

Second season of training comes to a close, and we still want more!

What started as a pilot scheme in Cornwall and Devon is now proving so succesful that new groups have already started.

The training clubs around the South have been busy since the start of the year covering topics such as Problem Solving in the Farrowing House, Care of the Sow and Reviewing the Experienced AI Operator.

Training has become such an important part of pig businesses in the South, that three members of the Oxford Group passed their Certificate of Competence Stage 1 and three members of the Exeter group are signed up ready and raring to go. At the last session, deciding what to cover in the autumn was the topic of discussion at the established Exeter and Cornwall groups who have undergone 10 training sessions since they started as a pilot group in late 2007.

The group developed sessions including "Why you do what you do" and picked Gilts, Service and Farrowing as key areas where they would like to compare and contrast each others units.

Over the summer, each unit will take photos of these departments so that when the groups meet later in the year, they can discuss each unit's systems and see what areas can be improved.

Nick Dymond spoke about his continued commitment to the Cornish group "These sessions are both practical and accessible, we go away from every one with something to try".

If you would like more information about the training clubs in Oxford, Somerset, Wiltshire, Devon or Cornwall please contact:

Helen Thoday on 07973 701202.



Abe Whiney, Stuart Warby and Chris Brown (pictured with Manager Darren Broughton) have now completed their Stage one Certificate of Competence

In Brief

Business Management

If you're looking to improve your business skills, the Worshipful Company of Farmers are running a three week Advanced course in Agricultural Business Management. The course is designed for existing experienced managers and concentrates on developing your understanding of the business environment and implementing this knowledge to benefit your business. For Further information contact: Rhonda.Thompson@rac.org.uk

New groups for Cheshire

Calling all producers in Cheshire, BPEX is looking to set up a training group in this area. The venue for the group will depend on the location of the producers interested, but it is anticipated that the small group will run on a regular basis providing the same opportunities and benefits that other producers are already receiving elsewhere. If you are interested in joining a group please contact Tess Howe. Tess.howe@bpex.org.uk

Support for East Midlands

BPEX has agreed funding with Landskills East Midlands for skills development in the region. We are currently drawing together a plan of events for the region, with support going to existing and new initiatives. Any event which will improve knowledge will be eligible for up to 70% funding. If you want to discuss your needs/ideas please contact Tess Howe. Tess.howe@bpex.org.uk

If you would like more information about staff development, or have an article for the newsletter please contact Tess: 07779 321078 or tess.howe@bpex.org.uk



Producers for Profit, July 2009



Producers for Profit

Business improvement through staff development

In this Issue



Wet Feeding Forum



AI workshops



Virtual Scanning

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- Virtual Farm Tour
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Could it be YOU ?



BPEX is looking for new managers across the industry to take part in the first BPEX Management Development Programme

The scheme, which starts in January 2010, will run over 12 months and provide the participants with the opportunity to develop their management potential and overall understanding of pig production.

Similar courses have proven not only to benefit the individual but also their company. BPEX also believes the wider industry will benefit from such a scheme.

Completing the course will involve attending a number of training sessions over the course of a year. Each session will consist of an evening presentation focusing on a particular sector of the industry, followed by a day of management training delivered by Cedar Associates. In addition, work-based projects relevant to your current role will need to be completed. Successful completion of the course will result in a nationally recognised qualification from the Institute of Leadership and Management.

Your background and qualifications (or lack of them!) will not be the focus of selection, it's your **potential** and **ambition** that are key.

So if you are looking for a new challenge, contact the BPEX Skills Development Manager for an information pack and application form. **Tess Howe: 07779 321078**

Already a high flyer? Check out your options in the 'in brief' section

Farrowing House Management

Experienced managers across the Eastern region gathered to discuss farrowing management in a series of workshops organised by the East of England Pig Training Group, delivered by Susan Walpole from the Oakwood Veterinary Practice.

The workshops, which were divided into indoor and outdoor systems, focussed on the topics most relevant to their system. Indoor managers focussed on fertility and feeding the sow, whilst the outdoor groups concentrated on the day-to-day running of farrowing paddocks and huts.



With the discussions revolving around their own experiences, producers not only went home with up-to-date technical information, but also a lot of practical ideas that could be implemented relatively quickly on their own unit.

This meeting is one of a series EEPTG are running. For more information about this and other workshops available check the BPEX website or contact Jonathan Bradley at EEPTG:

geneticsolutions@btopenworld.com



Regular training sessions now established

Thanks to funding from Yorkshire Forward, Landskills and industry sponsorship, Bishopton Vet Group is now running a comprehensive package of group workshops over the summer tackling all aspects of production.

The first two workshops, based on veterinary medicines, have taken place with fantastic interaction and discussion amongst the group members.

Apart from covering techniques and supervisory roles on farm vaccine basics and timings were discussed. Feedback from individual units was a major part of the workshop, and lively debates took place with regards to the most effective interventions available.

