



Results for DanBred pigs 2025

Tage Ostersen, Mark Henryon, Jens Vinther, Christian Sørensen,
Line Busk Jensen, Ole F. Christensen and Anders Vernersen

Breeding & Genetics, Danish Agriculture & Food Council Pig Research Center



Main conclusion

DanBred delivers breeding progress on survival and bottom line.

DanBred pigs once again show historically high productivity with number of weaned pigs per sow per year of 37.3 in 2024 and a steady improvement in the production value of weaners and finishers. Piglet survival has had annual breeding progress of 3.4 percentage points and sow survival of 1.1 percentage points over the past two years and is thus the largest contributor to the total realized breeding progress measured in the DanBred nucleus. In the coming years, the expectation is that the overall breeding progress will continue to be high, and that piglet survival and sow survival will contribute most to the overall breeding progress. Our new trait in the breeding goal – litter weight gain – goes straight in as the third-most important trait.

Results for DanBred pigs 2025 include:

1. Production results for DanBred pigs
2. Breeding progress in the DanBred nucleus
3. Prognosis of breeding progress

1. Production results for DanBred pigs

DanBred pigs have the world's highest productivity.

Production herds in Denmark that base their genetics on DanBred LY sows crossed with DanBred Duroc show supreme key figures in both sow, weaner and finisher herds in 2024 [1].

Sow herds. For sow herds with DanBred genetics, the production results are the highest reported averages for any breeding company in the world. In 2024, the sows weaned 37.3 piglets, which can be compared to 35.6 from the national average [2], and had a total piglet mortality of 21.4% (Table 1). In the period 2022 to 2024, weaned piglets per annual sow increased stably between 0.9 and 1 piglet per annual sow per year, just as total piglet mortality has fallen stably by 0.8 percentage points per year (Figure 1). Live born piglets per litter have also increased steadily during the period with 0.3 extra pigs per year.

Table 1. Key figures for sow herds using DanBred genetics and average for top 10% sow herds (after weaned pigs per annual sow). The key figures for the years are calculated as weighted (by herd size) averages, while the top 10% key figures are simple averages [1].

Period	2022	2023	2024	Top 10% – 2024
Number of herds	135	125	141	12
Number of herds with feed registrations	122	114	124	12
Ratios				
Sows per year, pcs. ¹	891	910	974	987
FUsv + FUsov per sow per year ²	1,520	1,531	1,542	1,517
Litter results				
1st parity litters, %	22.2	22.3	23.5	22.3
Liveborn per litter, pcs.	18.6	18.9	19.2	20.0
Stillborn per litter, pcs.	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.9
Weaned per litter, pcs.	15.8	16.2	16.5	18.0
Lactation period, days	31	31	30	29
Weight at weaning, kg	6.0	5.9	5.8	5.6
Deaths until weaning, %	15.0	14.3	13.9	10.0
Total piglet mortality, %	23.0	22.2	21.4	17.9
Reproduction				
Non-productive days per litter	14.5	14.1	14.0	10.0
Days from weaning to mating	6.0	6.1	6.3	5.7
Returns, %	5.0	5.5	5.0	3.9
Farrowing percentage, %	87.5	87.5	88.0	90.9
Weaned pigs per sow per year, pcs.	35.4	36.3	37.3	41.9
Litters per sow per year, pcs.	2.24	2.24	2.25	2.33

¹ The key figure for "Sows per year, pcs." is calculated as a simple average

² FUsv + FUsov per sow per year is only included from herds that are in the interval 1,000-2,000 FU.

