

Pork Productivity: Watch The Sow, Producer Says

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ELVERSON (Chester Co.) — To a pork producer such as Nelson Beam, it's important to keep an eye on the health of the sows.

One sow produces, on average, about 5,691 pounds of pork on his farm per year. At 41 cents a pound, that means an equivalent of \$2,333 worth of "other white meat."

Investment in health strategies to improve the productivity and longevity of a sow "can impact quite a few dollars of farm income," Beam said during an interview at his farm.


Beam, who cares for about 220 sows on his farm near Elverson, said he doesn't baby the sows. Beam noted that his sow management simply means checking their food, overall comfort, and watching the farrowing when necessary to ensure good litter size, improved pig performance, and other factors.

A critical health factor is keeping an eye on temperature fluctuations in the house. During the summer, though the computer controls can read 80 degrees, the temperature can climb to 83-84 degrees without proper adjustment. Temperature control remains an ongoing management procedure at the farm.

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Nelson Beam also has a beef finishing operation. He finishes about 400 Angus-based crossbreds per year. The cattle are sold to Moyer Packing. Outside the feedlot he stands with son Joshua. Photo by Andy Andrews



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