

Standard Operating Procedure for Daily Pig and Barn Care

Introduction

Pigs and facilities should be observed at least once daily. Regular observations can help identify problems with pigs and/or facilities early, so that necessary interventions can be implemented.

Safety

Hazards:

- **For all size of pigs:**
 - Lifting
 - Struck by or against object
 - Fall (slips and trips)
 - Pinch points
 - Debris in eyes
 - Dust (respiratory)
 - Noise (hearing)
 - Needle stick
- **For pigs over 40 pounds:**
 - Stepped on by animal
 - Struck by animal
 - Caught between gates

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal protective equipment (PPE) to be used may include:

- Protective eyewear
- Dust mask
- Safety-toe boots
- Hearing protection

Supplies

Supplies needed may include:

- Marking chalk, paint or spray
- Temperature/humidity monitor
- Maintenance supplies/tools
 - waterer nipples
 - scraper
 - pliers
- Syringes
- Appropriate-sized needles for size of animals (See PQA Plus guidelines)
- Treatment medications, per the operation's herd health plan
- Pen and paper

- Snare
- Sorting panel/board

Procedures - Observing Pigs

Observing pigs

To begin the procedure, enter the room quietly to avoid disturbing pigs. If possible, observe through a window before entering. For animals housed individually, observe the general attitude and behavior of the room. Listen for unusual noises in the room. For pigs housed in groups, observe how the pigs are lying. Based on your observations of lying patterns, take action as follows:

1. For pigs that are piled on top of each other, it could indicate they are too cold. Evaluate the temperature settings, note any drafts or health issues with the pigs.
2. For pigs that are lying together, slightly touching each other, the air temperature in the room is likely just right for the pigs. No further action needed.
3. For pigs that are lying apart and not touching each other, it could indicate they are too hot. Reduce the temperature settings or start using cooling strategies such as turning on misters or cool cells.

Enter the room, if you haven't done so already, and determine if the air quality is appropriate. Be observant for high levels of ammonia or other gasses that cause a burning sensation in the eyes, create a strong smell of ammonia or cause a burning sensation in the throat and chest when inhaled. Observe facilities for signs of increased humidity, such as water dripping from pipes, dust balling up on gates or wet floors.

If air quality or the humidity level is a concern, check to ensure that:

- Minimum ventilation, or grater, is occurring.
- Ventilation equipment is functioning properly. Check fans, inlets, baffles and curtains.
- Manure is at or below the recommended level to assure adequate air movement, if below-slat pits are used.
- Air distribution is even, no drafts exist and there are no areas of stagnant air.

After observing the general air and temperature conditions of the barn, step in to the first pen or walk down the first alleyway. For group housed pigs, slowly move through the group and get each animal up. For pigs housed individually, slowly walk down the alleyway and get each animal up. Observe all pigs in the room,

Look for:

- Fuzzy hair coat
- Gaunt belly
- Lameness (with or without swollen joints)
- Unwillingness to get up or to be non-weight bearing on one or more legs
- Pale color
- Coughing and/or thumping (labored breathing)
- Lesion such as: open deep wounds, ruptures, large scratches or shoulder sores, abscesses, prolapses, hernias, tail biting or vulva injuries
- Diarrhea or signs of diarrhea, such as manure caked on the inside or back side of rear legs
- Pigs that are separated from the group
- Watery, mattery eyes

Any sick pigs need to be marked and treated according to the site's treatment protocols. Record any treatments per PQA Plus and company guidelines.

Any pigs still housed in their group pen that have not responded to treatment should be moved into a hospital pen to continue treatment according to the site's treatment guidelines.

Humanely euthanize pigs that:

- Have no prospect for improvement or are not responding to care and treatment after two days of intensive care unless otherwise recommended by a veterinarian.
- Are severely injured or non-ambulatory pigs with the inability to recover. (An animal is considered non-ambulatory if it cannot get up or if it can stand with support but is unable to bear weight on two of its legs.)
- Is non-ambulatory with a body condition score of 1 - must be euthanized immediately.
- Have hernias that are perforated or large hernias that touch the ground while standing and cause difficulty walking and are

ulcerated.

- Have an untreated prolapse that has become neurotic. Uterine prolapses must be euthanized immediately.
- Remove any dead pigs from the pen using a snare or cart.

Procedures - Observing the facilities

This portion of the daily observation protocol can be done at the same time as animal observations or as a stand alone task.

Walk through the barn and identify if:

1. Feeders and waterers are in good repair, not causing or posing imminent threat of injury to the pigs.
2. Feeders and waterers are allowing for unobstructed access to feed and water.
3. Penning, flooring, alleyways and chutes are in good repair and not causing or posing imminent threat of injury to the pigs.
4. Record anything that needs immediate attention such as pigs out of feed, an overflowing feeder, a non-functioning water source, a broken water line, loose gates or feeders, broken slats, etc.

Documentation

Record daily observations according to the site's recordkeeping policy. The records must indicate all pigs were observed at least once daily. Retain daily observation records for 12 months.