contains more minerals and vitamins because the pigs are kept outside and get slaughtered at an older age. Marbling also increases with age.

But as I have mentioned, to get a Mangalitsa to have a decent meat % it will take at least 16-20 month while a Mangalitsa cross can be slaughtered with in 10-12 months and a breed like Old Line Duroc, Hampshire, Large Black, Old Spot etc. you can slaughter at 9 month with less fat and more meat! This is the reason you have to be able to get almost 2x the price for the Mangalitsa meat/fat. Find out first if you will have a market to ask such high prices. Often breeders tell me they had to change to crosses or other breeds as the costs (feed) to produce these pigs were way too high as they could not get the price they would need to cover the costs and make any profit.

It is beautiful meat and fat as you can see but have to have the right market!





**THE MANGALITSA FAT** is exceptional, very creamy and soft, like the fat that Wagyu's have. It melts even below body temperature (32C/89.6 F), we all know that this fat is way better for a human body than other fats. It is rich in omega 3 and 6 polyunsaturated fatty acids and in natural antioxidants. According to studies of the University of Debrecen in Hungary, the levels of Omega 3 in Mangalitsa pigs are 2 to 3 times higher than in many varieties of fish. The large amount of unsaturated fatty acids (healthy fat) allows it to melt at lower temperatures than most other pigs.

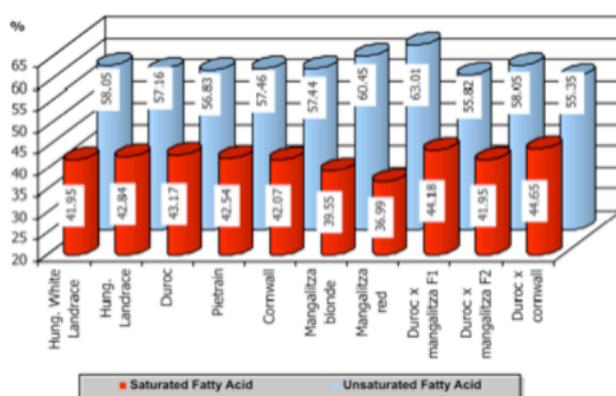
The fat is basically the goal of this breed, as they are created in 1833 to produce as much as possible high quality lard. But you would need/market to have a use for it.

Many people who want to start raising this breed have good ideas what to do with the fat but when you are butchering 5 pigs a month you will have A LOT of it. Turning all this fat into soap, candles and rendering it and selling it to customers is a lot of labor.

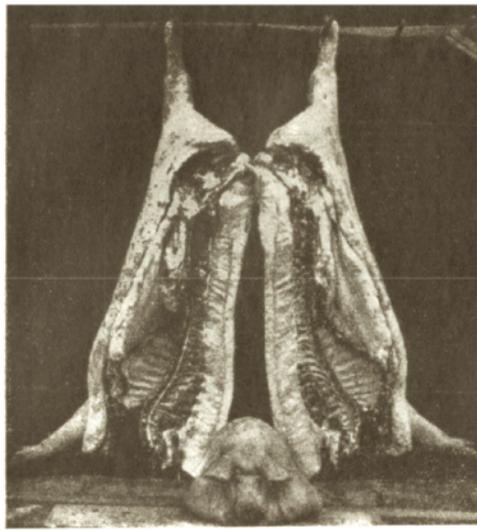
When I may advise, find a breeder that has raised Mangalitsa pigs for at least 4-5 years and visit him/her, buy a 1/2 or whole Mangalitsa and work with it to find out what you want to do.

When you want to sell rendered lard it must be rendered in a USDA certified facility, kitchen!

Here a graphic from a study about the fatty acid composition of different pig breeds and crosses:



More scientific studies about the meat and fat you can find on my website: [Mangalitsa meat & fat science](http://Mangalitsa.meat&fat.science)



## THE MANGALITSA

70% FAT  
30% MEAT

37. sz. ábra.

