



Welcome to the winter edition of the PIG e:newsletter.

Autumn is a time of year for reflection as thoughts move from the year that has been to planning for the year ahead. Prices have remained high through 2017, prospects look good and many producers are investing in their businesses to make their enterprises look

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Month end date	EU Spec GB SPP (p/kg)	Change on month (£)	Average Pig Weight (Kg)	UK weekly clean kill-000head	LIFFE wheat futures-
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Tooth shortening (clipping or grinding the tips of the teeth) aims to reduce the risk of skin infections by reducing the ability of piglets to injure each other. Is it a genuine solution or are we just swapping one short-term, visible problem for another hidden, longer lasting one?

Pulp exposure is a common consequence of tooth shortening so while it helps reduce the risk of skin infections it also creates an entry point in the mouth where inflammation and chronic oral infections can take hold. The bacteria responsible are also capable of spreading from the mouth to surrounding tissues, joints, and even vital organs with the potential to cause diseases that are much harder to identify and treat than common skin infections.

Image 1. Pulp exposure following tooth shortening is likely to be



Adding dietary fibre to the diets of dry sows helps them feel fuller, is required by EU directives and UK pig codes- but are we feeding enough fibre and the right type?



What is dietary fibre?

Plant-derived materials that are not digestible by the animal. Within this broad class are lignin and non-digestible carbohydrates including cellulose, hemi-cellulose, fructans, pectins, non-digestible oligosaccharides and resistant starch. These include insoluble fibres - which are not soluble in water - and soluble fibres - many of which can be fermented by bacteria in the gut to produce short-chain fatty acids.

What are the benefits of fibre?

Fibre has a low energy density which means sows can have a greater weight and volume of food yet also restricts energy intake to avoid getting fat. Sows fed on higher fibre diets are calmer at feeding time, it takes them longer to eat and afterwards they show many abnormal oral behaviours. Certain fibres have also been shown to reduce the occurrence of gastric ulcers with high fibre gestation and pre-farrowing diets aiding both digestion and reducing the incidence of stillbirth during farrowing.

Does the type of fibre matter?

Although all fibre types have some benefits to sows, research suggests that the soluble, fermentable fibres



As part of their courses SRUC students



Carbon Audits have been used throughout industry for some time. Agriculture now has its own set of tools that calculate Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions specifically catering for the sector. These include **AgRE Calc**® (**A**griculture **R**esource **E**fficiency **C**alculator), SAC

Greenhouse gases come from a number of sources on the farm as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Greenhouse Gas sources.

Designed for farming businesses AgRE Calc measures GHG emissions associated with purchased inputs and on-farm activities and expresses them as outputs sold off the farm i.e. as an emissions intensity; this is also known as a Carbon footprint. The results are benchmarked against similar enterprises with potential areas for improvement highlighted, helping to improve efficiency.

Actions to reduce emissions intensity generally have a positive effect on the business in terms of increased efficiency and increased cost savings. This is therefore a win-win situation for the environment and the business.

Efficiency measures can be grouped into five key action areas and some examples of actions within each area are shown below:-

Using Energy and Fuel Efficiently

- Monitoring of electricity and fuel use.
- Switching off machines and lights when not in use.
- Planning work to minimise journeys

Developing Renewable Energy

- Opportunities to introduce renewable sources of heat and energy.

Locking Carbon into the soils and vegetation

- Planting trees to act as a carbon sink

Optimise the application of fertiliser and manures

- Use of fertiliser and nutrient management plans
- Analysis of soils and manures
- Target nutrient applications according to time, conditions and amount required
- Calibration of spreaders
- Consider precision farming technologies

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How can a pig farming business benefit from a Carbon Audit and what are some of the actions that can bring real results?

As pig businesses have high requirements for energy, any move towards renewable sources will see positive results in terms of reduced emissions.

Nutrient budgeting allow



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