

# Feeder pigs affected by stress

NEWARK, Del. - Feeder pigs that arrive at the farm are subject to the same kinds of stresses after travel as a person would be, says Delaware Extension livestock specialist Dr. Richard E. Fowler. They'll get off to a faster start if they're made comfortable in their new home.

One should give them a warm, dry pen - 75 degrees Fahrenheit is optimal. Drafts should be eliminated, at least in the sleeping area, as they can affect a young pig's performance.

The pen should be isolated from all other pigs on the farm. One can introduce the pigs to a clean, disinfected pen by applying phenol type

or cresylic acid disinfectant to all surfaces.

One should limit numbers of pigs to 50 or less per pen. Twenty-five is a good number. At least four square feet should be allowed for 30 to 50 pound pigs, and five square feet for 50 to 80 pounders. Some research has shown that space can be cut to 3.5 square feet for lighter weight pigs. One should provide a separate hospital pen for sick pigs.

Stressed or sick pigs will drink water before they will consume much feed. Fowler suggests medicating their water for one week. One waterer should be allowed for 25 pigs. Water soluble sulfa and electrolytes or



Feeder pigs introduced to a new environment are affected by stress just like a human would be.

Care should be taken to make them feel as comfortable and as much at home as possible.

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water soluble antibiotics and electrolytes can be used. A flavor enhancer such as Jello or Kool-Aid will increase water consumption.

One feeder space is allowed for every four pigs. If the feeders are covered, one should fasten the lids open for several days. Special formula feeds benefit the pigs for the first five days.

A special ration should contain 13 per cent protein, 17 per cent oats or barley,

vitamins at two times the NRC levels, and higher levels of antibiotic (100-200 grams per ton). The effects of shipping stress and anemia can be reduced with the addition of two pounds of ferrous sulfate and one pound of copper sulfate per ton of feed.

One can gradually change to his regular feed, which should contain 16 per cent protein. A good way to make this change is to blend half regular feed and half special

ration before changing over entirely to the regular feed. One can consult his veterinarian for the proper medication to use in regular feed.

A person should deworm the pigs when they arrive, or wait three weeks. A broad spectrum wormer containing levamisole HCL or dichlorovos should be used. If there is sickness, one should wait until it is over to deworm.

External parasites can be

treated by using Malathion or another approved pesticide for lice and mange. One should spray when the temperature is above freezing and treat as often as necessary.

During the first week or two, a person should observe the pigs several times a day. Individual pigs can be treated upon the advice of your veterinarian for three consecutive days. Early treatment often prevents death.

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