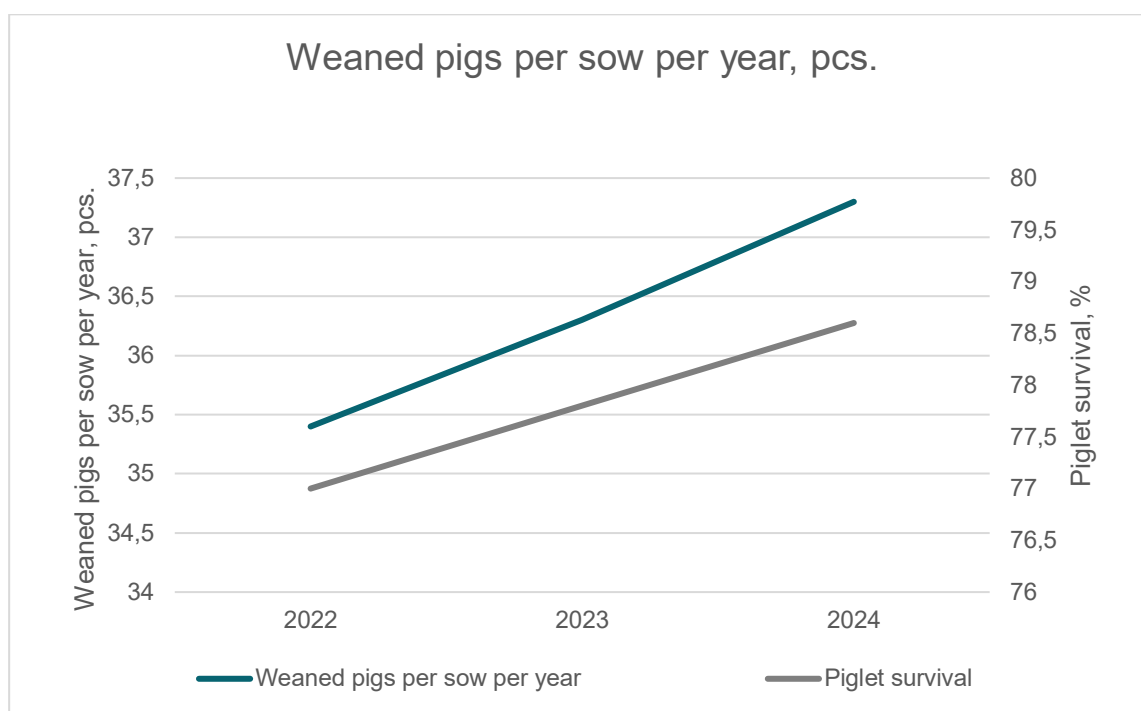


Figure 1. The development in weaned pigs per sow per year and piglet survival in percent (100 - total piglet mortality) for sow herds with DanBred genetics [1].

Weaner herds. Overall, throughout the period since 2022, there has been a high level of productivity in weaner herds that used DanBred genetics (Table 2). Total productivity, expressed by the production value per pen space, has been increasing in the period 2022 to 2024 – with an increase of 9% from 2022 to 2024 (Table 2, Figure 2). It is especially improvements in feed efficiency and mortality that have driven the positive development. The top 10%, measured by production value per pen space, had a reference feed efficiency of 1.62 FUsv per kg gain, and a mortality rate of 2.7% (Table 2).

Table 2. Key figures for weaner herds with DanBred genetics and average for top-10% weaner herds (by production value per pen place). The key figures for the years are calculated as weighted (by herd size) averages, while the top 10% key figures are simple averages [1].

	2022	2023	2024	Top 10% – 2024
Number of herds	93	75	82	8
Number of herds with feed registrations	85	69	77	8
Ratios				
Pigs produced per year, pcs. ¹	29,074	27,157	31,639	42,841
Daily gain, g	460	457	452	502
Reference daily gain (7-30 kg), g ²	468	471	470	518
Feed consumption per kg gain, FUsv	1.77	1.72	1.73	1.61
Reference feed efficiency (7-30 kg), FUsv per kg gain ³	1.77	1.73	1.74	1.62
Reference feed efficiency (7-30 kg), kg feed per kg gain	1.55	1.52	1.53	1.42
Died, %	5.0	4.0	4.5	2.7
Weight at introduction, kg	6.2	6.0	5.9	5.6
Weight at the time of sale, kg	30.9	30.0	29.9	31.3
PV per pen space per year, EUR ⁴	57	64	62	83
Index (PV per pen space per year) ⁴	100	112	109	-

¹ The key figure for "pigs produced per year, pcs." is calculated as a simple average between herds.

² Reference feed utilization and reference daily gain corrects the measured averages to the standard weight range of 7-30 kg, thereby enabling comparison between the results achieved in each year [1].

³Reference feed efficiency has been converted from Feed Units to kg using the conversion rate 1.14 FU/kg feed.

⁴The production values in this table are calculated on the basis of the average results obtained for productivity. The same price assumptions were used for all years [1].