A 35. sz. ábrán kihizva bemutatott expresszhízó kettéhasítva. Hidegen 173-20 kg. Vágási vesztesége 19-90 kg (10-3%). Fehérarú súlya 123-30 kg (70.70%). Hús súlya 51 kg (29-30%). Szalonnája egyenlő vastag, finom, sejtés, vékonybőrű, hája óriási, az egész hasüreget betölti. Húsa rózsaszínű, finoman zsírszövetes, puha, pecsenyehús.

### MARKETS FOR THE FAT

1. Try to find out if you might have an eastern European community around you. Russians, Ukrainian, Hungarian, Polish, Serbian, Romanian people, THEY know what a lard breed is and they love the fat.
2. People who are doing the Keto-Diet love high quality fats, and these pigs have plenty of it.
3. Areas where people go hunting and need fat to put with the meat of deer or other lean animals can also be a part of your market.
4. People who make soap, candles or body lotion can be a market for you. But be aware that a lot will not want to use pig fat....so first talk with them.
5. Bakeries that make pies or real french croissants or pies use lard.
6. Some Restaurants will use lard to work with in their kitchen.

When looking into such markets, make sure you get the price for your product that you will need.

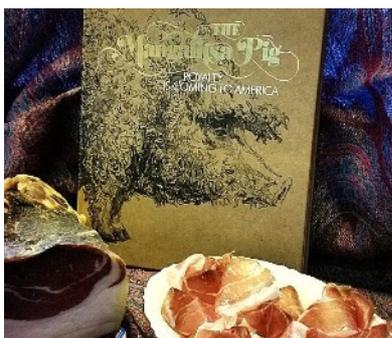




## \_\_\_ SWEET AND SALTY

I love making „Herb Lard“ with the lard to spread on bread, put on cooked vegetables or fry meat in it.

Another delicious and healthy thing is: „Sweet Lard“, that you can use as a spread on bread like Nutella, kids love it and it is full of healthy Omega 3 & 6 which is good for their brain. On my website is an easy recipe that you can change to create all kinds of sweet lard: [Sweet Lard](#) I also made fillings for „Chocolate Ice bonbons‘ with the sweet lard. Start thinking ‚Out of the Box‘ when it comes to such things, just play with it in your kitchen and you will be able to create beautiful things.



## \_\_\_ MANGALITSA COOKBOOK

There is also a Mangalitsa Cookbook I would advise to try to find on Amazon. It is sadly sold out, but sometimes you can find it there. The title is: „Royalty is Coming to America - The Mangalitsa Pig“ [Mangalitsa Cook Book](#)



## A WORD ON COSTS AND PRICING YOUR MEAT & FAT

*M*ake sure you have a market for +60 lbs of fat per pig when you slaughter them! The leaf lard, the fat around the kidneys inside the pig are often 15 lbs. As I already said: if you do not have the market for all the fat, be careful with this breed.

The average price you will get for an 18 month old animal (depending on location) is between 4.50 \$ per lbs up to 7-8 \$ lbs in California, hanging weight. Hanging weight means the pig is slaughtered but not cut into meat parts.

When you want to sell meat cuts, sausages, bacon and it is vacuum packed you pay often around \$450,00 - \$600.00 Dollars depending on location and butcher per pig. Plus you need a USDA authorized butcher to legally sell it to public/restaurants.

You will roughly have to feed between 8-10 lbs mash or 5-6 lbs pelleted feed. At the moment (2021) the feed costs are high. 15-17\$ per 50 pound bag pelleted feed and 10-14 \$ per 50 pounds mash/ground feed in some states of the US. A Mangalitsa from birth to 18 month till slaughter will need average 5-6 lbs of pelleted feed or 8-10 lbs of mash a day.

Before you start raising any pigs you should first calculate as much as possible your costs.



I would like to share what Mangalitsa breeder Ryan Thatcher in Michigan posted on his Facebook Business site this year (2021). I think it will be helpful for you to read.

## HERITAGE BREED PASTURE PORK PRICES

Post 1 „Today I posted in a local group about hog prices. One person was saying that people are charging too much for pork. I would say we are still on the low end and we raised our hang weight price to \$4.50. Below are some figures on the pricing and a look into the AVERAGE cost per Mangalitsa pig we raise. It's a fair amount of reading and I get a little into the farmer vs grower debate.

