

H20 - Feeding of sows - dry feed



A sow in medium condition is ready to nurse.

Feeding restrictively in the first week of lactation and then following the sow's appetite is the recipe for optimum feeding of sows.

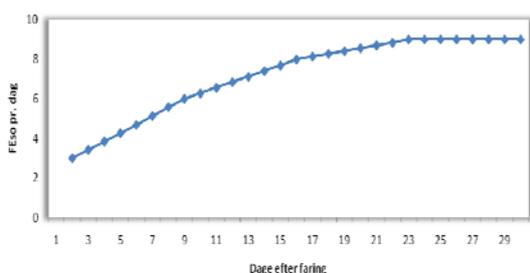
Before farrowing

1. To be able to calculate the amount fed, you need to know the weight of one litre of feed.
2. Until farrowing, feed 3.5 FU_{sow} a day.
3. The day before expected farrowing, reduce the feed dose to 2.8-3.0 FU_{sow} a day.

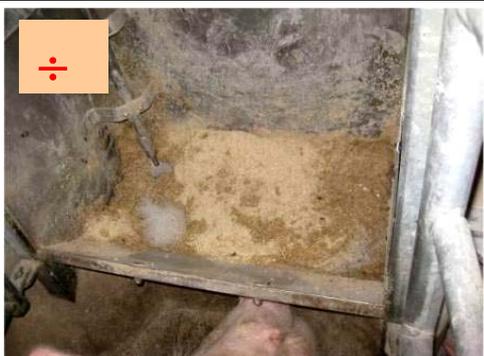
After farrowing

4. Feed the sows 3-8 times a day.
5. The sows must have eaten all their food 25-35 minutes after feeding. Check this min. once a day.
6. The day after farrowing, give the sows 3.5 FU_{sow}/day.
7. Increase the feed dose daily by 0.25-0.5 FU_{sow}. See H21 - Individual adjustment of one sow's feed dose after farrowing and Appendix 19 - Guiding feed charts.
8. The aim is for the sows to reach 5.5-6.0 FU_{sow}/day after one week of lactation. A feed dose higher than this will risk the sow stopping later in lactation.

Vejledende foderkurve til diegivende søer



Principle for feed chart in the farrowing facility. Guiding feed units on the different days of lactation are shown in Appendix 19 - Guiding feed charts. The chart must be adjusted to the individual herd.



Poor hygiene reduces feed intake and thereby milk yield

If the sows' feed intake is generally below the feed chart, check

- The temperature in the sows' activity area.
- Body condition / feeding in the gestation facility.
- Feed quality and hygiene.
- Water supply and feed dose.

If the sows generally lose weight

- Inadequate feed dose.
- The volume of the feed is lower than expected, ie. the feed dose is lower than intended. The sows are not getting the amount expected due to incorrect adjustment of the feeder, segregation or blockage of the feed pipe.

If one or a few sows stop

- Problems with water supply.
- Problems with the hygiene in the trough or in the feed pipe.
- Incorrect adjustment of the feeder; the sow gets less feed than expected.
- The feed's volume is larger than expected; the feed dose is higher than expected.
- The sow is sick or suffers from a gastric ulcer.
- Fat sows eat less than sows in adequate body condition.



The sow will not get the expected feed dose if the volume of the feed is different from what you expected

Additional comments - Feeding of sows - dry feed	
1.	You need to know the weight of one litre of feed to be able to calculate the feed dose in litre per feeding. An easy way to do this is to pour 1, 2, 4 and 6 l, respectively, from the feed boxes and calculate the average weight of one litre. Do this for all types of feed boxes in your herd. Once you know the energy content of the feed, you can calculate the daily amount fed per feeding. See Appendix 2 - Weighing of feed.
2.	It is essential to ensure a high feed intake due to sows' milk production and subsequent reproduction cycle. Medium body condition at farrowing will ensure the sows' feed intake and minimise the risk of shoulder lesions. See Appendix 20 - Evaluation of body condition and feeding.
3.	A high feed dose up to farrowing will increase the risk of M.M.A. and double the prevalence of metritis compared with a feed dose of 2.8-3.0 FUsow a day. If you reduce the feed dose the day before expected farrowing it will have no effect on birth weight, but will be sufficient to reduce the risk of problems during farrowing. Sows' appetite may be reduced around farrowing. Therefore, always empty the trough before the next feeding. Water is essential, as too little water will reduce the feed intake. If a sow has not eaten all her food around farrowing, pour some fresh water into the trough when you have emptied it.
4.	As a minimum feed the sows 3 times a day. 5-8 daily feedings increase the sows' feed intake and reduce weight loss. This minimises the prevalence of shoulder lesions and increases the weaning weight of the litter when weaning after 5 weeks. Example of feeding strategy with 3 daily feedings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At 6 - 8 o'clock • At 11 - 12 o'clock • At 15 o'clock (possibly at 21 o'clock in warm periods) Example of feeding strategy with 5 daily feedings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At 5 - 6 o'clock • At 7 - 8 o'clock • At 11 - 12 o'clock • At 15 - 16 o'clock • At 20 - 21 o'clock Aim for minimum 8 hours of rest between evening and morning feedings.
5.	To ensure a sufficient energy intake, use a feed dose so high that you have to empty the troughs of a few sows daily (5-8%). Sows that do not eat up are not necessarily sick, but may have stopped and therefore need to have their feed dose reduced. Example of work routine around feeding: Before feeding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empty the troughs if there is feed left from the previous feeding. If there is much feed left, do not feed the sow at the next feeding. After feeding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have all sows been given feed? • Do all sows get up? If not - see H15 - Disease and treatment of sows. • Do the sows eat up within 25 - 35 minutes? See H21 - Individual adjustment of a sow's feed dose after farrowing. • If a sow has not eaten all her feed within 25-35 minutes, empty the trough a couple of hours later so that she has access to clean water. For farrowing sows, empty the trough after half an hour so that they have access to clean water.
6.	Too much feed increases the risk of the sow stopping. Too little feed will result in a weight loss due to the lactation process. Thin sows find it more difficult to recover after farrowing.
7.	Slowly increase the feed dose (see the feed chart on the front of this fact sheet) to avoid the sow stopping and for the energy intake to follow the milk yield. See H21 - Individual adjustment of a sow's feed dose after farrowing.
8.	There is no need for sows to reach more than 5.5-6.0 FUsow a day after one week of lactation. If the feed dose is higher than this, the sow may stop later in the lactation period. After two weeks, the sow should have reached 8-9 FUsow a day. For the rest of the lactation period, feed the sows according to appetite to limit loss of body condition.