



Carthage Corner

February, 2005 Quarterly Newsletter

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A note from:



Dr. Joe Connor
Carthage Veterinary
Service, Ltd.

&

Elanco Products

Important Industry Dates:

Carthage Veterinary
Service, Ltd. Annual
Swine Conference
August 30, 2005

World Pork Expo
Iowa State Fairgrounds
June 9-11, 2005

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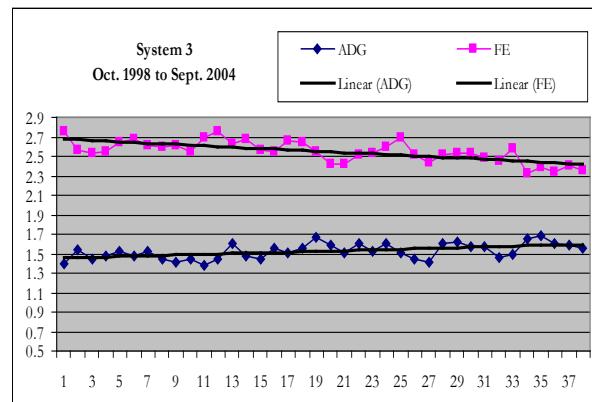
Take time to evaluate your herd's productivity for 2004 and set goals for 2005. This past year has been one of tremendous profitability, but this does not diminish the opportunity to set productivity goals and evaluate costs for this year. Each year our group compiles participating herds in our PigCHAMP® bureau. This database encompasses a large number of herds of varying sizes and different genetics. This analysis compares the key productivity influences of factors such as parity, lactation length, entry to service, replacement rate, and sow mortality. In addition for the individual herds, the analysis evaluates farrowing house location, piglet age, and parity influenza on prewean mortality. This allows you to benchmark against these herds to assess the various opportunities for your herds. This will be available in mid-February or early March.

It is always encouraging to see the continual increase in totalborn and liveborn as you better understand how to manage gilt development, age of first service, herd health, and stockmanship expertise. I expect the top herds in the database this year will be above 27 pigs per sow per year with 12.5 totalborn, 6.5% stillborn, and 8% pre-weaning mortality. Even with this outstanding production, our goal is to get all the herds we service to hit this productivity while moving the top herds to 30 pigs per sow per year. At our August 2004 Swine Conference, we invited Dr. Hasse Poulsen from Denmark to speak and lay out the foundation of achieving 30 pigs per sow per year. He services over 30 herds that are producing at or above this level.

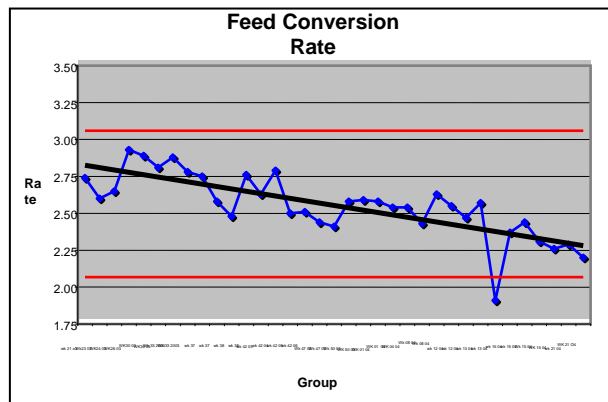
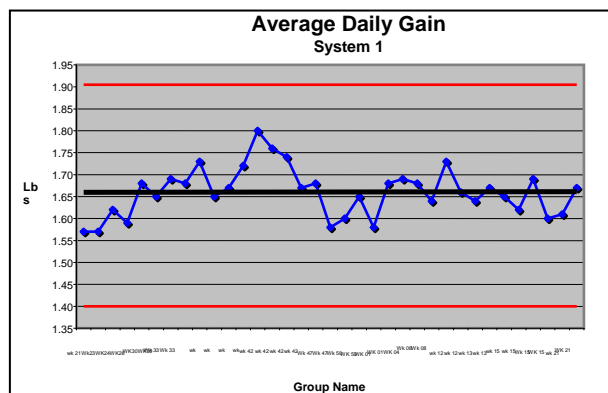
Nursery/grow/finish performance also needs to be analyzed. We are fortunate that we have access to group records and consecutive groups within numerous systems. This table is an example of productivity in 2004.

