

## Testimonials

Newman Farm pork is the best pork in the USA. By respecting nature's way and allowing the pigs to range freely, and because they are fed nothing artificial, the pigs acquire excellent marbling that this country's greatest chefs swear by. Patrick Martins and Sarah Obraitis - Heritage Foods USA. [www.heritagefoodsusa.com](http://www.heritagefoodsusa.com) Oh yes, here comes the Porchetta and this time it's fancy Berkshire Pig from Newman Farm I haven't had a lot of the Newman Farm product, but what I have had has been rich and tasty. A little redder than one might have guessed, so nice. Fatted Calf - San Francisco, Ca. Look up this website [www.fattedcalf.com](http://www.fattedcalf.com). June 18, 2006 Life at the Newman Farm The sky over Mark and Rita Newman's farm was filled with big, billowing clouds cast in silver lining. The day was gorgeous. It had rained buckets mid-day for about 15 minutes and then settled down. We're at the top of the Ozarks and just above the Arkansas border and the delta; it's a lush, green haven. The Beatles hid out just down the road from Newman's place when they needed some respite in the 1960s.

Touring Mark's farm is like going to class. Mark is a pig professor; he knows just about everything on hog production because he's live through it all. He's worked for the huge confinement plants, consulted for the World Bank, developed supply in Jamaica and China, studied outdoor production methods in England and finally he settled on the raising the best and only 100% pure-bred Berkshire pigs in America.

His family is wonderful. They eat, drink and are very merry (and sarcastic!). All four kids and their families came to event at Lidia's in KC and when we visited them today, Father's Day, we were able to hang out some more with his son Chris. Chris talked about wanting to come back to the farm one day and work it. Hopefully his other brother, David, will too. He's getting a PhD in animal and meat science and has been sought after by Cargill and the likes. I'm crossing my fingers that Mark's boys continue the heritage on Newman farm.

They have a small house behind their own that used to be the Meat Shop where they retailed cuts from their pigs and other homemade products from local communes and farms. The place is filled with nifty knick knacks and the walls are papered with old-school signs promoting pork. Later in life I'm going to insist I come back and reopen the shop.

There's a huge sign at the gate for Newman's Heritage Berkshire Pork inviting people in and so many of their friends came to know the Newmans just from stopping by. Their farm and their home are so welcoming, they belong in the pages of Country Living and the Father Day's BBQ they hosted was out of Saveur or Gourmet magazine celebrating Americana, good times and comfort foods. A beautiful mix of folksy people, military veterans and musicians came over. A guy named George played with Neil Diamond decades ago and a great fiddler from Mountain View, AR came with her instrument and played with David and Anthony while we all sang along. It was almost too good to be true.

It feels like we are being parented by the best farmers of the country. We're staying in their kids rooms, grabbing food from their fridges, gaining their wisdom and learning their histories. We're so fortunate to be here in the heart of America, where farming is the essence of life. - Sarah

If I were a pig I would need to be a pig on Newman farm. Defining happiness for a beast is not easy- what makes an animal happy? The answer to that question is to be a pig on Newman Farm. Newman pigs live on a series of bushy and Moorish fields divided by electric fences that can't be seen through the thicket. They spend their days in huts and mud ponds and wait for Mark and his farmhand to deliver food once a day. The pigs boarder on being feral but in the end they are food. These animals are the only 100% Berkshires raised 100% on pasture for their entire lives.

After a tour of the farm, Sarah and I finished invoicing for the week as Mark, Rita and their bulky son Chris prepared for a Southern Feast. When it began there was part of me that felt like I was in a Dukes of Hazard episode. We were in the true South in the heart of the Ozarks. Guests at the event was a guitar player who played with the likes of Neil Diamond and Bob Dylan and Elvis Presley; a four star general who was in charge of 12 of the 18 divisions of the US army under Reagan; young Phillip who cried because Daddy didn't invite him out for a Sunday armadillo hunt; the head folklorist for the state of Arkansas also a Slow Food member; a fiddler from Arkansas; and numerous other friends who sang as the crew played the harmonica and the guitar. Baseball and Frisbee was played in the fields while mangy dogs nipped at bare feet. The whole hog BBQ was superb and ended with homemade vanilla ice cream. Rita is a most gracious host and leaves you wanting for nothing. The whole event last 8 hours but it felt like 8 minutes. Sleep is intense at Newman farm, the only noise coming from the rustling of pigs in the fields.

Southern culture is an Art product in and of itself. It's a dying culture that forever appears more and more marginalized. But there is charm and tradition and honor there and it would be tragic for it to ever end. I notice that Southern humor is self-deprecating. The common man is the respected one and even the expert plays the novice. The humor embraces the hillbilly and ignorant stereotype even though of course they don't believe it. One of my favorite objects in the Newman home, one I hope to find one day, is an old Mountain Dew glass bottle with a label of a man shooting an intruder with a pig looking on and on the back its written Mountain Dew, the hillbilly drink.- Patrick

- Patrick Martins and Sarah Obraitis