

LARGE BLACK

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THIS PAST WINTER WE PREPARED for the arrival of a Large Black Pig. Listed as a critically endangered breed of pig by the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy, the Large Black is a grazing breed, most suitable for pasturing operations. Native to southwestern England, the Large Black was one of the most numerous breeds in 1900, raised for bacon and pork.

After World War II, due to changing consumer demand and a shift to confinement feeding, the Large Black lost its prominence. In modern confinement feeding situations, the Large Black grows too large and produces too fatty a carcass. It is also slow to mature. Today only about 300 breeding Large Black hogs remain.

The Large Black is praised for its docile nature and its prolificacy. It interacts well with others and is suited to being raised outdoors in a wide range of climates. Large Blacks are hardy and good grazers. The sows are known for their mothering ability, milk capacity and ability to raise large litters on modest rations. All of these qualities make them ideal for the small farm. You can pick out a Large Black because of its color and large ears that protect the pig's eyes from briars and thorns when foraging.

Pig

SPOT-LITE

LARGE BLACK *Facts*

- Originally called the "Lop Eared Black"
- Native to Cornwall, Devon & Somerset in Southwestern England
- Peaked in popularity during the 1920s and was exported to Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Germany, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States
- Mature boars weigh 700 to 800 lbs.; mature sows reach 600 to 700 lbs.
- Not susceptible to sunburn because of its black color
- Breed originates from the Old English Hog established in the 16th and 17th centuries

