



BREEDING

Nurtinger Intensive Rearing System

Nurtinger units reduce pre-weaning mortality by 5%

Farm facts

Name: RW and EV Wilson
Location: Helmsley, North Yorkshire
Farm size & enterprise: 600 sow unit

Benefits

Pre-weaning mortality has decreased by 5% and losses from the Nurtinger units are an impressive 0.5%.

Background

An increasing number born alive, currently at 13 per litter, combined with an excellent farrowing rate, meant that opportunities to reduce piglet mortality could not be maintained with the normal method of using nurse sows. Mike Coates, production manager, made the decision to resurrect the Nurtinger piglet rearing system to good effect and renovated seven Nurtinger units as well as investing in another three!

Key to success

- Quality of the piglets
- Attention to detail - daily and weekly routine hygiene procedures
- The daily food allowance is mixed and stored in the integral tank which is cleaned daily with the other equipment
- The water dispensers are completely emptied before being refilled with fresh water
- The whole unit can be totally dismantled for thorough cleaning in-between litters

Looking after the units takes approximately five hours/week, which they believe is five hours well spent!

“The introduction of the Nurtinger units has made a dramatic improvement to our numbers reared per sow; we can't envisage a future without them.”
Mike Coates, production manager



The Nurtinger

- Piglets taken off sows and artificially reared.
- Currently two Nurtinger pens are used per farrowing room, which will increase to three, each unit housing one of the best litters of between 10 to 12 piglets.
- Piglets from the remaining litters are then fostered onto the spare sows.
- Piglets are reared according to the prescribed Nurtinger feeding programme (with the added ingredient of superb stockmanship):
- Start on cold liquid milk replacer (automatically dispensed every hour).
- The milk powder is gradually replaced with top quality starter creep, which again is dispensed as gruel.
- Pelleted creep is also offered via recessed creep feeders.
- Piglets are moved from the Nurtinger units at around 26 days to join the mainstream weaners (of comparable age and weight) where they thrive.