

Force-feeding the Farrowing: Survival Techniques

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Rules:

- Maintain All-in:All-Out procedures
- Make all pig movements within 24 hours of found/farrowed
- Do not make pee-wee litters
- Allow the "most fit" sows time to lactate (≥ 17 days)
- Move 0-wean sows forward to fall-behinds
- Over-farrow by up to 120% by 0-weaning sows daily
- Target MATRIX or skip-a-heat use so that no sow is mated for at least 20 days post farrowing
- Place pigs based on born alive and % of litters < 7 BA
 - when BA is < 12 place all pigs uniformly :
 - when > 12 - place 12 good and ≥ 1 pee-wee and clean-up the ones that don't start by 24 hours
- Induce only after the 1st sow mated on the same day starts farrowing
- Begin 0-wean procedure 2 rooms before the large group and make the adjustments daily to keep space tight (even when only a few sows are due that day)

My procedure:

- Obtain a PigChamp (or other) list of sows due to farrow
- In PigChamp this is a LISTDATA with the variables including ID, DUETOFARROWDATE, PARITY, LIFEAVEBORNALIVE and LIFEAVEWEAN1PIGS
- SORT variables are DUETOFARROWDATE and then ID
- Highlight sows with record issues and then walk the group to see if lameness, small bellies or underlines and or possible PCNs are present (? Mark at preg-check also)
- These animals are predetermined to be 0-weaned meaning they will be kicked out as soon as farrowed and replaced in farrowing with a "better" sow (again daily)
- Start pigs based on BA
- Keep each room as tight as possible
- Wean only when a sow is pushed out, not for breeding
- Target minimum normal weaner to lactate 17 days: all others get MATRIX or Skip-a-Heat
- MATRIX is fed daily – squirted in the mouth of each animal
- 0-wean sows get it beginning the day after farrowing, continuing for at least 14 days and fed the last time on Wednesday morning for majority of Tuesday breeds
- Kick-out sows get ≥ 7 days beginning at weaning and ending on Wednesday morning
- If the flow dictates sows are weaned at less than 17 days, all sows get MATRIX the day of weaning and for 3 or more days based on desired breed date
- Expect mortality to increase by < 2 % if the correct pigs are removed
- Expect equal performance (or better) from MATRIX treatments vs normal weaned sows (increase 0.07 to 0.10 pigs per lactation or MATRIX day)