

Sow with eleven live piglets.



This young sow produced eleven live piglets today.

We bought 120 piglets two weeks ago. Those pigs were weaned before we brought them home.

It is always fun to have a sow with little pigs on the farm. Gail searched the Internet and found a bred gilt for sale.

A gilt is a young female pig. A gilt becomes a sow when it gives birth.

We (especially Gail) have been watching the expectant mom closely so we could help when she farrowed. (Farrowing is the act of giving birth to piglets.) Gail checked on the gilt late last night. The pig was in labor and had one live piglet. Gail spent most of the night watching and assisting. It took the sow about six hours to eject all her litter. The last one was full size and perfectly formed but still-born. That is not unusual. The whole process probably just took too long for that one.

Normally, a farmer can save one or two pigs per litter by being there to help. Sometimes you can save a newborn from being crushed. Sometimes you can clean tissue so the piglet can breathe. I have saved some by squeezing their chest to initiate breathing.

Gail saved a couple last night.

This gilt is mostly Red Wattle although she does not look it. She was mated to a full Red Wattle boar, yet the pigs show few Red Wattle markings. That leads me to assume the Red Wattle characteristics of solid red color and wattles are recessive traits that are only common in purebreds.

The sow is good natured and a fine mother. They have their own shed and pasture.

She and this fine litter will be fun to have around. Tom