Pig Welfare - What are the basics for grow-finish facilities?

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Messages from society?

Pork producers can be proactive

- Swine Welfare Assurance Program (SWAP)
  - Self evaluation tool
  - Educational tool
  - Voluntary program
  - Helps prepare for audits

- SWAP
  - Based on Care and Well-being Principles (CWP's)
  - Assessors invited by producer to farm
  - Data stays at the farm
  - More info. at: www.pork.org
  - Next generation will be PQAPlus

CWP's

1. Herd Health/Nutrition  
2. Caretaker training  
3. Animal Observation  
4. Body condition score  
5. Euthanasia  
6. Handling/Movement Facilities  
7. Emergency support  
8. Continued assessment

CWP #3 – Animal Observation

- Daily Observations
  - Record visits to each room/barn
Animal Observations

- Look for:
  - Lameness
  - Skin Lesions
  - Abscesses
  - Wounds

Other observations

- Swine Behavior
  - Are pigs flighty and agitated?
  - Are pigs calm and inquisitive?
  - Do pigs approach stockperson easily?
- Social Contact

CWP #4 – Body Condition Score

- How many poor, unthrifty pigs?

Body Condition Scores

1           2            3              4                5

CWP #5 - Euthanasia

- Timeliness
  - Max. of 2 days special care with no improvement
  - Provide for euthanasia on any day
- Procedures in NPB manual

Euthanasia Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Farrowing Pig</th>
<th>Nursery Pig</th>
<th>Grower Pig</th>
<th>Feeder Pig</th>
<th>Mature Animal</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carbon Dioxide (CO2)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>not practical</td>
<td>not practical</td>
<td>not practical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conchler</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capnics Bath</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electrocution</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anesthetic overdose</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bleed venae</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
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</table>

* Only unthrifty Carbon Dioxide (NIH) or Carbon Monoxide (CO2). Carbon Monoxide is a method of euthanasia but is not currently recommended because of the high potential for human health hazards.
CO₂ Euthanasia Chamber

Euthanasia Procedures


CWP #6 – Handling and Movement

- Why care about handling?
  - Improve pig welfare
  - Positive attitude of people working with pigs
  - Enhanced pig performance
  - New program looks for willful acts of abuse

Effect of Handling on Pig Growth Performance

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time to interact, s</td>
<td>Pleasant</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>73</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>81</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rough</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>147</td>
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<tr>
<td>Growth rate, lb/d</td>
<td>Pleasant</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>1.97</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<td>1.94</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rough</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>1.84</td>
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</table>

Effect of Handling on Sow Performance

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Trait</th>
<th>Control Farms</th>
<th>Trained farms</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive attitude score</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>102.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negative handling, %</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>38.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pigs born/sow/yr</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stockperson Behavior and Pig Performance

Pig Handling Tips

- PATIENCE, PATIENCE, PATIENCE
- Gentle demeanor
- Calm, deliberate movements
- Low noise
- Positive physical interactions
- Move small groups
- Think like the pig

Good or Bad Handling?

Common Pig Distractions

- Reflections on puddles
- Reflections on metal
- Clanging noises
- Air drafts on animals
- Seeing people moving ahead
- Changes in floor texture, drains
- Bright lights in eyes
- Bright sunlight
- Dark chutes and trucks
- Loud handlers
- Objects/equipment at pig level
- Spilled feed

Equipment for Moving Pigs

Do's:
- Solid stock boards
- Broom
- Paddle
- Flags
- Tarps

Don'ts:
- Electric prods
- Electric chaps
- Pointed sticks
- Canes
- Noise makers
- Leather slappers?

Examples of Pig Movements

CWP #7 - Facilities

- Ventilation
- Heating and Cooling
- Physical Space
- Pen Maintenance
- Feeder space
- Water Availability
- Hospital pen
Ventilation
- Controls moisture in winter and heat in summer
  - Ammonia levels < 25 ppm
  - CO₂ levels < 3000 ppm

Heating and Cooling
- Target the pig’s ideal temperature in all seasons
  - Nursery pig (30-75 lb): 65-80 °F
  - Grower (75-150 lb): 60-75 °F
  - Finisher (150-230 lb): 50-75 °F

Floor Space Allocations
- Traditional space allocations:
  - 60-100 lb: 5 ft²/pig
  - 100-150 lb: 6 ft²/pig
  - 150-mkt: 8 ft²/pig
- Space allocations currently under review
  - New allocations allow for heavier mkt weights

Pen Maintenance
- Flooring
- Fencing
- Feeders
- Alleyways
- Waterers

Feeders and Waterers
- No. and quality of feeding spaces permit easy feeding without undue fighting
- Pigs require about 0.3 gal water/lb feed
- Water flow should be adequate
  - Nursery: 70 sec/pint
  - Finishers: 50 sec/pint

Hospital Pen
- Area set aside for sick or injured pigs
- Can be a pen usually used for housing healthy pigs
CWP #8 – Emergency Support

- Emergency support system
  - Alarms
  - Contact person
  - Backup generator
- Test emergency system periodically

CWP #8 – Emergency Support

- Written Action Plan
  - Fire, flood, tornado, personal injury
  - Emergency contacts: Producer, veterinarian, emergency medical personnel, equipment suppliers, fire and police depts., environmental
  - Post plan around site (office, house, telephones, outside unit)
- Ensure employees know plan of action

Summary

- Pig welfare is an important issue for pork producers
- Several guidelines are available to enhance pig welfare
- When in doubt, look at things from the pig’s perspective