

Judges Expectations

Tyson Kimble, 2026 Asotin County Fair Swine Judge

Market Classes

My preferences are very consistent in market classes. When evaluating market hogs, muscle is my top priority. If the animal has enough muscle, my winners are also equipped with:

- Width of base and consistent progression from blade to hip
- A big top, with adequate muscle expression
- A bold rib cage, in particular, their upper rib cage, while still not being too shallow in terms of their lower rib
- A stout skull and bold blade with big feet and large toe spread
- A sound structural setup, being flexible off both ends.
- Levelness of design over their top and out of their hip, with the added heads-up look and elevation up front.

Showmanship

In swine showmanship, exhibitors should remember that the focus is on the animal. The goal is to present your market hog in a way that highlights its strengths and allows it to look its best. Good showmanship preparation begins at home.

Preparing Before the Show

Keep your hog and its pen as clean as possible. Hogs do not need to be bathed daily but washing them a few times before the show will reduce the amount of work needed at the fair. Regular brushing with a rice root brush helps toughen the skin and improve hair direction.

Hogs should be clipped to remove long or uneven hair. No hog should be clipped shorter than ½ inch (my preference and the Asotin County Fair requirement). The head and neck should be clipped shorter, blending forward from the shoulder. Ears and tails should also be cleaned up so the hair appears even. Leaving extra hair or “shag” on the legs, as is common in current show pig trends, is acceptable.

Work with your hog before the show using the driving tool you plan to use in the ring (whip, pipe, etc.). Daily practice is ideal, but any time spent working with your animal will improve its performance at the show.

Any driving tool is acceptable, but choose one that is easy for you to handle. I often recommend whips for younger exhibitors since pipes and canes can be harder for smaller showmen to manage.

In the Show Ring

Success in the show ring starts with preparation at home. While every judge has different priorities, the following are most important to me:

- **Control:** You should be driving your hog, not the other way around.
- **Cleanliness:** Your hog should be clean and well washed before entering the ring. Bring a rag and brush in case of any messes.
- **Use of Driving Tools:** Your driving tool should guide your hog but should not be overused. Excessive use can distract from your animal. If needed, I prefer a light tap with the brush rather than using your hand or knee.
- **Movement and Position:** Keep your hog moving with its head at a natural level. Use your driving tool to turn the hog by tapping the jowl and to move it forward by tapping the rear flank. Avoid the hock area.
- **Positioning in the Ring:** Keep your hog between you and the judge so it can always be clearly seen. Adjust as the judge moves around the ring.
- **Awareness:** Maintain awareness of both your hog and the judge, keeping eye contact when appropriate.
- **Ring Awareness:** Keep your hog moving and away from the rail, turning before it reaches the edge of the ring.

I will be asking age appropriate questions. Questions will include but are not limited to, feeding routines, daily care, meat industry questions, and questions like “what is your favorite trait about your animal?,” and “What is one thing you would change about your animal?”

New This Year

There will be a new pen setup this year for entering the show ring. There will be 10 individual pens so that classes can be preloaded. When entering the show ring I will ask one pig to enter at a time. Make sure that you are watching me for when I signal you to enter the ring. Also it is your responsibility to make sure that you and your pig are ready to enter the ring when I signal. Lastly, once you enter the show ring, I prefer that you shut your gate to the individual pen immediately after your pig enters the show ring.