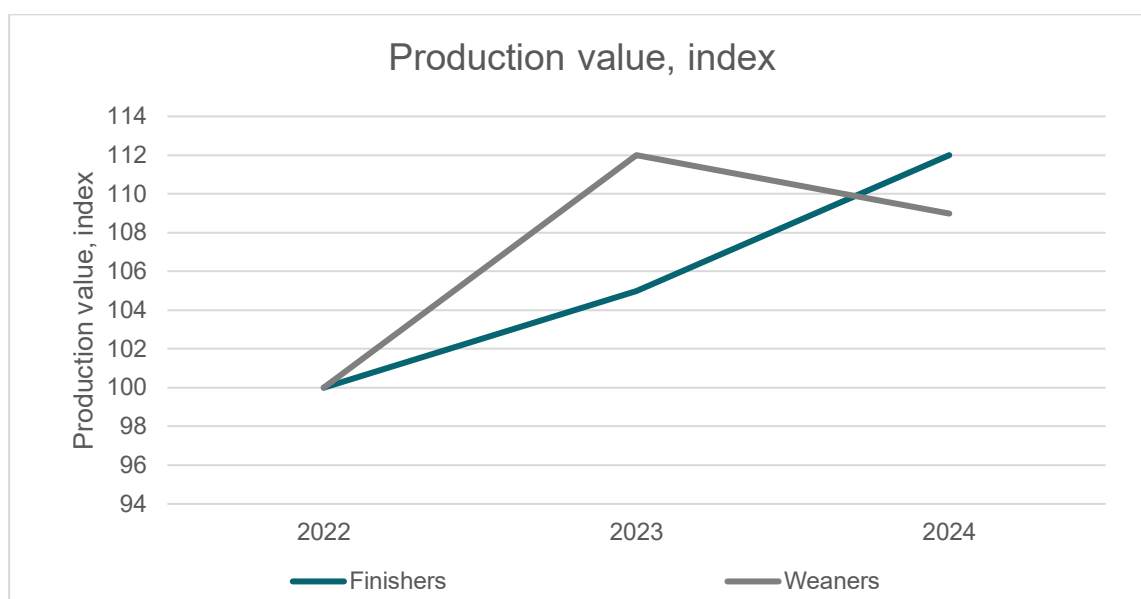


Figure 2. Development in the index for production value per pen space for weaners and finishers with DanBred genetics [1].

Finisher herds. The productivity of finisher herds has increased significantly and steadily over the period with 5-7% improvements in production value per pen space per year (Table 3, Figure 2). This is particularly driven by a steady improvement in feed efficiency from 2.46 kg feed per kg gain in 2022 to 2.38 in 2024. In addition, reference daily gain for finisher herds with DanBred genetics increased by 25 grams from 2022 to 2024 (Table 3). In 2024, the top 10%, measured by production value per pen space, had a reference feed efficiency of 2.23 kg feed per kg gain, a mortality rate of 2.4% and a reference daily gain of 1162 grams (Table 3).

Table 3. Key figures for finisher herds with DanBred genetics and average for top-10% finisher herds (by production value per pen place). The key figures for the years are calculated as weighted (by herd size) averages, while the top 10% key figures are simple averages [1].

	2022	2023	2024	Top 10% – 2024
Number of herds	351	392	406	37
Number of herds with feed registration	266	330	363	37
Ratios				
Pigs produced per year, pcs. ¹	7,906	7,572	8,495	11,239
Daily gain, g	1,058	1,065	1,081	1,161
Reference daily gain (30-115 kg), g ²	1,055	1,063	1,080	1,162
Feed intake per pig per day, FUsv	2.77	2.77	2.79	2.81
Feed consumption per kg gain, FUsv	2.63	2.60	2.58	2.43
Reference feed efficiency (30-115 kg), FUsv per kg gain ²	2.62	2.59	2.55	2.39
Reference feed efficiency (30-115 kg), kg feed per kg gain ³	2.45	2.42	2.38	2.23
Weight at introduction, kg	31.0	30.8	30.3	29.4
Slaughter weight, kg (avg.)	87.7	88.5	90.3	91.3
Growth per pig produced, kg	83.9	85.1	88.1	90.3
Measured meat percentage (avg.)	62.5	60.7	59.7	59.8
Corrected meat percentage ⁴	59.6	59.6	59.7	59.8
Dead and discarded, %	3.0	3.0	3.1	2.4
PV per pen space per year, EUR ⁵	96	101	107	140
Index (PV per pen space per year) ⁵	100	105	112	-

¹ The key figure for "pigs produced per year, pcs." is calculated as a simple average between herds.

