

## Rare pigs studied at Purdue University

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Purdue University scientists at West Lafayette, Ind., are using Ossabaw pigs in a study concerning human infertility, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.

Ossabaw pigs are predisposed to metabolic syndrome, which involves health problems that include obesity, insulin resistance, hypertension, atherosclerosis, high levels of triglycerides and abnormally fast blood clotting.

Purdue developmental and reproductive biologist Rebecca Krisher and colleagues, led by Michael Sturek, are studying the pigs to determine if they embody all of the metabolic and reproductive aspects of polycystic ovary syndrome, or PCOS -- an illness that leads to infertility in 5 percent to 10 percent of reproductive-age women.

Krisher said if further research confirms the preliminary finding that the breed exhibits PCOS, it could lead to a cure for that type of infertility and related diseases.

There is currently no research model for PCOS and Purdue's herd of Ossabaw pigs is the only breeding group of the species. The pigs were rescued from a South Carolina coastal island.

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