



Finisher Challenge champion

Farm facts

Name: A and B Leamon

Location: Essex

Farm size and type: 320 sow indoor breed-to finish unit

Background

Producer Chris Leamon got in touch with the BPEX knowledge transfer team to sign up to the 2TS Finisher Challenge. He was already working with his vet to improve his feeding herd health status, in particular to reduce the high level of mortality in his finisher pigs.

The main health problem was porcine dermatitis and nephropathy syndrome (PDNS), with finisher pig mortality rates running at around 8%. At its worst, the herd was losing 50 pigs per month in the post 50kg stage, not only a huge financial loss but also disheartening for Chris and the staff. Pigs are finished at 102kg liveweight.

The system

Chris introduced three key changes during the first half of 2012:

- 1 In January he improved pig flow by reducing the number of movements post-weaning
- 2 From the spring, he started vaccinating sows as well as piglets with a PCV2 vaccine
- 3 In late summer, he started selling lighter pigs with the rest of the batch rather than keeping poor growers back to reach target weight.

Benefits

- Finisher herd mortality reduced from 8.9% to 6.8%
- Finisher herd FCR improved from 3.13 to 2.37
- Finisher herd daily growth rate increased from 555g to 620g
- Stress is reduced due to improved pig flow with fewer movements
- The all-in, all-out system enables cleaning and disinfection of all rooms between batches
- Chris was the national winner of the 2TS Finisher Challenge in 2012.

We took the bull by the horns and made many improvements to get in control again.

Chris Leamon, producer



Key to success

- Chris reduced the number of movements post-weaning, from four moves down to two, for most pigs
- All pigs remain in the same group from weaning through to slaughter
- Selling poor-growing, lighter pigs with the rest of the batch, rather than keeping them back, has led to health improvements in the later finishing stages
- Four different diets are fed between weaning and finishing
- With two feed pipelines coming into the sheds, Chris uses a phase feeding programme switching diets gradually on a daily basis.



Improving finishing herd performance