² Reference feed utilization and reference daily gain corrects the measured averages to the standard weight range of 30-115 kg, thereby enabling comparison between the results obtained by the individual years [1].

³ Reference feed efficiency has been converted from Feed Units to kg using the conversion rate 1.07 FU/kg feed.

⁴ An adjustment has been made to the meat percentage formula, therefore the measured meat percentage for 2023 and the years before 2023 is corrected [1].

⁵ The production values in this table are calculated on the basis of the average results obtained for productivity. The same price assumptions were used for all years [1].

2. Breeding progress in the DanBred nucleus

In the past two years, there has been a large overall breeding progress, where sow and piglet survival have been the largest contributors.

The realised breeding progress for the past two years shows that there has been a large total breeding progress of EUR 2.35 for the DanBred finisher pig, where piglet survival and sow survival have made the largest contribution. Overall, the robustness traits have contributed 73% of the total breeding progress, the traits for productivity and reproduction have contributed 18% and 9% (Figure 3). We have already got stronger pigs in the nucleus, which will support both animal welfare and productivity in the production herds.

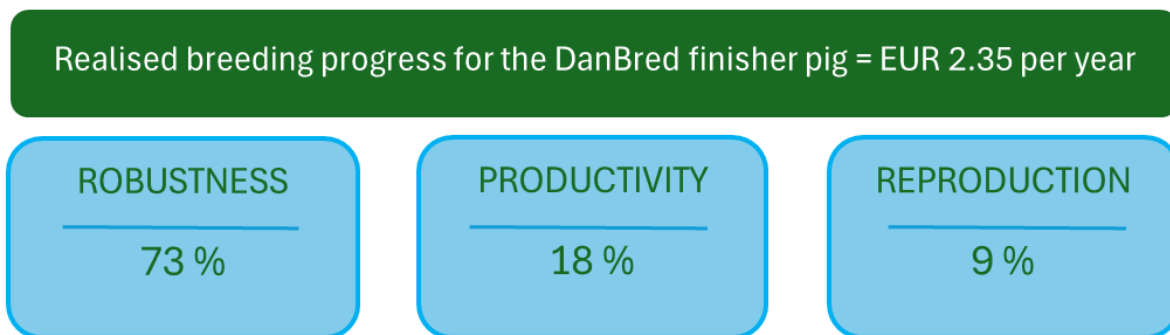


Figure 3. The realised breeding progress for the past two years has been EUR 2.35 per year per DanBred finisher pig. The calculated breeding progress is divided into three categories: robustness (piglet survival, sow survival, conformation and litter weight gain), productivity (piglet and weaner growth, finisher growth, lean meat percentage and killing out percentage) and reproduction (litter size).

Robustness traits. Again this year, there is great breeding progress for the robustness traits, which therefore take up 73% of the realised breeding progress.

For piglet survival, there is a realised breeding progress of 3.4 percentage points per year in the DanBred finisher, which is due to solid breeding progress in all three breeds (Table 4). DanBred Duroc contributes, through the piglet's own ability to survive, to half of this progress. DanBred Landrace and DanBred Yorkshire contribute with the other half of the breeding progress for piglet survival, where it is both by increasing the ability to survive among the piglets themselves but also the DanBred Landrace and DanBred Yorkshire sows' ability to keep their piglets alive. It is unique that DanBred Duroc contributes so significantly to piglet survival, which is normally a trait that is improved through the maternal line.

The impact of the last 2 years' breeding progress for piglet survival in DanBred Duroc can already be seen in the production herds. For DanBred Landrace and DanBred Yorkshire, the expectation is that it will not be until 2025 that they will begin to seriously contribute to increased piglet survival in production. The improved piglet survival in DanBred production herds will thus in the future be driven to a greater extent by breeding progress from DanBred Landrace and DanBred Yorkshire.

