



BREEDING

Shunt Fostering on a Three-Week Batch System

Purpose: to provide extra suckling capacity when born alive is higher than the number of functioning teats in that batch. This process can be referred to as shunt, cascade or 2-stage fostering.

Equipment/info required	Personal safety
Piglet booster	On outdoor units, work in pairs while the sow is feeding
Fostering box/trolley	
Hut door boards (for outdoor units)	

Preparation

- Line the fostering box/trolley with clean straw
- Set a target of how many piglets to leave with sows and gilts ie sows to be left with 11 and gilts 12 piglets
- Identify 'spare' piglets that need removing from the sows at fostering
- When this total becomes 10 or 11 a "shunt fosterer" is carried out

Outline of the work

Collect up all "spare" piglets as you cross-foster each day



Identify an older litter from this batch of farrowings ie 3 or 4 days old, remove and place them into the fostering box/trolley



Identify a gilt or low parity sow with a 3-week old litter, good body condition and with no previous health or udder problems, remove her older piglets



Move the older weaned piglets into weaner accommodation or other suitable holding accommodation until they are ready to be moved off-site



If outdoors ensure the sow remains with the new litter by temporarily boarding up the hut



Dose the “spare” litter and the 4-day old litter with piglet booster to give them energy until their new suckling pattern is established

