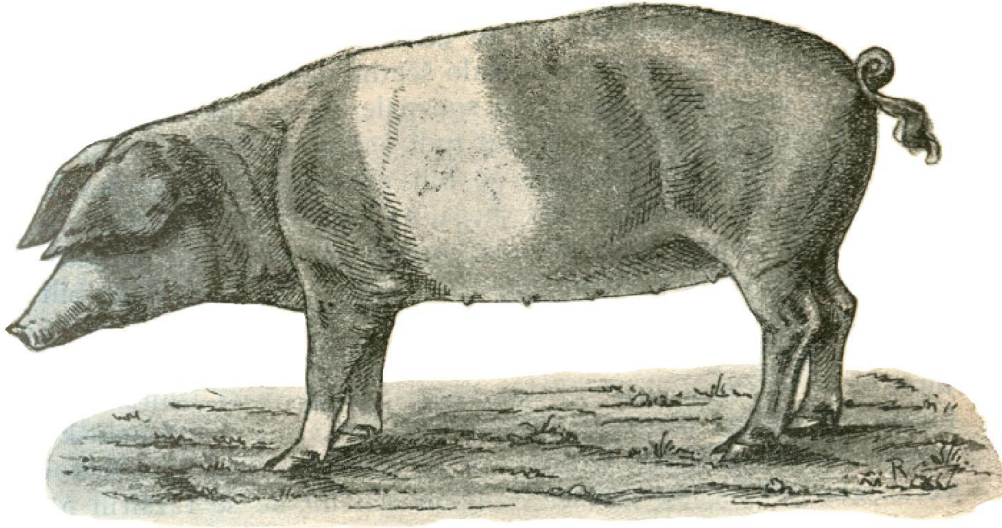


# KRŠKOPOLJE PIG

Slovenian indigenous pig breed



Krškopolje pig on the drawing from 1899 (Rohrman Viljem, 1899. *Prašičje pleme na Dolenjskem*. Kmetovalec, 16)



Krškopolje sow



Krškopolje pigs outdoor

## INTRODUCTION

The Krškopolje pig or black-belted pig is the only preserved Slovenian indigenous pig breed. It originates from the south-east part of Dolenjska region, the area of Krško-Brežiško field and in the foothills of Gorjanci hills. The breed is adapted to poor rearing environment. It has large appetite, great ability to produce fat, good meat quality, good resistance, good maternal traits, and moderate fertility traits. The breed was prosecuted in the past and only the most persistent breeders are deserving that breed still exists. After the year 2003, the interest of raising the Krškopolje pigs has increased. Consequently, the breeding herd in year 2011 consisted of 124 sows and 49 boars. However, breeders have on average only 1 to 2 sows.

## **HISTORY OF BREED**

The first known written record dates from the middle of 19th century. Rohrman (1899) prepared detailed description of breed in Kmetijske novice and he also named the breed as Krškopolje pig. He stressed that pigs in the Krško field are uniform in exterior, color, and also in other traits, and they are distinguishable from other breeds. However, many breeders from that time mixed and crossed the Krškopolje pig with Yorkshire. In the rural survey from the year 1938, Oblak pointed out that original Krškopolje pig could be found only in the most distant villages. After the second world war, many studies in fertility, fattening and meatiness of Krškopolje pig was performed (Eiselt and Ferjan, 1972). On the other hand, breeders were left to themselves without any professional support at breeding and rearing. The breed was put to the list of endangered Slovenian breeds in the year 1991. The herdbook was established in the year 1992, three family farms were included in gene bank and they started with pedigree and performance recording.

## **BREED CHARACTERISTICS**

The Krškopolje pig is middle to large breed. Adult sows have body length between 155 and 175 cm, wither height between 80 and 85 cm, and rump height between 85 and 90 cm. Breed is adapted to poor rearing conditions, resistant, and it has efficient use of forage. Their temperament is calm. The breed has moderate good fertility. The first parity sows have 8.2 liveborn piglets per litter and sows in higher parities 10.4 liveborn piglets. Sows together have 7.9 weaned piglets per litter. Fatteners are capable to gain 1 kg/day, however the composition of gain is bad in this case. Slaughter yield is near 80% and the lean meat content is between 40 and 45%.

### **Description of exterior**

The breed has characteristic continuous white belt over shoulder; forelegs are white, and nose top should be white, as well. The rest of the body is black. Head is medium sized, with looped ears of medium length and face slightly dished. Body is wide and not too deep; back is long, wide, and straight; shoulders are strong and medium width; hams are broad, full, and long. Coat is strong and strait, and dark over pigmented parts of the body.

### **The purpose of rearing**

The Krškopolje pig is intended for production of high quality meat and lard under poorer conditions with high fiber fodder. Pigs can be kept outdoor. The research of Furman et al. (2010) showed that Krškopolje pigs have advantageous fatty acid composition of meat and fat tissue for human nutrition compared to commercial fatteners.

## **KRŠKOPOLJE PIG TODAY**

The Krškopolje pig is listed among endangered Slovenian breeds of farm animals. In the Krško-Brežice field, the breed was preserved by four family farms, After the year 2002, it is gradually increased to close to 60 farms across entire Slovenia. There are 14 farms among them with the status of breeding farms. The breeding herd consisted of 30 sows and 4 boars in the year 2003. At present, there are 133 sows, 34 gilts and 35 boars. Farms have between one and 30 sows and practically every farm has a boar. Over the last years, between 40 and 70 buyers purchase around 200 pigs for fattening from breeding farms. The breed is included in the breeding program for pigs SloHibrid, which is run by the Chamber for Agriculture and Forestry of Slovenia.

## **PRODUCTS AND MARKETING**

Anonymous author in 1956 noted that meat of Krškopolje pig was used to prepare Kranjska sausage. Original area of Krškopolje pig covers district where Cviček wine is produced. The wine goes well together with dishes prepared from meat of Krškopolje pig. The meat is tasty, due to the high content of intramuscular fat. It is suitable for roasted pork or preparation of traditional dried products (e.g. salami, sausages, dried hams ...).

Weaner piglets could be purchased from farms and breeding farms, while fatteners could be purchased from farms which perform fattening only. The list of farmers could be supplied by the Society of Krškopolje pig breeders. The society prepares trade mark "Meat products from Krškopolje pig", it makes promotion of sale of live animals and products, as well. The society provides addresses where you can buy meat products or you can try dishes from Krškopolje pig.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL POSSIBILITIES**

Despite considerable enlargement of population over last years, the breed is not numerous and consequently it is endangered. Further enlargement of population, as well as organized activities of breeders are needed for long term preservation. The breed will live if it will be in function and thus interesting for breeders also from economic perspective.

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