The annual breeding progress for sow survival is calculated to be 1.1 percentage points fewer deaths and culled of year sows (Table 4), which is in line with the expected breeding progress. The breeding progress for sow survival is expected to have an impact as the sows are replaced in the herds – which will probably start to pick up speed in the production herds from 2026 onwards when the trait became part of the breeding goal in the spring of 2024. The annual breeding progress for strength is 0.31 for the DanBred finisher pig (Table 4), which is in line with expectations.

Litter weight gain became part of the breeding goal in March 2025 for DanBred Landrace and DanBred Yorkshire, and breeding progress can already be observed in the trait of 1.1 kg per litter (Table 4). This is mainly due to the fact that litter weight gain is favorably correlated with the other traits in the breeding goal.

Production traits. The most important production trait by far this year is feed efficiency, which has had an annual breeding increase of 0.015 less kg feed per kg gain (Table 4). There is moderate breeding progress for production traits compared to previous years, and they account for 18% of the total breeding progress. Meat percentage is the only characteristic that shows a slight decline (Table 4).

Reproduction traits. The total annual breeding progress for litter size of 0.24 pigs is, in line with expectations, slightly lower than it has been in previous years. The two reproductive traits thus account for 9% of the total realized breeding progress. This is primarily driven by litter size from DanBred Landrace and DanBred Yorkshire, which contributed 0.22 extra piglets per litter annually (Table 4).

Table 4. Average annual breeding progress for each trait in the breeding goal for DanBred Landrace, DanBred Yorkshire and DanBred Duroc as well as the total breeding progress, expressed in the DanBred finisher pig (DLY). The breeding progress is expressed biologically, corresponding to the trait's measured unit, as stated, and is based on the last two years.

Robustness	DanBred finisher pig	Landrace	Yorkshire	Duroc
Piglet survival, maternal effect (percentage points)	1.0	1.3	0.7	
Piglet survival, piglet effect (percentage points)	2.4	1.9	1.2	3.3
Conformation (points)	0.31	0.43	0.29	0.26
Sow survival (percentage points) ¹	1.1	1.3	1.0	
Litter weight gain (kg)	1.1	0.6	1.6	
Reproduction				
Litter size, maternal effect (number of piglets)	0.22	0.11	0.33	
Litter size, sire effect (number of pigs)	0.02			0.02
Productivity				
Piglet and weaner growth (grams/day)	0.8	-2.2	-0.4	2.8
Piglet and weaner growth, maternal effect (grams/day)	0.5	0.7	0.2	
Finisher growth (grams/day)	4.3	1	12	2
Feed efficiency (FUsv/kg gain)	-0.016	-0.017	-0.014	-0.017
Feed efficiency (kg feed/kg gain)	-0.015	-0.016	-0.013	-0.016
Meat percentage (%)	-0.05	-0.03	0.01	-0.08
Slaughter loss (kg)	-0.14	-0.24	-0.03	-0.14

¹ For sow survival, the percentage is calculated as the percentage of sows that have not died or been euthanized, of year sows.

3. Prognosis of breeding progress

Piglet survival and sow survival will continue to be the most important breeding goal traits in the future – and litter weight gain will be the third most important.

In the coming years, an improvement in all of the breeding goal traits is expected with a total breeding progress in the nucleus of EUR 2.48 per year for a DanBred finisher pig. It is expected that the robustness traits will contribute with 69% of the total breeding progress, while the traits for productivity and reproduction will contribute with 25% and 6% (Figure 4). In the future, this will result in even stronger pigs in production.

