

AVOIDING DISEASE AND PARASITES

Disease, parasites, and inefficient use of feed are extremely costly to the swine industry.

Swine should be raised in clean, disease free quarters. If pastured, a rotation should be followed.

In starting a swine herd, make every effort to purchase sound, healthy animals. Hold all purchased animals in isolation for 30 days before putting them on clean premises, and for 60 days before using them in the breeding program. If any disease symptoms show up, never put the animals on the clean premises. All animals bought should be vaccinated for erysipelas at least 14 days before being delivered. Visitors should be required to disinfect their shoes or boots with a strong disinfectant before being permitted in the swine production center. Guests should be accompanied by someone working with the hogs, and then never allowed in the lots or pens where hogs are kept.

Proper sanitation is basic. Use of antibiotics and other drugs may stave off trouble for awhile, but will not take the place of clean premises. The goal of the successful operator must be clean, uncontaminated premises and good management. Remove sick animals from the herd at once and place them in quarantine quarters, where they can in no way contact healthy animals. Never drag dead animals, but move them directly into a vehicle for disposal. Any discharge from a dead animal, even in the isolation area, should be removed. Bury dead animals in a pit after covering them with quick lime, or send them to a rendering plant. If a front end loader is used to remove a dead animal and there is a possibility that the animal died of a contagious disease, disinfect the scoop before using it again. Never permit mud wallows. They are a source of contamination and disease.

An adequate supply of clean water should be available in each lot, so placed that droppings cannot contaminate the water. Keep waterers clean at all times. Electrically heated waterers are best since they provide an adequate water supply the year round.

Construct feeding facilities to prevent feed contamination and to allow for frequent cleaning.

Diseases cannot be prevented or controlled unless they can be identified. When the operator recognizes a disease it should be handled and treated at once, meaning within the hour if possible. If he does not recognize the symptoms, he should call his veterinarian immediately. If there is any doubt what the trouble may be after consultation with a veterinarian, specimens from the sick or dead animal should be sent to a diagnostic laboratory at once. If a live pig can be delivered, the chances of a positive diagnosis probably will result without delay. If the animal is dead and there will be several hours delay before delivery can be made to the laboratory, it is best to freeze the carcass. If the carcass is large and only diseased specimens or organs are being sent to the laboratory, they should be removed and frozen. Pack the specimens so there will be minimum of thawing before they reach the destination. Do not send specimens so they are in transit over the weekend. This may result in thawing and decomposition. In most cases, organs or specimens taken from an animal that has been treated with heavy shots of a medication such as penicillin or other chemotherapeutic agents, or that have started to decompose, are worthless for making a diagnosis. This also applies to specimens placed in alcohol or some other preservative for shipment.

Mass treatment of animals through feed or water may be satisfactory in the case of some diseases, or for internal parasites. Where individual treatment is given you are assured of each animal being properly treated.

When giving young pigs a hypodermic injection, always disinfect the injection site with 7 percent iodine, alcohol, or some other good disinfectant. Be sure syringes, needles, etc., are sterile. Syringes can be washed or sterilized in boiling water. Needles can be kept in a glass jar in denatured or rubbing alcohol. After using it, flush the needle with hot water before placing it in the alcohol. When giving injections to swine, keep a small bottle of epinephrine in the medicine kit to be given according to directions if an animal goes into shock.

Always follow directions in giving any medicine to swine.

Subcutaneous injections are given just beneath the skin. The best place for this injection is the loose skin next to the body just back of the elbow. Intramuscular injections are given directly into the muscle of the animal, usually into the ham muscle. When injections are given into the rear quarters, the needle should be inserted into the muscle and the syringe plunger pulled slightly backward to determine that the needle is not in a blood vessel, which is indicated if

blood is drawn into the syringe. If no blood is in evidence, slowly give the injection. Never give more than 10 cc injections in any one site.

Intravenous injections are made directly into the jugular vein along the neck.

Keep swine as free from stress as possible. Internal parasites, moving in hot weather, holding in large groups, keeping small animals with large ones, rough or excessive handling, all create stress. Animals under stress are subject to disease. Always move hogs as little as possible. When animals are moved, try to keep them comfortable. Don't crowd swine excessively before loading. If possible, keep animals of about the same size in each load or lot.

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