Attendees found useful points to take away from every section, whether it be revision of previously known areas or brand new points. One thing is for certain, you can always learn more! Despite having worked with pigs for 15 plus years, some delegates commented on how you can still pick up so many things that can be applied on farm to make things more efficient and productive.

Details of the remaining workshops can be found on the BPEX calander or contact Duncan Berkshire at Bishopton Vet Group.

www.bishoptonvets.co.uk



Artificial Insemination workshop wins all round approval!

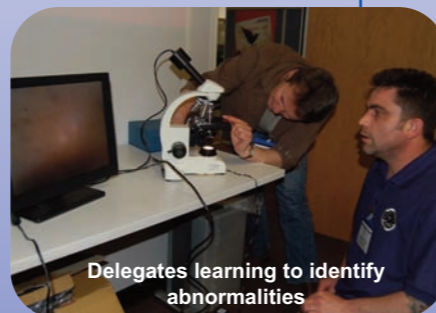
BPEX International AI consultant, Dr Hanneke Feistma, led a series of workshops for the laboratory technicians based at commercial AI centres.

The meeting started with an informative review of spermatogenesis, the process of sperm cell development and maturity. Understanding what could go wrong with this process, why it happened and how good the resultant sperm were is essential to the production of good quality AI.

The meeting became more 'hands on' after lunch, with everybody assessing samples of boar AI. Time was spent locating and identifying different abnormalities and practising slide preparation. The afternoon was rounded off with a quiz, the delegates having to count and identify the sperm abnormalities in each photographic image.

There was a unanimous vote of approval for the workshops and there are plans for another sequence of workshops to be run next year.

Angela Cliff: 07967 788484



Delegates learning to identify abnormalities



Young NPA Members from across the South West

Interactive Young NPA

(And just a little bit competitive!)

YNPA, BPEX and TVC collaborated on the second South West young pig producers dinner. Phil Baynes from SCA Nutec quizzed the group on nutrition, Alex Thomsett on biosecurity and Alex Lindsey from Duchy College on staff management.

Using interactive voting technology meant that everybody had the option to keep quiet when they didn't get the right answer!!

Prize winners were John Dunning, manager at Andrew Freemantle's who won a tooth grinder, donated by Rotech, Monty Strainge who won a lovely SCA fleece and Gemma from Lester Bowker's won a great Hermitage Seaborough fleece. Even the 'losers' were 'winners' going away with a Boehringer Ingelheim cap and mug!

"I picked Nutrition, Biosecurity and Staffing as the subjects for the evening as all are critical to the success of any pig unit" said Helen Thoday, "understanding the facts behind these subjects should be second nature to all those managing and working on a pig unit, the young producers are the next generation and should excel in these areas."

"These dinners are a great event and really help the next generation get together and have some fun, we are continuing this theme in Yorkshire and the East so watch out for dates and get involved".

Alex's Top tips for getting the most out of your staff:

- Get the best on board
- Align tasks to skills & motivation
- Strike the right balance
- Manage the team mix
- Give the credit and take the blame
- Be hard on tasks and soft on people
- Communicate constantly and review performance.



Monty Strainge modeling his new fleece



Zoe Davis with John Dunning

Zoe Davis, NPA

You have to see it to believe it!

Nothing beats seeing something first hand, but with today's biosecurity concerns it can be difficult. However, armed with video cameras, the KT team can now bring the farm to you!

Breeding Herd Tour

Yorkshire Finishers recently took a virtual tour around a breeding herd, helping them prepare their own sites more appropriately for future batches.



With all pigs leaving the breeding site, regardless of size, there was a large focus on what can be done to get all pigs back on target as quickly as possible. Experience has shown some of the group that the use of

kennels and providing 'porridge' helps the smaller ones catch up quicker.

Others felt that by keeping smalls in the same area as the remaining pigs, the potential disease challenge when they were re-introduced was minimised.

There was also discussion on the larger piglets who suckled well, but had not necessarily eaten solids. It was felt that the smalls that have had to eat solids from an early age can have an advantage.

Lis Ravn: 07891 656784

Virtual Scanning

A group of Salisbury producers took part in virtual scanning session with Andrew Carr from Larkmead Scanning Services Ltd. Andrew had been filmed by Helen Thoday scanning sows in different stages of pregnancy, allowing Andrew to talk in detail to the group about the views on screen.



Many questions were asked including difficulties with scanning gilts, scanning in a tent v's outside and what can affect the quality of the scan.

"It was good to be able to pick Andrew's brains. Sometimes I struggle to get a picture and I think I have picked up a few tips to try back on farm". Ken Boyden (Fawley Farms)

Helen Thoday said "There is only a certain amount you can ever learn in a classroom environment but I think the video goes one step closer to the practical side of many of our workshops."

Helen Thoday: 07973 701202