Chapter 3

GILT AND SOW MANAGEMENT
1.0 Management of Gilts

**Number of Gilts Needed**

- Depends on sow culling rate
- Usually around 20% first litter sows (18-25)
- With 2.5 litters/sow/year: 50% gilts/year
- On 600 sow farm: 300 gilts needed per year
- If 75% of gilts are used: 400 gilts should be purchased or produced

**Gilt in Isolation**

- Gilts in Isolation every 10 weeks
- Age should be between 3 and 5 month
- After 8-12 weeks: Move gilts to sow unit
- Clean isolation between groups
**Why have gilts in isolation**

i. Prevent disease introduction in herd

ii. Prepare gilts to enter farm
   - Vaccinations
   - Adaptation

iii. Control of health status
   - Bleeding

**Feeding strategy for non-bred gilts**

i. Feed ad lib until 70-80 kg
   - Use normal nursery/grower diet

ii. Feed 75% of ad lib during rest of period
   - Use lactation diet or similar
Breeding the Gilts

- Move gilts to breeding pen/house/shed/barn
- Boar exposure
- Feed ad libitum
- Move around
- Spray with cold water 10 min/day
- Breed in 2nd or 3rd estrus
2.0 Management of Gestating Gilt/Sow

*Feeding gestating gilts and sows*

- Day 1-21: Implantation
- Day 22-90: Body condition
- Day 91-112: Fetal growth
- Day 113-115: Prepare farrowing
2.1.2 Feeding curves in gestation (kg/day, 3.0 - 3.2 Mcal/kg)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Gilts</th>
<th>Normal sows</th>
<th>Thin sows</th>
<th>Fat sows</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-21</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>22-90</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>91-112</td>
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<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>113-114</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: Remember: Adjustments for temp. if lower than 20°C
Importance of right body condition

Fat sows and gilts

- Diabetes
- Difficulties during farrowing
- Reduced feed intake in lactation
- Reduced milk yield in lactation
- Shorter longevity

Water

- Sows should have free access to water 24 h per day
  - Check water quality
- Water from pump better than water from nipples
  - Give water several times per day
Reproductive Checks

- Place sows after day of breeding
- Keep breeding groups together
- Move sows out if they return to heat
- Use color scheme for each group (depends!)

Heat Checks & Efficiency

- Check for heat every day
- Concentrate on sows 3, 6, and 9 wks post breeding (same color)
- Pregnancy check 4-5 wks post breeding (Ultra sound & Scanning)
- Important to spend all the time that is necessary for efficient heat check of gestating sows every day
- Closer the average breeding to rebreeding interval is to 21 days, the better a job did you do heat checking gestating sows
3. Management of Lactating Sows

Why feeding?

i. High milk yield
   • More milk decreases pre-weaning mortality and increases weaning weight

ii. Prevent BW loss
    • Low weight loss improves the chances of the sow returning to heat right after weaning
**Feeding lactating Sows**

- Day 1-2: 2 kg per day
- Day 3-4: 4 kg per day
- Day 5- weaning: *ad libitum* (semi *ad lib*)
- *Other method*: 1.5 kg & 0.5 kg per piglet (RF)
- Feed at least 2 times a day - 3 is better
- Don’t let feed sit in feeder
- Make sure water is available all the time
- Include fat in diet (Increases energy)
- Barn temperature around 20°C

**Check sows 30 min. after feeding**
- if feeder completely clean, give more feed next time
- if feed left in feeder, give less feed next time
- if crumpled left in feeder, give same amount next time
4. Management Around Farrowing

Objectives
- Avoid problems during parturition
- Decrease number of still born pigs
- Make sure live borns get colostrum and warm surrounding
- Make sure sow is treated if she gets sick

Prior to farrowing
- Clean and disinfect barn/pen/shed – 3-6 days before moving to farrowing pen
- Clean & disinfect sow – udder should be clean & disinfected
- Watch out farrowing behavior
- Milk in teats - farrowing within 24 hours.
- Use prostaglandins or oxytocin (only if necessary) – not < 113 d
- Low feed intake before and after; Plenty of water
During farrowing

• Watch farrowing
• Assist sow in farrowing if required
• Cut umbilical cord
• Record weight
• Place piglet in the creep box with heating facility
• Wait until all the piglets are born
• Expulsion of placenta marks the end of farrowing
• Nurse all piglets together - colostrums
• Foster if necessary