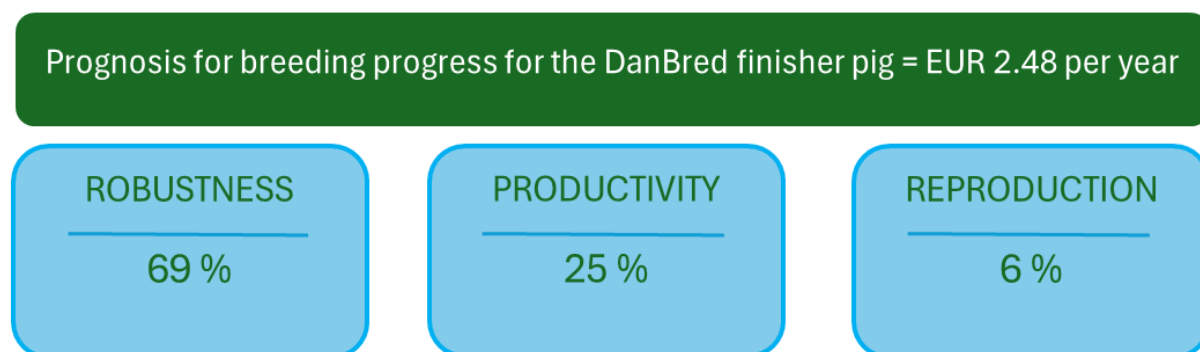


Figure 4. The prognosis for the breeding progress for the DanBred finisher pig in the coming years is EUR 2.48 per year. The expected breeding progress is divided into three categories: robustness (piglet survival, sow survival, conformation and litter weight gain), productivity (piglet and weaner growth, finisher growth, lean meat percentage and killing out) and reproduction (litter size).

Robustness traits. We welcome our new trait in the breeding goal – litter weight gain – which is expected to take the place as the third most important trait in the breeding goal from the start. The expectation is that litter weight gain will increase annually by 2.9 kg, which corresponds to half weaned pig extra per weaning if the progress is interpreted into more piglets. The prognosis still shows significant annual breeding progress for piglet and sow survival of 3 and 1 percentage points, and thus the development from the breeding work of recent years continues.

Production traits. The production traits are given a little more of the spotlight in the prognosis than the one calculated in the section on *Breeding progress in the DanBred nucleus* – and thus constitute 25% of the total expected breeding progress. This is particularly driven by higher expectations for the breeding progress for finisher growth, which is expected to be 13.5 g/day and lean meat percentage, which is expected to be 0.02 (Table 5).

Reproduction traits. The reproduction traits get a little less of the spotlight in the prognosis and make up 6% of the total expected breeding progress. This is driven by a lower expectation of litter size from both the sow and the boar of a total of 0.15 piglets per litter (Table 5).

Table 5. The prognosis for the expected breeding progress is given for DanBred Landrace (LL), DanBred Yorkshire (YY) and DanBred Duroc (DD) as well as the overall breeding progress expressed in the DanBred finisher pig (DLY). The breeding progress is expressed biologically corresponding to the measured unit of the trait, as stated.

Robustness	DanBred finisher pig	Landrace	Yorkshire	Duroc
Piglet survival, maternal effect (percentage points)	1.1	0.9	1.2	
Piglet survival, piglet effect (percentage points)	1.9	1.5	1	2.6
Conformation (points)	0.41	0.29	0.39	0.48
Sow survival (percentage points) ¹	1.0	1.0	0.9	
Litter weight gain (kg)	2.9	2.1	3.6	
Reproduction				
Litter size, maternal effect (number of piglets)	0.20	0.39	0.01	
Litter size, sire effect (number of pigs)	-0.05			-0.05
Productivity				
Piglet and weaner growth (grams/day)	2.2	1	0.5	3.7
Piglet and weaner growth, maternal effect (grams/day)	2.4	1.5	3.2	
Finisher growth (grams/day)	13.5	6.2	14.7	16.5
Feed efficiency (FUsv/kg gain)	-0.014	-0.010	-0.019	-0.013
Feed efficiency (kg feed/kg gain)	-0.013	-0.009	-0.018	-0.012
Meat percentage (%)	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.01
Slaughter loss (kg)	-0.09	-0.09	-0.12	-0.07

¹ For sow survival, the percentage is calculated as the percentage of sows that have not died or been culled, of year sows.

Technical explanations and disclaimers

In Results for DanBred pigs 2025, data has been published for DanBred pigs' productivity and realised breeding progress as well as a prognosis for breeding progress in the coming years. This is done on the basis of production data, and a calculation of the realised breeding progress via statistical models with data from the breeding system. The prognosis is based on simulation models that simulate the entire breeding system.

When it is mentioned how important a trait is in the breeding goal, reference is made to how large a share, measured in DKK converted to EUR, the individual trait constitutes. The valuation of each trait is based on a bioeconomic model that models an integrated future pig production, where all costs are assumed to be variable.

Production results for DanBred pigs

In the summary for productivity in weaner herds, the data available was limited. The limitation is partly due to a large number of anonymised herds that cannot be identified.

