



Established For the Members, By the Members Working Together, the Possibilities are Endless!

Buying And Selling KuneKunes

(Caveat Emptor)

By: Debra Allen



It is becoming increasingly clear that the KuneKune breed is under attack by unscrupulous breeders and scam artists who sell mixed breed or other breed pigs as pure KuneKune. They're in it for only one reason....money. They don't

care about breed standards, lineage, health, deworming, mothering ability, keeping only the best as breeders, temperament...only how many pigs can they raise and sell in the shortest amount of time.

One of the amazing things about KuneKunes is their versatility. They're awesome animals that are relatively easy to care for compared to their 800 pound commercial cousins. There are markets for breeding animals and for meat animals.

Over the last decade, we've seen a huge resurgence of small farms, and people choosing to raise their own food by way of gardening and/or by raising livestock. Many of these small acreage farms look for animals that adapt easily to that type of farm. Kunekune pigs are ideal. Smaller, easy to feed plus they graze, better temperaments, easier on pasture and fences, and great for families with kids.

As demand has increased, disreputable people started crossbreeding KuneKunes with other small breeds including Juliannas and Potbellies, and others...and try to pass them off as pure KuneKunes. Some KuneKune traits like colors and wattles are fairly dominant. Just because a pig has wattles, doesn't mean it's a KuneKune! Red wattle pigs, for example, have wattles as well. I myself have spoken to numerous people recently (6 in the last two weeks alone) that are out hundreds to thousands of dollars on piglets sold by scam artists. I've spoken to people who've ended up with mixed breed pigs, sick pigs, malnourished pigs, aggressive pigs.....

I'm writing this article in hopes of pointing out some things you can do as either a REPUTABLE breeder or as a KNOWLEDGEABLE buyer....before a sale.

And....the importance of buying a registered KuneKune...even if you're only raising pigs for pork. Start with registered pigs. I can't say this enough. The reason we love our KuneKunes is because of the traits the breed is known for. Not every piglet born meets the breed standard and deserves to be registered.

******Being A Smart Buyer******

1. Decide on why you want a pig

Are you a homesteader and want to raise your own pork? Do you want to raise and sell breeding stock? Some other reason or all of the above? Know why you want a pig and then.....

2. Do research and educate yourself

I can't emphasize this enough! The internet is full of information on different breeds of pigs. Do you want one that grows bigger or faster? Or one that roots less, is smaller and has a better temperament? If you've decided that a kunekune fits your goals and lifestyle best, congratulations! But...if you're unwilling to eat them yourself, or sell them to people for pork, then this may not be the breed for you.

Before you even look at pigs to buy, read everything you can. Each registry has information available about the breed. The British Kunekune Society (BKKPS), the American Kunekune Society (AKKPS) and the International Kunekune Hog Registry (IKHR) have info on their websites. The Empire Kunekune Pig Association (EKPA) is a group that also has lots of educational information on KuneKunes and excels in the pork producing side of things. The KPPA (Kunekune Pork Producers Association) is part of the EKPA.

[AKKPS Education Link](#)

[EKPA Link](#)

Learn breed standards and basic breed info. Understand basic terminology.

Nothing paints you more as a newbie than to not know a thing about KuneKunes. You become fodder for scammers who want to sell substandard or mixed breed mutts to the uninformed. Know the basics of breed standards and conformation. Know what a "wattle" is and PLEASE don't use "waddle". Ducks waddle. KuneKunes have wattles. And it's not "guilt, or bore, or boer"... it's "gilt, or boar". There's a dictionary of pig terms on the AKKPS website.

[PIG TERMS \(click here\)](#)

I have a bore, a gilt, a sow and three female piglets. One of the red piglets does not have waddles. See.

(actual ad from Facebook)

Check out the [AKKPS color chart \(click\)](#) and [KuneKune line names \(click\)](#). A newbie likes the 'orange' pigs. When an educated buyer likes 'ginger' ones.

Learn what it takes to own a KuneKune

Food, water, shelter, fencing, pasture....minimum basics before buying and bringing home a pig.

Visit some breeder farms. See how they do it.

Ask questions. A breeder in Florida has different requirements than a breeder in Minnesota.

One of the biggest myths about KuneKunes is that they only need grass or pasture to eat. WRONG! All pigs are omnivores, not herbivores. They require certain nutrients in their diets to thrive. Yes, they graze and yes their pig feed requirements are less than commercial type pigs. But they require pig feed.

A personal pet peeve of mine is people wanting pigs, or any farm animal really, being unwilling or unable to give that animal what it needs to be healthy and content. Don't buy any animal if you can't feed it appropriate feed for its breed, don't have or can't afford proper veterinarian care if the animal gets sick, or you don't have proper ways of watering or sheltering the animal, or keeping it contained correctly.

And don't forget...pigs are herd animals. You need to buy in pairs. Two gilts, two barrows, a gilt or a boar and a barrow, two boars etc. Do not plan to keep a male and a female together all the time.

