



Attention to detail sees post-weaning performance soar

Farm facts

Name: Worsall Manor Farms
Location: Yarm, Teeside
Farm size & enterprise: Indoor 340 sow farrow to finish, weaning approximately 150 pigs/batch

Benefits

- No growth check post-weaning
- Creep intake of 375g/day on the first day post weaning (ie >1 kg in 3 days)
- Creep intake of 2.5 kg/pig in week one
- Daily liveweight gain 28d - 48d of 468g
- High staff morale
- Low piglet mortality (2%)

The System

Over days 7-21 of age each piglet consumes an average 1.4 kg creep, this means that at day one of weaning each consumes 375g feed, ie 1 kg in under three days!

Piglets are split into large boars and small boars and gilts at weaning. The temperature is set at 29°C and decreased by 1.6°C a week for five weeks. Cross flow ventilation is set at 15% min.

Water is available via five nipple drinkers plus a large turkey drinker. No feed is offered for two hours post-weaning while pigs are exploring their new surroundings.

Feed is then supplied in an Osbourne Wheel, with extra feeding spaces from two troughs. Three daily feeds ensure



that food is fresh and eating is stimulated. Gradual diet changes aid the gut transition, resulting in high feed intake and good growth rates. The first stage diet is fed for four days post-weaning, with the transition to second stage complete by day seven.

“ Creep feeding should not be negated to save money – the benefits post-weaning far outweigh any costs
Brian Bainbridge, producer ”

Background



Weaning is a source of many challenges to the piglet including mixing, relocation and gut modification.

The establishment of a good creep feeding routine prior to weaning allows good post-weaning

performance as piglets are stronger and gut development, stimulated by pre-weaning creep feeding, allows the piglet to digest weaner diets more readily.

Maintaining this performance can be achieved by optimising water and feed intake, and closely regulating temperature, ventilation and stocking density.

Key to success

- Improve water intake by providing nipple and turkey drinkers
- Clean and disinfect header tanks and water pipes between each batch
- Provide one nipple drinker per ten pigs
- Feed creep little and often to prevent it becoming unpalatable as well as stimulating interest
- Provide plenty of light to encourage rooting and investigation
- Ensure optimal temperature, ventilation and stocking density
- Use extra feeding spaces after weaning to allow all pigs to feed at the same time
- Starter diets selected for lightest pigs
- Leave feeders empty for up to two hours after weaning
- Introduce compound feed when pigs are 16 kg