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Items to check in tie stall barns:

✓ **Cows standing and lying.** Do certain cows spend long periods of time standing up in the stalls but not eating or drinking?

✓ **Rising and reclining.** Can cows rise and recline easily in the tie stalls, with minimum interference from tie chains, curbs, tie rails, and side bars? Is the stall resting surface clean dry, and comfortable, conforming to the cow's body and providing good footing? Do cows show signs of bumps, bruises, or other injuries from using stalls?

✓ **Water and feed.** Are feed and water within easy reach? Are water bowls clean, do they provide adequate drinking water on demand, and are they easy for the cow to operate? Is the feed eating surface smooth and easily cleaned?

✓ **Air quality and quantity.** Is fresh dry air always available at the cow's nose? Does the ventilation system provide for continuous removal of wet humid air and have various rates to account for temperature changes? During hot weather, is there adequate air flow over the cows and fresh outside air to provide relief from hot humid conditions?

What items are on your inspection sheet and how often do you evaluate them to assure comfortable productive conditions for your cows?

Your cows may not have the opportunity to "select a different barn" next time they go shopping but they do have the option of producing less milk if your barn isn't providing for their needs.

Swine Housing Update

*Eileen Wheeler, Assistant Professor, Environmental Control
Agricultural & Biological Engineering
The Pennsylvania State University*

Thinking of a hoop structure for your market pigs? What designs are people considering in nursery facilities?

Swine housing options range from traditional confinement buildings to simpler hoop structures. New management trends, such as wean-to-finish buildings, are also getting a lot of attention.

A hoop structure is a simple naturally-ventilated building with lower construction cost than the traditional mechanically-ventilated confinement barn. They have a Quonset

shape with a tarp cover attached through tubular metal arches to a low wooden sidewall. Pigs are kept on a well-bedded dirt floor with access to a concrete slab feed and watering area. Manure is handled as a solid.

Hoop structures are most beneficial to producers who want to keep up-front, fixed costs low and who desire to enter the market with versatility to match a rapidly changing swine industry. Production is less automated, which requires more specialized husbandry skills. With about 180 to 200 pigs in the hoop structure, it can be more difficult to observe individuals.

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Planning to expand or update? Check with Agri-Inc. where quality is our standard.



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