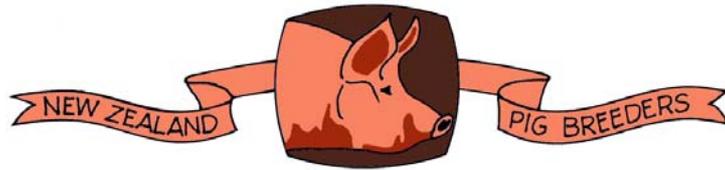


New Zealand Pig Breeders' Association



Identification of Pedigree Pigs

To register pedigree pigs with the Association, the pigs need to have a clearly traceable parentage, be purebred, and be individually identified.

The preferred method of ear marking is to use an ear notching system, although tattooing, ear tags and microchipping can also be used. The aim is to identify each pedigree piglet soon after birth, so that it is clearly traceable to the dam.

Ear notching is an ear marking system that allows each piglet to be individually marked, and if done correctly the marks are clearly visible throughout the life of the pig. The best time to ear notch a piglet is soon after birth, as in situations where multiple litters are born around the same time the piglets may cross-foster themselves, and it might not be clear later on which piglet actually belongs to which sow.

The Association recommends marking each piglet within 30 days of birth with at least the litter number. Some breeders may choose to mark piglets initially with only the litter mark, then later on select and mark with an individual mark only the ones that are to be kept on or registered.

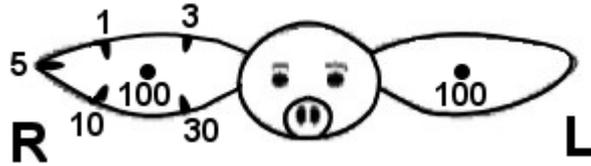
Once the litter is marked, complete the **Litter Notification Form** and send it to the Registrar within 60 days of farrow. There are no fees to pay, but it helps the Registrar to reconcile the details for any piglets that later become registered.

For ear notching, use an ear notching device that cuts a small 'V' of tissue from the edge of the ear. The idea is to make the 'V' deep enough that the mark will show permanently, but without making the mark too disfiguring to the ear structure. The notch cut in the ear may bleed for a while, but will usually stop bleeding without any problem. In general, the older the piglet the slightly deeper the 'V' should be in relation to the ear size to ensure that it will be permanently visible.

The recommended ear notching method is to use the **Right** ear as the **litter number** mark, and the **Left** ear as the **individual** mark for the pig.

For new breeders, it is suggested that the litter number starts at number 1, and continues in sequence. Where breeders breed more than one breed, it is suggested that each breed has its own litter number sequence.

The ear notch is made in the edge of the ear, with the placement of the notch to a pre-determined position on the ear to match the numbering system. To assist with getting the numbering correct when working with the piglets, it is a good idea to draw diagrams of the notch positions and have them handy, making sure the correct ear is used. The right ear is the ear on the right when looking at the back of the piglet's head from behind.



The **litter** mark is made in the piglet's right ear using a combination of notches.

Litter number 1 is a single notch in the 1 position

Litter number 2 is two notches in the 1 position

Litter number 3 is a single notch in the 3 position

Litter number 4 is notches in the 1 and 3 position

Litter number 9 is notches in the 1, 3 and 5 position, etc

20 is 2 notches at position 10

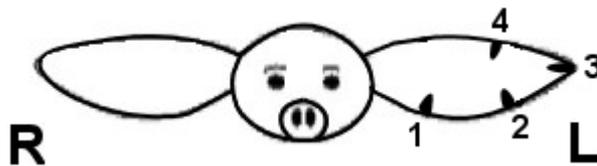
60 is 2 notches at position 30, etc

100 is a hole punched in the centre of the ear

200 is a hole punched into each ear.

The **individual** mark is used to identify between piglets in a litter, and is made in the pig's left ear using a combination of notches.

While a boar and a sow can have the same individual mark as they are clearly identifiable as being different pigs because they are different sexes, it is recommended to identify them with different marks to save any possible confusion later. Most breeders will ear notch the piglets of one sex first, then the other sex next i.e. sows first, then boars, so that there are less chances of making errors of identification later, particularly if the notches are difficult to see.

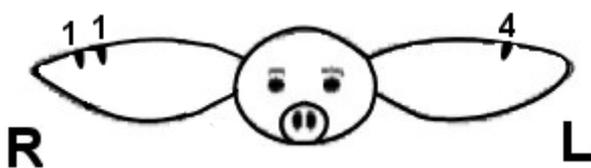


Piglet number 1 of that litter is a single notch in the 1 position

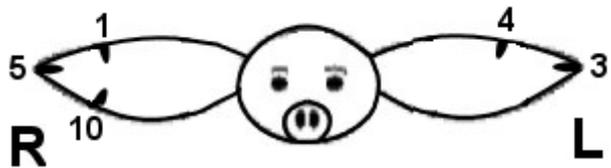
Piglet number 5 of that litter is notches in the 1 and 4 position

Piglet number 7 of that litter is notches in the 3 and 4 position, etc.

Examples:



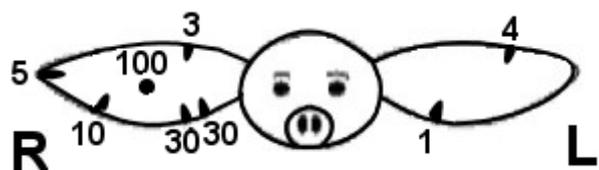
Litter number 2, Piglet number 4



Litter number 16, Piglet number 7



Litter number 33, Piglet number 9



Litter number 178, Piglet number 5