Breeding progress in the DanBred nucleus

The realised breeding progress shows the breeding progress in the breeding goals over the past two years for DanBred Landrace, DanBred Yorkshire and DanBred Duroc and an overall improvement expressed in the DanBred finisher pig (DLY). The realised breeding progress is defined as an average annual breeding progress for each trait in the breeding goal based on the breeding values for sows with offspring that have completed individual testing in the DanBred nucleus. Sows over a two-year period are included in this report.

Tables 4 and 5 show the average annual breeding progress, expressed biologically, corresponding to the trait's measured unit. The total breeding progress, expressed in the DanBred finisher, is calculated as a weighted average of DanBred Duroc, DanBred Landrace and DanBred Yorkshire.

Forecast of breeding progress

The forecast for the breeding progress is a calculated estimate that expresses the expected breeding progress in the coming years, provided that the breeding goal does not change. The premise is also that the current breeding system, genetic and non-genetic variances remain the same. The forecast is calculated using complex computer simulations that model the DanBred breeding system from DNA strand to herds and breeding decisions.

References

[1] Hyttel, H. L. & Boldsen, S. K. (2025): Key figures for DanBred pigs in production herds for 2024. Memo No 2516, SEGES Innovation.

[2] Hyttel, H. L. (2025): National average for productivity in the production of pigs in 2024, Memo no. 2505, SEGES Innovation.

Appendix

Average results for DanBred breeding and multiplication herds

The average results for DanBred breeding and multiplication herds show a continued high production level for DanBred breeding animals. Table 6 shows the results for the reproductive traits in DanBred breeding and multiplication herds over the past year. Table 7 shows the results for individually tested boars at the test station Bøgildgaard, and Tables 8 and 9 show the results for individually tested boars and sow gilts in the breeding herds in the past year, respectively.

Table 6. Average results for reproductive traits in DanBred breeding and multiplication herds in the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

Sow breed	Boar breed	Litter type	Number	Number of litters	Piglet survival
DD	DD	Purebred (DD)	5174	10.2	76
LL	LL	Purebred (LL)	8934	17.4	84
YY	YY	Purebred (YY)	9855	18.0	84
LL	YY	Crossbred (YL)	38041	19.2	87
YY	LL	Crossbred (LY)	29181	20.5	84
Total			91185		

The total number of breeding pigs that have undergone testing in the past year is 123,793 (Table 7-9). This is on par eau with last year. The breeding pigs that undergo the testing form the data basis for the calculated breeding value figures, which are used to select the best breeding pigs for future generations. This large number of pigs contributes to great breeding progress through high selection intensity.

Table 7. Average results for individually tested boars at the test station Bøgildgaard in the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

Breed	Number	Finisher growth, 30-100 kg	Feed efficiency (FUsv/kg)	Meat percentage (%)	Conformation	Slaughter loss (%)	Back fat (mm)	Scanning weight
DD	2597	1292	1.84	62.9	2.88	25.39	6.2	103.4
LL	2572	1146	1.93	64.9	3.06	25.69	5.7	105.3
YY	2011	1122	1.91	63.4	3.09	26.41	5.9	105.4
Total	7180							

Table 8. Average results for individually tested boars in breeding herds in the past year in the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

Breed	Number	Finisher growth 30-100 kg	Piglet and weaner growth, 0-30 kg	Meat percentage (%)	Conformation	Back fat (mm)	Scanning weight
DD	8205	1346	394	62.09	2.89	7.0	102.2
LL	20873	1172	362	64.66	2.98	6.4	105.3
YY	23516	1153	349	63.10	3.10	6.8	105.8
Total	52594						

Table 9. Average results for individually tested sow pigs in breeding herds in the past year in the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

Breed	Number	Finisher growth, 30-100 kg	Piglet and weaner growth, 0-30 kg	Meat percentage (%)	Conformation	Back fat (mm)	Scanning weight
DD	10588	1252	400	62.47	3.02	6.6	101.5
LL	27934	1121	367	64.86	3.18	6.1	104.2
YY	25497	1109	353	62.95	3.18	7.0	104.4
Total	64019						

Technical explanation

The average results in the DanBred nucleus are measured on all DanBred breeding pigs for selected productivity and reproductive characteristics. Data was collected during the test period at the test station Bøgildgaard and in breeding and multiplication herds.