

Improve sow nutrition and save more pigs

NEWARK, Del. — Most pork producers would accept 90 percent as a survival rate for pigs from birth to weaning. Many factors interfere with this goal so that, in fact, 75-80 percent is average on many farms. Rising production costs increase the importance of saving another pig per litter, says University of Delaware Extension Livestock specialist Richard Fowler.

Losses occur from inadequate nutrition, poor housing and disease, but more than half the deaths are caused by poor nutrition, he says. The nutrition of the sow affects survival rate and thriftiness of newborn pigs. Early colostrum intake provides antibody protection and energy — so important to the newborn pig — that is relatively weak compared to newborn calves and lambs. Prompt food intake is required for the baby pig, since it is born with a thin haircoat and has little body fat to provide insulation. Any stress such as chilling or inadequate food intake may cause irreversible changes in health and/or death.

Research shows that birth weight is influenced by litter size and energy intake by the sow during the last 30 days of pregnancy. In one recent European study, when sow feed was increased from 4 to 8 pounds per day between days 100 and 110, pig birth weight improved 1/4 pound and survival increased by 10 percent.

"One must evaluate several factors before adjusting feed levels, however," cautions the specialist. "Condition of sow, weather, and present herd con-

ditions affecting pig survival and birth weight should all be considered in deciding whether additional feed is desirable."

Adding fat to sow diets is one way to improve litter nutrition and survival rate, he says. Normally sow milk increases in fat from parturition in early lactation. The amount of fat in the sow's colostrum increases by as much as 50 percent when fat is added to the gestation diet. Some research shows a 4-8 percent improvement in baby pig survival when this is done. Fat additions to the diet also help keep sows from losing excessive weight during early lactation.

The practice provides more calories in the milk for baby pigs during their first 48 to 96 hours. Dr. Robert W. Seerley of the University of Georgia reports that added fat helps increase milk yield, too.

"The effects of feeding fat to sows in late gestation to increase energy reserves of the developing pig are not clear," says Fowler. "Some research shows an advantage. Other work does not. The encouraging part from the standpoint of baby pig performance is that blood sugar levels in the litter stay higher longer when fat is fed to the sow."

The performance factors affected favorably by adding fat in sow diets include maintenance of sow weight during lactation, better baby pig survival rates, and prompt return of sows to estrus after weaning.

There are several ways to feed fat. The simplest is to pour it over the regular sow feed. There are

some dry forms of fat available commercially. Some of these products are easy to handle from bags just as one handles feed.

Amount of fat used depends on how long the feeding period is. One recommendation is to feed fat 5 days before and 14 days after farrowing. In this case, use one-half pound per sow daily. Use good quality animal or vegetable oil. These fats should be stabilized to prevent rancidity during warm

weather.

Cost of feeding fat should be measured against results. Nebraska researchers consider each 1-tenth of a pig to be worth \$2.50. Factors like prompt return to estrus are harder to put values on. If added fat improves survival by one-half pig per litter, then one can afford to spend up to 20 cents per day for added fat for a three-week period.

In addition to greater survival and rebreeding improvement, sows don't become constipated so other additives such as bran are not necessary when a fat supplement is fed.

From both the standpoint of improved baby pig survival and better sow reproductive performance, it would pay to consider supplementing the sow diet in your herd with fat during late gestation and early lactation.

Fourth estimate of 1981 meat imports down

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block said recently U.S. meat imports in 1981 are expected to be more than 200 million pounds below the level which would require restraints on imports under the Meat Import Law.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's fourth quarterly

estimate of U.S. meat imports indicates the United States will import about 1.235 billion pounds of meat during 1981. The trigger point for imposing quotas under the law is 1.447 billion pounds. The law requires the president to restrict imports of certain meats—primarily beef and veal—if USDA estimates that imports of those

meats will equal or exceed the trigger level.

When the second and third quarterly estimates were made, Block said an analysis of conditions in this country and abroad affecting meat imports strongly suggested that there would be no need for import restrictions for the remainder of the year.

Patz

★ Barn Cleaners, Manure Pumps, Manure Stackers, Silo Unloaders, Bunk Feeders, Feed Conveyors

MARVIN J. HORST

DAIRY EQUIPMENT
1950 S. 5th Avenue, Lebanon, Pa. 17042
Phone: 717-272-0871

SENENIG'S SPOUTING

Rd 3, New Holland, PA 17557

- ★ Seamless Spouting in a variety of colors.
 - ★ Made on the job.
 - ★ New or repaired.
 - ★ Old style half round spouting
- Quality Workmanship
at Low Rates

FREE ESTIMATES

717-354-4481
Nelson S. Sensenig

J. M. HORST

SERVICE CO.
BOX 231, QUENTIN, PA

DE LAVAL™

DAIRY EQUIPMENT
TANKS — PIPELINE
VACUUM PUMPS — ETC.