Ok. So I did some figuring. We raise Mangalitsa and finish between 14 & 18 months of age. If we bought hog grower from the elevator our feed cost would be an Average of \$698.25 per hog raised on 3-5 acres of woods/pasture.

We buy all of our grain from local farmers and grind it ourselves adding bulk minerals in the grinder. This drops the average price to \$477.75 per hog for the same 14-18 months.

Our hang weights are 150#-220#. Skinned, gutted, no legs, or head. We get a good amount of lard and beautiful fatty chops and steaks. We are charging \$4.50 a pound hang weight. Which at our feed costs is \$197.25 profit for more than a year of labor.

If we had to buy hog grower from the local elevator we would have a LOSS on each pig of \$23.25. At the \$4.5/lb hang weight.

This does not include earnings from selling piglets as feeders and breeders which adds some cushion. This also doesn't include any vet or maintenance costs. Obviously fencing, feeders, huts, straw, and supplemental hay in the winter not included. We also supplement with bulk produce which we buy 10 yards at a time for \$50 a load. We probably get about 15 loads a year.

Raising animals is not cheap and farmers need to stop trying to compete with growers. If you think you are going to sell pasture raised pork and profit at the same price as a hog grower running hog barns you are wrong. The prices need to be higher as the animal had a way longer and better pig life and was able to do pig things. I am not here trying to compare our pigs to any pink weaners either. If you buy a couple that fell off a truck or came from a hog grower that couldn't keep them

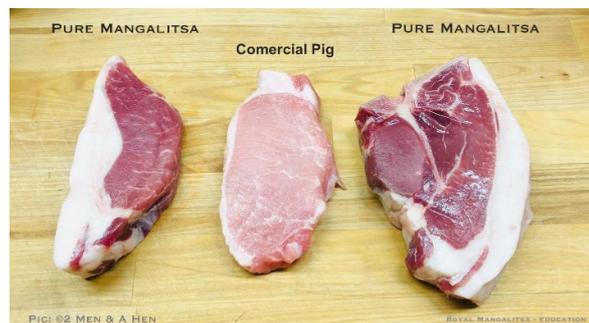
then throw them in a 10'x10' area we are not the same. You are raising them in conditions closer to the grower than the farmer.

There is a difference between growers and farmers and the public (and a lot of farmers/growers) need to start realising it. Much like all pork is not the same also all farmers are not the same."

\_\_\_Post 2 „This post is informational in nature as we have gotten some questions regarding the price of our pork and some comments regarding how we make money selling pork. The short answer is we lose money on selling pork. This is not to complain or throw a pity party. It is to help educate the consumer and potential farmers.

The cost of raising a heritage breed pig to slaughter is not comparable to CAFO raised pork. The pork itself is completely different. The picture below shows the difference in store bought chop compared to our pork. We break down the cost of raising pasture pork. Using hog grower bought at a local elevator. Costs in central Michigan as of 8/1/21

- 18% Hog Grower (corn and soy) \$488/ton
- \$0.244/lb
- Piglet price \$150
- Avg Hang Weight 142#
- Avg packaged weight 85#
- Avg USDA Processing \$284/pig (all cuts smoked and cased products included)



We average approximately 6lbs of feed/pig/day which equates to \$1.46 a day. Our pigs are raised for 16 months or 548 days. So  $\$1.46 \times 548 \text{ days} = \$800.08/\text{pig}$  to slaughter for feed.

$\$800.08 \text{ feed} + \$150 \text{ piglet} + \$284 \text{ processing} = \$1234.08/\text{pig}$ .  $\$1234.08/85\# \text{ of finished product} = \$14.52/\text{lb}$  of pork. This does NOT include fencing, shelter, medications, electric, tools, land, or TIME.

So 1 pound of processed pork at BREAK-EVEN price is \$14.52.

Ways to decrease costs:

-Grow own feed: On our farm raising our own grain is not an option and doesn't make logical sense as it would be extremely time intensive.

-Buy feed from local producer and grind/mix yourself: we do this and it saves us \$134.16/ton of feed or \$0.07/lb.

