



Blinded by routine?

Farm facts

Name: Louise Dorward
Location: JT Fall Ltd, Thirsk
Farm size & enterprise: 650 sows, batch farrowing breeder/finisher

Benefits

- Sows are calmer in the farrowing house
- Lower incidence of joint ill
- Reduced level of medication now used

The system

Sows farrow in typical slatted farrowing crates, which can be quite barren. Louise now uses newspaper in each of the crates, at both the front and back. This provides nesting material for the sows, protects the piglets from drafts and also means the piglets dry quicker.

Sows are visibly calmer and the piglets get up and move about a lot sooner as a result.

Navels are now dipped in iodine, resulting in reduced incidences of joint ill, which in turn has led to a reduction in the amount of medicines used, saving money and also time in handling the piglets to administer medication.



Louise now has regular contact with the other people who were at the workshops and can get practical advice quickly from people in similar situations. She is also learning to open her eyes to the bigger picture to improve production.

Key to success

- Refresh your general knowledge regularly
- Concentrate on the finer details; small changes can have a big impact
- Step back and look at the bigger picture; what are you doing right? What could be improved?
- Speak with other stockpeople; put what you have learnt into context

“Everybody should get involved in training, no matter how much experience you have, there is always something new to pick up. The workshops were excellent, Duncan Berkshire (Bishopton Vet Group) put the information across in a simple and straightforward manner, so that we could all understand.”

Louise Dorward

Background

Louise has over 18 years of experience on pig farms in both practical and management roles.

For the past six years she has managed the farrowing house, running a batch system of around 80 sows.

Having joined the Pig Industry Professional Register (PIPR), Louise was keen to take part in training activities to improve her knowledge and collect CPD points.

Despite working solely in the farrowing house, Louise signed up to the full course of workshops being delivered by the farm's vet.

Each of the workshops was designed around a module of the Pig Industry Certificates of Competence and covered all aspects of pig production.

The day-long workshops were very well presented and easy to understand. Whilst not everything was new, the workshops helped Louise and other participants gain a general understanding of all areas and think more about the finer details.



Training was supported by Landskills and Yorkshire Forward
For information on PIPR and the Certificates of Competence contact Tess Howe