



Feeding gilts for first lactation



It is vital that the gilt consumes enough nutrients to produce an ample supply of milk for her litter and to maintain her body condition, so she loses no more than 0.5 in body condition score.

Increasing the lactation diet specification to a ration with at least 14 MJ DE and 1% lysine per kilogram is one option, with many producers using a higher specification gilt lactator diet; producers should discuss the options with their nutritionist.

However, the greatest challenge is stimulating the gilt to eat a sufficient quantity. A gilt's appetite can be influenced by events prior to farrowing, as well as how well she is managed while lactating. It's been shown that the higher a gilt's feed intake is during gestation, the lower it is during lactation.

Appetite can also be affected by changes in environment pre-farrowing, when the gilt moves into farrowing accommodation.

For more information on how to manage these challenges, download Knowledge Transfer Bulletin no.7, The first lactation: a feeding review from www.bpex.org.uk/2TS/publications

Reduce semen storage risk

A challenge in winter is to prevent AI semen chilling to below 15°C: the optimum storage temperature is 17°C with variation of no greater than 2°C. Typical risk points are:

1. Semen delivery site – especially when outside working hours
2. Overfull semen storage containers – use baskets to aid circulation
3. Incorrect storage temperature – monitor daily with max-min thermometer
4. Inappropriate location of storage container – is it too cold?
5. Transfer of semen to the service area
6. Storage of semen in the service area.

For more information, download Action for Productivity 30: Semen storage and handling from www.bpex.org.uk/2TS/publications



An invitation to the Breed+3 Regional Producer Events

What: A half-day practical workshop to discuss ways you can improve breeding performance on your farm tomorrow

Who: Suitable for farm managers and stock people

Date and location:
13 November: Newbury Rugby Club
14 November: The Granary, Kidderminster
19 November: Wetherby Racecourse
20 November: Diss Rugby Club



FREE to attend*

Register for regional events

There is still time to register for BPEX's Breed+3 regional producer events in Newbury, Kidderminster, Wetherby and Diss on the 13, 14, 19 and 20 November 2013 respectively.

The practical half-day workshops are focused on helping pig unit managers and stockpeople wean more piglets per sow per year, covering: optimising the number of piglets born, reducing pre-weaning mortality and how to interpret performance records. Attendees will hear from fellow pig producers about sow feeding system trials and how they manage their units.

Go to www.bpex.org.uk/events or call 0247 647 8792.