-sell piglets to pay for feed and recoup breeding stock feed costs: This is where we make up some of our costs as piglets sold as feeders are about \$150 each. With the smaller litter sizes with heritage breed pigs this gets us to break even with breeding stock or a bit better. But you need a market to sell feeders.

-Raise in confinement: this is not an option we will consider on our farm as we like to have healthy happy pigs that are allowed to wallow in the mud and do pig things.

-Supplemental feeding (local produce, bread etc.): We do this minimally with garden produce sourced from larger scale farms. It is a good additive, but you must be careful to not add too much because it changes the protein and lysine structure which hinders muscle growth. And feeding too much bread will result in bad fat quality.

I hope you found this helpful."

Here the calculation another Mangalitsa breeder in the state of New York and one in Minnesota send me:

NY state: „We pay 100 for kill. 2\$ per lbs hanging for processing. Another 1.25\$/pb for bacon and 1.25\$/pb for sausage. So for a 225 lb pig, ~\$600"

Minnesota: „At our processing place, the kill/gut is \$36 (for a whole pig, \$18 for a half). Cut and wrap is \$0.60/pound (hanging weight). Vacuum packed is \$1.50 per item (I typically do butcher paper wrap because it does a great job and is included in the cut & wrap price). The customers that want vac packed have to pay extra. Sausage (unless it is plain ground pork) is \$2/pound extra. The weight after gutting the animal...

My average hanging weights are about 250, so cut and wrap is about \$150. Smoking/curing is also an additional \$2/pound.

\$350 would be for a whole with NO smoke/cure on anything, and just plain ground pork."



## **NO SHORTCUTS WITH FEED TO SAVE COSTS**

*Good* feed is essential for your breeding stock (sows, boar & piglets) they need at least 16-18% protein in their diet, plus the vitamins and minerals all pigs need to grow well and stay healthy. Feeding them a low protein diet and not the needed vitamins and minerals can result in fertility problems as well as badly nourished piglets at birth. Feed can also have an influence on your litter size.

Also the feeders you want to grow out for slaughter need good feed, so you will get the beautiful product this breed can provide.

I see way too many people starting, that believe the stories where it is told this breed can live off grass or hay and some fruit and vegetables. Remember you are raising a pig, not a sheep or cow, **ALL** pigs need a good balanced diet with vitamins, minerals, enough protein and carbohydrates, feed that suits their needs to stay healthy.

Mangalitsa pigs have a lot of hair and they shed in spring/summer, so they need Biotin in their diet, something they will not find on your land, also the correct amount of Salt, Zinc and many other things.

'Grass fed pigs' is something that does not exist and it never should! Yes they eat grass and other plants in spring/summer and they will go into the woods to forage on acorns, but you **ALWAYS** will need to provide a good amount of hog feed for them. That is their basic feed, everything else is extra! Withholding them from the needed feed, will let this already slow growing pig breed only grow slower. They will not show their full potential when fed wrong.



When you are new to raising pigs I would advise to provide your pigs hog feed from the local feed store or mill and not start mixing your own feed. You have already so much to learn and a putting good balanced hog feed together is almost science. Maybe you have a farm and other livestock like cattle, sheep, goats and you local mill mixes your own feed. Talk with them if they can help you creating the mix you need for your pigs.

It is totally no problem to feed your breeders and growing feeders corn and soy, some people will tell you that it will ruin the fat and meat but that is not the case. The last 3 month before slaughter I would advise to change the diet, lower the protein and feed rolled/milled barley, rye, wheat or oats as a finishing diet. This will give you beautiful clean, firmer fat.



Be careful with cutting down your feed costs with loads of bakery goods or brewers grain, both these products should only be fed in a low amount. Brewers grain should not get fed to piglets as they can not digest it! The older pigs should never get fed more than 10-15% of their diet with brewers gain. Be careful with bakery goods especially things that contain lots of fat, like doughnuts. It can ruin the fat from your pigs and make it super soft and blubbery/loose.