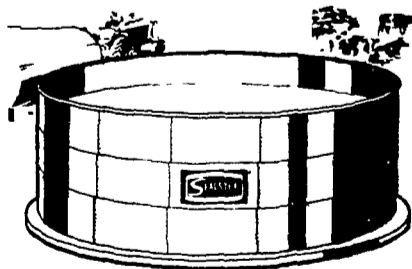
PHONE: 717-274-1242
24 HOUR SERVICE

Your Complete Systems Dealer

SEALSTOR

PLANNING LIQUID MANURE STORAGE?

We Will Custom Design
Your System to Meet your Needs



Grain and Forage Structures Available
For Immediate Erection

Please Clip & Mail Coupon to:

PENN DUTCH FARM SYSTEMS, INC. LF 10/17
1730 Highway 72 North, Lebanon, Pa. 17042

I am interested in:

High Moisture Corn Storage

Liquid Manure Storage

Please add my name to your mailing list

Haylage or Corn Silage Storage

Replacing my old or broken bottom unloader with the Laidig

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

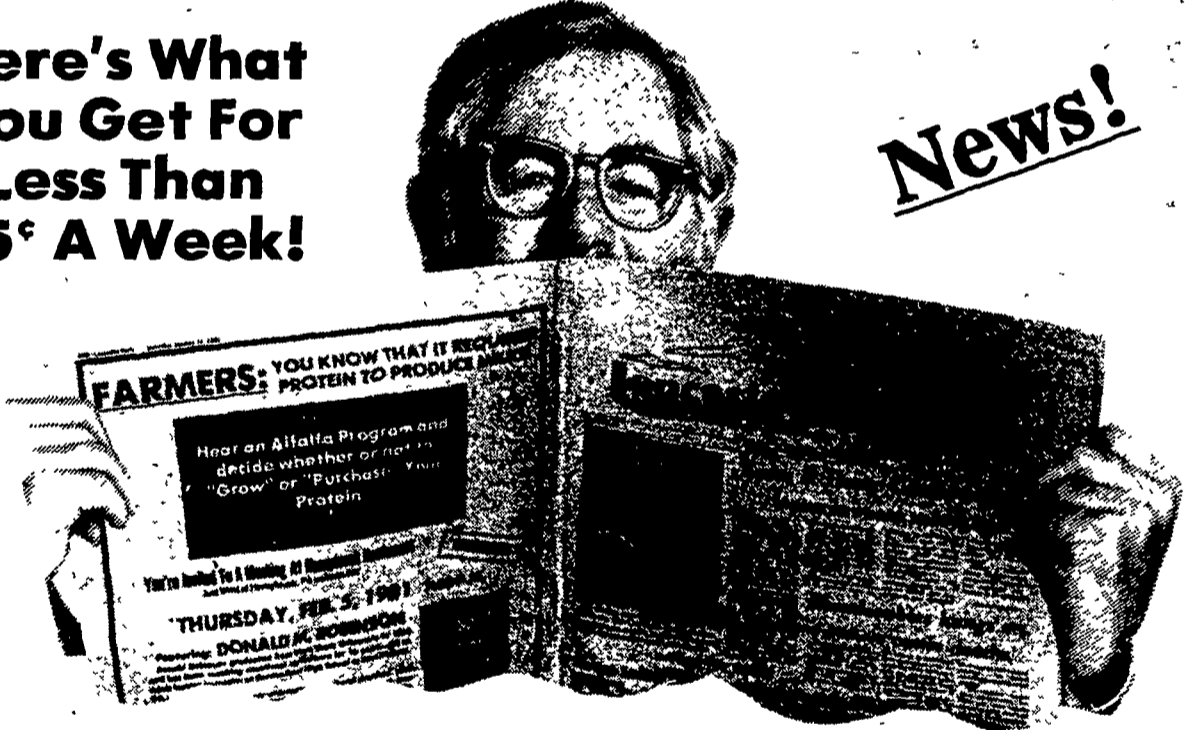
TELEPHONE (include area code) _____

NO. OF BEEF _____

DAIRY _____

HOGS _____

Here's What You Get For Less Than 15¢ A Week!



News!

- ★ UP TO THE MINUTE REPORTS on legislation, meetings and events of interest to the beef, hog, poultry and crop farmers, plus...
- ★ DAIRY COVERAGE...more dairy news in each issue than appears in any other weekly newspaper!
- ★ DHIA REPORTS from dairy counties in Pennsylvania and Maryland!

Our total farm coverage also gives you FEATURES...MARKET REPORTS...BEST BUYS ON PRODUCTS & EQUIPMENT...FREE MAILBOX MARKET...and much, much more!

At LANCASTER FARMING, we think we do a good job of keeping you informed...and we have over 39,000 paid subscribers who think so too!

Lancaster Farming

P.O. Box 366, Lititz, Pa. 17543

Phone

717-626-1164 or 394-3047