

Site Operational Report

Operating Hours

Staff operating hours are, and will be, primarily 06.00 to 18.00 Monday to Friday and 07.00 to 13.00 on Saturday and Sunday, however automatic feeding and ventilation systems will be operating outside of these hours. This farm is operated in such a way that only essential activities are carried out outside of these hours. The pig farm manager/owner, Mr. William Murphy will be available at all times should any emergency arise regarding this farm. In addition Mr William Murphy will retain overall responsibility for the day to day running of the farm.

Production

This fully integrated farm will produce pigs at market weight intended for sale to the pigmeat processing sector. The sow/weaner house will hold the breeding herd of sows, boars and replacement gilts. All pigs born on the unit will be reared up to 12 weeks of age; they are then moved to the finisher houses.

These pigs will be transferred on a weekly basis to the finisher houses and will remain here until they reach market weight. In order to ensure that the maximum performance is achieved from this farm with the minimal amount of inputs significant attention is paid to the genetics of the pigs produced. The breeding programme to be carried out in the farm will ensure that only pigs with the top performance in terms of growth rate and feed efficiency are produced.

High health status is and will remain a priority on this unit. The proposed management team will be highly trained and experienced, and this will be complemented with additional personnel where required. All in – all out movement of pigs is/will be practiced on this farm. Each age group of pigs have a different level of immunity and even in high health status herds it is important not to mix pigs of different age groups. Hygiene routines are carefully planned and monitored. The rooms will be carefully washed, disinfected and rested between batches.

The applicant is committed to providing a system on-site that ensures adequate time for cleaning and resting the rooms between batches. One of the objectives of the development is to allow improvements to this hygiene and washing routine. Adequate accommodation will mean that there is more time allowed between emptying the farrowing / weaner / finisher accommodation and re-filling of these rooms with the next batch of pigs. This will allow more comprehensive washing, soaking, cleaning and drying out. The proposed development has been designed to facilitate this improved hygiene and washing routine at the proposed stock levels. Pens will be adequately soaked prior to washing to reduce water and energy usage associated with this practice.

The young are born in the farrowing rooms. Piglets remain suckling on the sows for an average of 28 days. At day 15, creep is introduced in minute quantities as the sow's milk quality begins to decrease. It is also important to build up the piglet's ability to receive solids, thus preparing them for weaning onto a diet of solid feed. The suckling/lactation period for the sow is 28 days on average. The sow is then weaned back into the service area where she is fed ad lib until she returns to cycle approximately 5-7 days later. Gestation period being 114-116 days, the pre-farrowing sow is moved to the farrowing rooms 6-7 days before parturition.

At weaning the pigs are moved from the farrowing rooms aged 28 days, weighing approximately 7/8 kg, to the weaner rooms. The piglets remain here on a complex diet until 85 - 90 days of age. They then leave this area and move to the finishing houses at circa 35 - 40 kg.

Procedures of Production

The applicant is currently approved and/or will seek approval under the Bord Bia quality assurance system. The daily procedure follows / will follow the Bord Bia Code of Practice for pig welfare and consists / will consist of the following procedures:

Dry Sow/Gilt Accommodation.

- * ensure all sows/gilts have adequate feed and water.
- * check health status and treat accordingly.
- * check sows/gilts returning to cycle after service.
- * scrape excess faeces from behind sows/gilts.

Farrowing Accommodation.

- * ensure all sows have adequate feed and water.
- * check the health status of this area and treat as required.
- * check house temperature and heat pad temperature.
- * check and record births and deaths.
- * remove excess faeces, farrowing debris, dead and mummified pigs at the time of farrowing for hygiene purposes.
- * manually remove all faeces at weaning to reduce water waste at power washing.

Weaner Accommodation.

- * ensure all pigs have adequate feed and water.
- * check the health status of this area.
- * check temperature and ventilation rates.
- * check for water wastage via drinkers.

Finishing House(s) - as for weaners above. It is also important to take note of appropriate withdrawal periods of all medicines used and keeping accurate records of all pigs treated.

Feeding

Pigs will be fed with a computerised wet feeding system and/or a dry feeding system. Compound Feed will be supplied to the farm from a specialist feed supplier (such as Ballynagall Feeds etc.). Ad libitum water is supplied to the pigs via water nipples as per welfare legislation. Feed to be used is calculated on an industry standard average feed consumption on the farm on an annual basis divided by the number sows/served gilts on the farm giving an estimated figure of c. 7-7.5 tonnes per sow/served gilt.

Water supply and use.

Water is to be supplied from the existing supply source. Water is to be stored in an over-ground water storage tank(s). All animal drinking appliances are regularly maintained to ensure that there is no leakage to the slurry storage structures.

Manure Storage Structures and capacities

All pigs are/will be housed in fully slatted houses with under house manure storage tanks. The slurry is collected directly through these slatted floors and stored in tanks located below slat level.