I can not go in more feed details here but here is a link to understand why good feed is so important: [Pig nutrition and diseases](#)

## SALES TO RESTAURANTS

*M*ost Chefs that work with Mangalitsa's only buy 1-2 pigs every 2 months because of all the fat, or they only want certain meat cuts. I have heard many stories where people started raising Mangalitsas as one or several restaurants told them they would take ALL they could get. But these Chefs had never worked with a whole Mangalitsa pig and often had no idea that a Mangalitsa had so little meat and an overwhelming amount of fat.

So after they bought the first pigs they ordered, they complained about the amount of fat, the little meat and the high price. They only wanted meat cuts where the fat was trimmed off but didn't want to pay higher prices for such prime cuts, a disaster for the breeder as he now had to find another market for all the pigs he/she especially had raised for these Restaurants.....mostly these pigs ended up for \$100 or less each at the auction.

Terrible for the breeder that invested all the time (often 2-3 years) and money in it and now needed to get rid of the animals because of the exploding feed bills.

Direct sale from farm to customer often works well, but that means you have to grow slowly and be prepared to do lots of education and marketing.

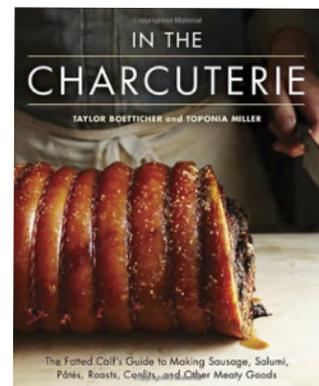
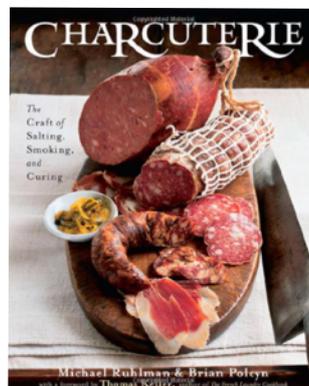
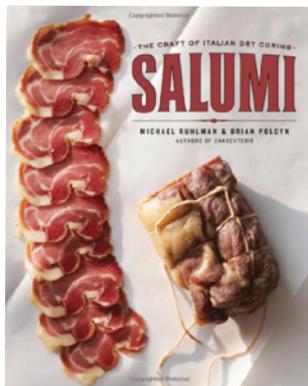




## \_\_\_THE PERFECT PIG FOR CHARCUTERIE

The Mangalitsa is a perfect pig for Charcuterie (dried cured meats), but it is very difficult to find a butcher that knows the craft of making good Charcuterie. As the Mangalitsa has more and softer fat than other breeds, curing high quality meat from it is also a bit different/more complicated and it is not easy to find a butcher that has a USDA certified curing room. And also for such high end products you would need to find a market. The last few years dried cured meats/Charcuterie has become a bit more known in the US. In France, Italy, Germany, Hungary, Spain..... the craft of it is well known and it is easier to find a butcher that can transform your pig into many delicious products.

When you who are looking into the breed for private use (for you and your friends) and you might be interested in some books that provide good guidance in curing meat, these are some you could look into:





## MY ADVICE

The advice I would like to give you on your way to search to find the „Perfect Pig“:

Start with buying some Mangalitsa feeders, Mangalitsa crosses and maybe also some from different breeds/crosses. Depending on your set up and goals, start with 1 or 2 of each max. Buying barrows (castrated males) if available is the best as they are most easy to handle, especially when you are new to pigs. Raise them out and slaughter them. By going that route you have the less risk and the optimal set up to find out what the feed intake, finishing time and slaughter result will be. Compare them and see what you and your future customers would like to have.



After that decide what breed or cross you want to raise.

The US heritage breeds can often be slaughtered with 8-10 month, the crosses with 12-14 month the Mangalitsa with 18-20 month. After you have seen the carcass and meat cuts and have seen the differences, buy your breeding pigs to start building your future herd. That's my advice I want to give you to start you on your way.

