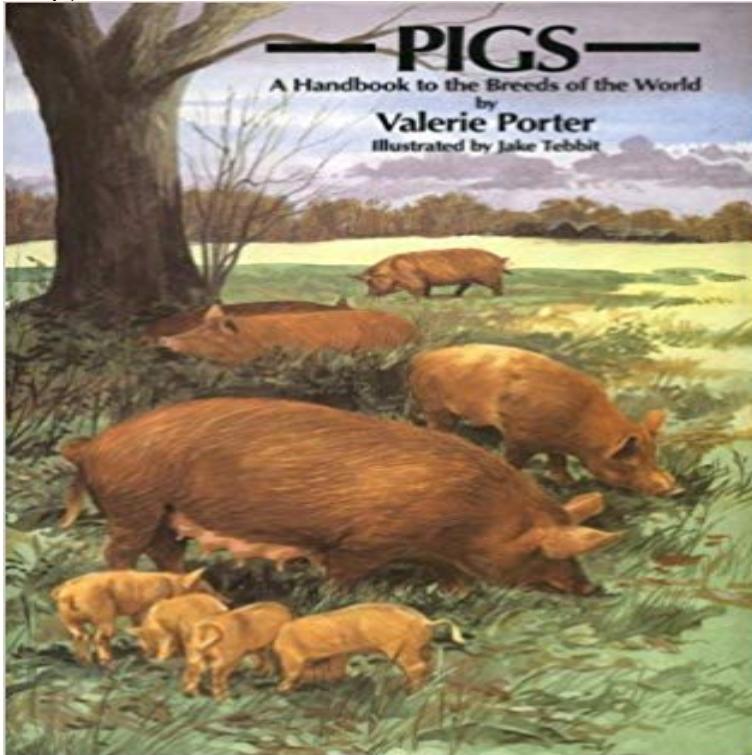


Pigs: A Handbooks to the Breeds of the World



Far beyond providing meat, fertilizer, and leather, the pig has played an essential role in the evolution of many different cultures. The ability - or inability - of a culture to domesticate the pig has been a crucial factor in the development of its mores, taboos, prejudices, social customs, and agricultural practices. This profusely illustrated book includes an amazing amount of information about pigs from all over the world. Valerie Porter studies every breed, type, and variety of pigs; their ancestors and relatives; and their wild, domestic, or feral habitats. She begins with the pig's origin in the wild state, and moves on to its biology, domestication, and hybridization. Grouping the species accounts by continent - Europe, Asia, Australasia, Africa, and America - and country of origin, Porter places the pigs of each region in a cultural as well as an agricultural context. The author shows how different countries developed their own breeds, and includes ample references to influential breeds that are rare or extinct. In her discussion of basic genetics, we learn that the preservation of ancient breeds, both European and oriental, is vital today because the search for the perfect animal requires as varied a genetic pool as possible. Porter describes natural environments to which pigs of all kinds have adapted, as well as other factors that have influenced their development. We learn about the historic movements of pig-keeping cultures and hence the spread of pig domestication - for instance, the arrival of domesticated pigs that were taken to unlikely places by navigators and explorers. Along the way, she includes other complicated and intriguing stories about the history of different breeds, and she describes pig industries in different countries, past and present. How large is the world's pig population? Which part of the world has the most pigs and why? Many readers will enjoy learning about the pig

and its place in the development of societies and cultures, and the book will be an invaluable reference for professional agriculturalists, particularly those in developing countries, teachers and students of veterinary science and animal science, and commercial pig-breeding companies. Valerie Porter is the author of numerous books on livestock, including the highly acclaimed *Cattle: A Handbook to the Breeds of the World*. Jake Tebbit is an animal illustrator who works extensively in the agricultural industry.

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