[Learn basic medical care \(click\)](#)

You need to know the minimum information to take care of your animal's health. Even such things as taking a temperature might save an animal's life. Your KuneKunes will need deworming, vaccinations, castration, tusk trimming, hoof trimming etc. You need to either learn to do these things yourself or pay someone else to do them. You must learn to give shots! Learn what to do if your animal becomes sick or injured. Have a veterinarian available to help.

Learn basic breeding information (click)

If you're going to raise piglets, whether for your own use or to sell, you need basic information on pig reproduction, anatomy, heat cycles, maintaining breeding animals, farrowing and care of piglets. This is a big undertaking and responsibility. Don't do it if you won't take the time to educate yourself beforehand. It's sad and frustrating to see instance after instance of people not understanding basic reproductive concepts and ending up losing litters and even sows because of ignorance.

- **Know local/state laws**

Many towns and cities don't allow livestock to be raised in the city limits. And pigs are noisy! Many states have very strict laws on selling meat products to others. KuneKune Pork Producers Association has lots of information on raising KuneKunes for pork.

- **Buy registered (or certificate pigs)(click)**

Really. Almost every single person I've spoken to who started with unregistered pigs, switched to registered within a year. Yes it's more expensive to start with registered KuneKunes. Ultimately, registered pigs give you more flexibility in sales opportunities when it comes time to sell either piglets or pork.

- **Join the AKKPS registry (click)**

Most have extra benefits for joining and it's worth it to have a place to start in your kuneKune owning journey.

- **Find a breeder (click)**

Each registry has a breeders list. The AKKPS has a robust search function to make it easy to find breeders in your state. Buy only from a breeder who belongs to the registry! The registry can help you with problems with registration that come from other members but can't help you if the seller isn't a member.

Depending on your goals, you should already be aware of what you'd like to buy. Are you looking to only buy barrows for meat? Are you looking for unrelated piglets for breeding purposes? Are you wanting to sell pork products to high end restaurants or the public at farmer's markets etc.? The AKKPS offers meat pig certification for those pigs who are not registerable. This guarantees the end consumer is buying certified heritage breed kunekune pork.

- **ASK QUESTIONS.** Visit a farm if you can.

Sellers must have basic knowledge of the breed! If they don't, 🚩. If they don't know correct color terminology, 🚩. If they can't give you a contract or at minimum a receipt with terms and conditions, 🚩. They must be a current registry member. The pig or piglet should be listed in the herd book...either as fully registered, pending, or under certificate status. Check that the dam of the piglets is in the same name as the person selling you the piglets (aka the breeder). If not, 🚩.

- **Buying Your Pig**



Don't buy from an auction, a swap meet, a vendor at a fair, or some random person on a local marketplace. Don't buy an obviously sick, underage, or undersized pig or piglet! Do not buy a 'bottle baby'! Don't 'rescue' a pig. "Rescuing", by paying these unscrupulous people, is just enabling them to continue to exploit these animals.



It's frustrating and heartbreaking to see and hear from people who have made spur of the moment purchases of pigs and end up spending money, time and effort on these pigs and they end up dying or stunted, or bringing a disease onto the property. Or they get scammed by buying mixed breed pigs with zero kunekune blood. If you did your research, you know why you wanted a kunekune. Mixed breed pigs don't have these breed traits. If you educated yourself, you'd know that a kunekune shouldn't be weaned/sold until it reaches a minimum age of 8 weeks. If you educated yourself, you'd know an average 8 week old piglet weighs about 15-20 pounds...sometimes more. If you educated yourself, you'd know what a pig looks like if it has pneumonia, mange, a scrotal hernia, greasy pig etc. Don't buy an aggressive pig of any age. Kunekunes with

aggression are very rare, but it's common in mixed breeds. If the seller won't go into a pen with the pig, 🚩.

More red flags: 🚩🚩🚩🚩🚩🚩

1. Using terms like “mini pig” or “teacup” or not using proper terms for colors (saying orange instead of ginger) or using ‘waddles’ instead of ‘wattles’.
2. Selling underage piglets or underweight for age
3. Selling pigs with rough coats, bloated bellies, runny noses, injuries, mangy, cloudy eyes, boars with undescended testicles or a scrotal hernia. Verify gilts have even teats and no inverted ones. Manure can be a good indicator of the health of a piglet. Their poo should be fairly hard and solid. Be wary if the excrement is very soft, runny or has traces of blood in it. These can be signs that the pig you are viewing is sick.
4. Do not buy overweight pigs. An overweight pig can suffer all manner of health problems, such as: becoming lame, a higher risk of becoming blind, infertility, and a higher risk of arthritis. An obese animal may need to be placed on a diet to help him/her lose weight. It can be a tough job to slim a pig – they are very stubborn animals, changing their diet can lead to them becoming noisy, aggressive and problematic.
5. Sellers having no health protocol (deworming, vaccinations, iron shots)
6. Selling entire litters as breeding quality. Not every piglet born is breeding quality! No reputable breeder with knowledge of breed standards will register every piglet out of a litter, unless money is the only consideration.
7. Selling on pictures of newborns. Ask for current photos.
8. Selling with photos of piglets being held. You need to see the conformation of the pig standing to properly assess.
9. Not feeding proper diet or underfeeding
10. Seller ‘pressuring you’ to make a decision
11. Seller asking for a large deposit without providing a receipt or contract

Sample contract (click)

12. Selling pigs as ‘purebreds’ without being registered. An unregistered pig is not purebred...no matter what the seller says.
13. They don't offer to support you after the sale. A seller must be a mentor. They must want you to be successful with your pig.