**VIST A FARM** Visiting a farm that has experience with raising and marketing Mangalitsa and Mangalitsa crosses for several years (at least 4!), is also a good thing to do. Make sure they do not "talk you into" raising them because they want to sell piglets! Piglets are always cute and these Mangalitsa piglets are cute as can be! Like little puppies or kittens (it's dangerous to look at them ;-))



As I said, I do not want to discourage you, but I sadly know way too many people who were very disappointed after slaughtering their first few pure Mangalitsa's. They started with breeding stock. The piglets need to grow out at least 14-18 months to get bred, almost 4 months of pregnancy and than again 14-18 months to slaughter the first Mangalitsa from the 1st litter. That is roughly 2.5 years from the moment they bought breeding piglets! Only to figure out that the Mangalitsa dit not have enough meat, and too much fat. Not disappointed by the taste but by the amount of meat and fat.



## GOOD TO KNOW

*Is there a difference in the colors?*

No, not really „Color Combination“ animals often gives what is called hybrid vigor, which means faster growth rates. Color Combination means: breeding a pure color Red Mangalitsa to a pure color Swallow Belly or pure color Blonde (so breeding pure color Mangalitsa together). Here a link that explains hybrid vigor in pig breeds/crosses: [Crossbreeding and Hybrid Vigor](#)

In Hungarian scientific studies there is stated that there are differences in measurements of the 3 colors (Red, Blonde & Swallow Belly) but as we only brought a very few animals to the US these studies will not reflect the US genetics!

There were only 2 boars in 2010 in the import and only 4 sows of the blondes! In 2014 there were only 3 Blonde boar lines imported and 3 Red boar lines. So inbreeding is a huge issue and without known lineage nobody can tell you the real % of inbreeding. Be careful when someone would tell you they can sell you a Pure color breeding pair that is unrelated as that is almost impossible, there will always a % of relationship in one color!! Here you can find the import history to the US [Mangalitsa History](#)

That is one reason why we started to set up MBOAR, so we know the inbreeding % and the relationship % between pigs to avoid genetic defects and slow growing small animals. Always ask if people can show you at least 2-3 generations of the piglets you want to buy.



Make sure the pigs do not show any impurities which would indicate that they are crosses and not pure. Here you will find the breed characteristics [Mangalitsa Phenotype](#)

## OTHER BREEDS & MANGALITSA CROSSES

I have explained and showed you in pictures and videos what you can expect from a Mangalitsa (meat/fat/growth) and what you can expect from a cross or other heritage breed (meat breed).

You may want to know what would a good breed would be to cross the Mangalitsa with to get more meat, less fat, shorter time to finish and bigger litters. Here some other American heritage pig breeds that will be good combination with the Mangalitsa. I have put the ones I personally would look into in Red



Old line Duroc (*Henry Fudge genetics*)

Hampshire (*Albert Haraway genetics*)

- Old line Duroc
- Red Wattle
- Hampshire
- Berkshire
- Large Black
- Gloucester Old spot
- Tamworth

Do not use the new lines (show pigs!!!!) look into the Old lines/genetics!!

In Hungary they use Duroc x Mangalitsa to produce the famous cured hams. By breeding Mangalitsa to Duroc you will often get more visible marbling. In Spain they do the same with the Iberico pigs.

Many people are already breeding Mangalitsa x Berkshire in the US. I personally would use a Mangalitsa boar on a sow of another breed as you will get bigger litters. Mangalitsa sows have smaller litters, between 5-8 piglets, other breeds 8-12 or more. Also the boars of other breeds get way bigger/heavier than Mangalitsa boars, so they can become too heavy to for the Mangalitsa sow during mating. On the other hand most Mangalitsa sows are very good mothers. (Picture: Dazbog our Mangalitsa boar when he was 2.5 years)



For the Old line Duroc I would advise to talk with *Cliff Davis Pig & Leaf (Cliff Davis)* or *Henry Fudge*. You can go to the website and look at the genetics they have to offer. The Older lines of Hampshires is also a great match with the Mangalitsa, but not easy to find, you can try *Albert Haraway*.

**Do not** use another lard breed to cross like the: Ossabaw, Mulefoot, Meishan, KuneKune or AGH when your goal is to get more meat!