Wean-to-Finish Performance			
Source	Herd 1	Herd 2	Herd 3
Genetics	PIC	PIC	PIC
Lines	C22 x 327	C22 x 337	C22 x 337
Head	12750	32250	21031
Entry weight (lb)	10.5	11.5	11.5
Slaughter weight (lb)	272	282	273.1
% Lean	54.1	53.7	55.77
% Yield	77.7	76.81	76.82
Mortality %	5.16	3.2	3.43
ADG	1.63	1.67	1.69
FC	2.45	2.35	2.31

Also very useful are the trendlines of grow finish performance. This chart illustrates the improvement over time within a system.



Embedded within each of these data sets are variations that occurs in a normal system. Our SPC charting illustrates group to group normal variation around the mean or average.





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Check out the newly designed Carthage Veterinary Service, Ltd. website at www.hogvet.com

Visit the Carthage Veterinary Service, Ltd. Training website at www.hogvet.com/training to learn about their "Training Toolboxes"

Frequently, we lose sight of how excellent productivity can be. We often become barn blind with the day to day procedures and stray from the discipline of standard operating procedures that will optimize this productivity. It is easy to place productivity barriers that restrict changes that will improve productivity. It is challenging for management to set out a course of action and to impart this action to leave staff to accomplish these goals. Everyone has to recognize that once a strategic plan is identified, it still remains a work in progress that requires training, sampling for health, continual data analysis, and frequent adjustments to the program.

Health is a major influence on productivity. Management of health takes a coordinated effort by your team and your veterinary team. The changes in production systems over the last ten years combined with the improvement in diagnostics and understanding of diseases necessitates that an ongoing program of diagnostics is critical to optimizing production and cost. Numerous factors influence timing of interventions including parity, wean age, sources, commingling, and sow herd disease status. All of these influences can be evaluated through routine diagnostics combined with clinical assessment. Interventions can be evaluated and timing of those interventions, whether it is vaccine therapeutics or pig flow detailed for your individual herd.

In summary, use this time to compare your herd's productivity and performance to benchmarks, establish goals for 2005, develop a detailed plan to achieve those goals, and continually assess and modify your program.

Best regards,

Joe Connor, DVM
Carthage Veterinary Service, Ltd.

Farm-wide attrition management

Attrition describes the number of pigs that don't reach full-value market weight, typically identified as deads, culls and lights. Minimizing attrition requires a whole-system approach. By addressing health and management issues that increase attrition throughout an operation, producers can market more full-value pigs and significantly improve productivity and profitability.

Minimize attrition in the breeding herd by setting a goal to retain sows for 6 parities. To reduce sow culling rates, take steps to improve sow performance:

- Decrease the number of sows managed/person
- Reduce disease pressure on the sow
- Treat lameness early

Achieving 2% nursery mortality involves both management and health issues, beginning in the breeding herd. Reducing the percentage of gilts in the sow herd helps because offspring from gilts have more disease-related problems, higher mortality and poorer growth rates.

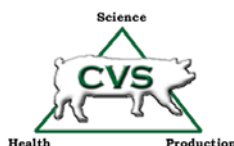
Another key is to ensure quality pigs are entering the nursery. Tag questionable pigs to see if they are more likely to be poor-doers at exit. Treat and control disease early—especially bacterial²—because poor-doing pigs are more likely to carry infectious diseases that spread to the rest of the population.

Reaching the goal of 12% attrition (2% mortality and 10% culls and lights) in grow-finish herds also requires enterprise-wide management to ensure quality pigs are entering grow-finish from the nursery. Early disease treatment and control is important because even subclinical disease can reduce performance. Ensure pigs have easy access to feed and water, avoid over-crowding, and monitor and record results at marketing to measure success.

By preventing and controlling ileitis, Tylan[®] helps reduce attrition losses caused by ileitis. Feeding Tylan[®] improves pig flow by preventing and controlling ileitis and reducing the number of lightweight pigs.

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and
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