14. Seller seems unfamiliar with registration process (litter notification, DNA)
15. Seller has not entered litter notification
16. Seller does not respond to requests for updates on registration process
17. If the pig you're buying is in the herd book, verify that the person you're buying the pig from is the person listed as the current owner of the pig.
18. There are two ways to transfer a registered pig with the AKKPS. Either the seller completes the online transfer of the pig or the seller can sign the front of the original registration papers and the buyer completes the transfer online. Either way, make sure you have a detailed bill of sale listing pigs AKKPS number and information on both buyer and seller.
19. Quarantine your new purchase. Your new pigs must be kept and housed separately from your other pigs for at least 30 days. This hopefully prevents exposing an established herd to disease or parasites. New pigs should be dewormed and vaccinated appropriately, if needed.
20. If your seller lives in another state, be aware of state laws regarding transport of animals across state lines. Some states require testing or a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) to accompany any transported animal. A buyer often pays these extra costs.
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(Photos of pigs sold to people as kunekunes....they are NOT!
Photos used with permission)

When viewing stock you need to be able to walk away if you think the pigs are not up to standard. **Do not let your heart rule your head.** You need to buy the healthiest stock with the best genetics/conformation you can afford. Buying anything less, or purchasing a sickly animal, could lead to additional vet bills and heartache in the future.

The State of Delaware just passed a law regarding certain kinds of pigs be considered an invasive species because careless breeders have allowed escaped pigs to become feral. As of now, **registered** kunekunes are exempt. As states start to make more laws (and they will), remember to make the best purchasing choices you can.

****Being A Reputable Breeder****

1. **Join the AKKPS (click)** The registry has a vast array of helpful information and marketing tools to help your breeding business thrive. You can even list pigs

for sale. It has sample contracts and help guides to take you thru the easy and fast registration process. Registration fees are included in your membership.

2. **Mentor your clients.** Provide information before and after the sale. A reputable breeder wants their clients to be successful with their pigs. Happy buyers create repeat buyers and positive word of mouth.

3. **Take proper care of your pigs.** Do I even need to mention this? Yes! Proper feed, health protocols including iron shots, deworming, and vaccines are important). Castrate boarlings heading for meat herds. Don't sell intact piglets without registrations.

4. **Practice biosecurity.** Understand and practice quarantine methods when bringing in a new pig. You may request a visitor not enter a pen or touch a pig while on a visit. This protects the pigs and the owner and the visitor (research zoonoses).

[Biosecurity \(click\)](#)

[Zoonoses \(click\)](#)

5. **Don't 'rent' out boars** or offer 'stud service' to outside people. It's risky both from a biosecurity standpoint but also from a risk of death or injury to the pigs. Just not worth it.

6. **Good sellers do all registration or transfer paperwork promptly.** And keep buyers updated on the status of registrations. DNA results can take weeks.

7. **Don't register every piglet as breeding quality.** Every piglet should be litter notified and indicated as a meat pig, under observation for later determination, or for breeding. An educated breeder knows the breed standard and only sells piglets that at a minimum meet the standard. Piglets with obvious faults should end up in the meat pen or at freezer camp. **The success of the future of the breed relies on responsible breeders only registering the best and eating the rest.**

8. **Ask buyer questions about goals.** Help guide them to a pig that bests serves their purpose. A piglet from smaller parents is not a good choice for someone wanting to raise meat pigs.

9. **Good sellers verify that buyers can properly care for a pig.** Feed, shelter, water, fencing etc. Proper infrastructure needs to be in place before taking pig home. Share that pigs are herd animals and single pigs may not thrive.

10. **Offer to sponsor a membership in the AKKPS.** It's inexpensive and gives the buyer immediate 'ownership' in his successful journey as a kunekune buyer.
11. **Update information in the herd book promptly.** Change of status from under observation to registered for example.
12. **Advertise pigs for sale in the AKKPS herd book.**
13. **Be ethical and honest.**
14. **Don't sell piglets that have hernias, or are cryptorchid, or are sick.**
15. **Keep good records**

Raising KuneKunes can be a rewarding farming enterprise. Very few pig operations are identical to one another, allowing producers a variety of opportunities to develop a program that uniquely suits their lifestyle and farming enterprise. This brief introduction just touches on a few of the aspects to think about when considering buying (or selling) a kunekune.