**\_\_\_\_\_ THEY ARE NOT LIKE DOGS** *(and even dogs sometimes bite!)*

*F*or the people that are not familiar with pigs, please listen. Pigs and also Mangalitsas can bite, boars grow razor sharp tusks and even when they do not want to harm you, by rubbing their head against your legs, they can slice your leg open like a sharp knife!! Kids should NEVER be with a boar! Sows will sometimes protect their litters and can bite you to chase you away or do worse. Yes, Mangalitsa's are mostly friendly but they are pigs not dogs. Pigs have their own „language“ and in the beginning you do not understand what they want tell you. Crossing their line can end in nasty situations.

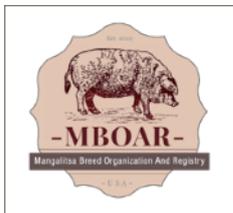
Mangalitsa pigs are considered a medium size pig, as you can see, a medium size pig is already a big one. Other heritage breeds get even bigger. Make sure you know how the pig you want to raise (breed) will look like when they are fully grown.





## *Additional Information*

### **THE MANGALITSA BREED ORGANIZATION & REGISTRY (MBOAR)**



Please visit the MBOAR Website, The Mangalitsa Breed Organization & Registry (MBOAR) just started 2 years ago, so it is a very young Breed Organization and needs to get built out in the coming years. I am one of the founders of the organization and also one of their Breed Advisors. When you would like to raise pure registered Mangalitsa, that is the place to go. As I have exported the Mangalitsa breed 2 times to the US from Europe and my husband (Wilhelm Kohl) did the first import of the blondes in 2010 from Austria, we could build the register with almost all the data of the imports, which is quite unique for a pig breed. You will find lots of information on the website: <https://www.mboar.org> (Note: will change to [mboar.com](https://www.mboar.com) somewhere next year)

If you would love to support the breed, please look into the MBOAR membership options.

### **THE ROYAL MANGALITSA WEBSITE**

You can also find helpful information and videos on my personal educational website Royal Mangalitsa <https://www.royal-mangalitsa.com> There are many links that should provide you with all kinds of information, not only about the Mangalitsa. Hope you will find it useful.



### **FACEBOOK GROUPS**

When you are on Facebook, please join the Mangalitsa group I started 10 years ago, you can find lot's of helpful information there and you can find breeders there also that can offer feeders. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/mangalitsa>

Here another Pastured Pigs group where you can find good info on other breeds, and find a farmer that raises other breeds and crosses in your area:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/pasturedpigs>

Here two groups where you can find Old line Heritage breeds: [Old Line Swine UNITED USA](#) and the other is called: [Heritage Purebred Pigs](#)

### \_\_\_\_\_ AN IMPORTANT STUDY

Here is a link to a study of a friend of mine Bob Perry. This could be helpful for you when you want to look into other heritage breeds, you will see the differences in meat to fat ratio, slaughter weights and such to compare: [Carcass yields of different Heritage pig breeds](#)

### \_\_\_\_\_ THE END

I hope this was useful and will help you at least a bit in your search for the „Perfect Pig“. It is a lot of information but there is way more than I can cover here. At the end I want to share something sweet with you! *(because you made it till the end ;-)*

Enjoy your journey, grow slow, take your time and be prepared that things will go differently than planned! Raise your pigs with love and compassion, observe them carefully and they will tell you what life they want to live!

Happy pigs provide healthy food!

*Barbara*





## *Mangalitsa* **COCOA LARD**

Chop back fat into very small pieces or put through grinder. Make sure no meat is on that fat. Render the back fat very slowly, but do not burn!

Add during rendering :

- Chopped Vanilla beans
- Cinnamon sticks
- little bit Whisky
- Honey

Render for 5 hours, put away over night so the flavor can be absorbed into the fat. Heat up till liquid again, pick out the cinnamon & vanilla bean pieces.

Leave the not totally rendered pieces as they contain most of flavor. Let all cool down. Add Cocoa powder to your liking. Add a bit natural Almond essence, and blend it till you get a smooth paste.

Add more honey, if needed to get it as sweet as you like. Put it in little jars in refrigerator.

Use as spread on bread or fill into chocolate molds than freeze and serve as ice-bonbons! Enjoy!

Barbara Meyer zu Altenchildesche

RECIPE & PICTURE ©ROYAL MANGALITSA.COM