

H29 - Essential statutory requirements to the farrowing facility



Out of regard to the welfare of the animals, the reputation of the pig production industry and as preparation for welfare inspections, all staff members must be familiar with important statutory requirements in relation to the farrowing facility.

1. **Space:** No specific space requirements for the farrowing facility.
2. **Light and vision:** Pigs must be kept in min. 40 lux for minimum eight hours a day. Generally, pigs must be able to see other pigs. However, exceptions exist around farrowing.
3. **Tethering:** Illegal in all facilities as of January 1, 2006.
4. **Flooring:** All piglets must be able to rest simultaneously on, for instance, a solid floor.
5. **Protection of piglets:** Farrowing pens for loose sows must have a protection device for piglets.
6. **Water:** All pigs older than two weeks must have permanent access to fresh water.
7. **Nesting material:** Sows and gilts must have access to nesting material in the week up to farrowing.
8. **Rooting and enrichment material:** In farrowing facilities taken into use after May 15, 2003, the sows must have access to sufficient manipulable material.
9. **Tooth grinding:** Routine tooth grinding is prohibited. If necessary, tooth grinding must take place within the first four days of life.
10. **Tail docking:** Routine tail docking is prohibited. If necessary, tail docking must be done within the first 2-4 days of life. It is illegal to dock more than half of the tail.
11. **Castration:** Due to requirements from countries that import pork from Denmark, castration must be performed under pain relief, and according to Danish legislation within the first 2-7 days of life. It is **illegal** to tear tissue.
12. **Weaning age:** Piglets must not be weaned before they are min. 28 days old.
13. **Destruction:** Pigs weighing more than 5 kg must be destroyed with a captive bolt pistol, unless destruction is performed by a vet, butcher, people with a game licence or other people trained in slaughter or destruction. All animals that are stunned (for instance with a captive bolt pistol) must be bled by breaking through at least one of the two carotid arteries or through blood vessels coming from this.
14. **Cleaning:** Gestating sows and gilts must be clean when they are placed in the farrowing pen.
15. **Time of transfer:** Gestating sows and gilts must be transferred to the farrowing pen max. 3 days before expected farrowing. As of 2013, all sows must be housed loose until 1 week before expected farrowing.
16. **Zinc:** Feed containing more than 150 mg zinc per kg feed must not be used in the farrowing facility.

Legislation

- [1] Animal Protection Act. Act no. 386 of June 6 1991
- [2] Order on protection of pigs. BEK no. 323 of May 6 2003
- [3] Act on amending act on indoor keeping of gestating sows and gilts and act on indoor keeping of weaners, breeding stock and finishers. Act no. 295 of May 30 2003
- [4] Order on tail docking and castration of animals. BEK no. 324 of May 6 2003
- [5] Order on slaughter and destruction of animals. BEK no. 1037 of December 14 1994
- [6] Order on amending order on protection of pigs. BEK no. 1735 of December 22 2006
- [7] Brief no. 0521, The National Committee for Pig Production.

Additional comments - Essential statutory requirements to the farrowing facility	
1.	All pig facilities must be large enough all pigs to be able lie down, rest and get up without difficulty (§ 12). Farrowing pens must have an unobstructed area behind the sow/gilt to ease natural farrowing or farrowing which requires assistance (§ 27). In farrowing crates, the piglets must have sufficient room to suckle without difficulty (§ 31). [2]
2.	Pigs must be kept with a light intensity of minimum 40 lux a day for a period of minimum eight hours a day (§ 8) [2], [6]. As a point of departure, all pigs must be able to see other pigs (§ 12, 3), but in the week before expected farrowing and during farrowing, gestating sows and gilts can be kept out of sight from other pigs (§ 25). [2]
3.	Tethering became illegal in all new facilities as of January 1, 1996.
4.	Part of the total floor area in a farrowing pen must be large enough for all piglets to be able to rest. There should also be solid floor covered by a mat or bedded with straw or other suitable material (§ 30) [2].
5.	Pig rails may function as a protection device for the piglets (§ 28) to reduce the risk of them being injured when the sow lies down [2].
6.	§ 19, BEK 323 [2].
7.	This has been a legislative requirement since May 15, 2003, and applies to all farrowing facilities - regardless of when they were taken into use - unless it is not technically feasible for the slurry system used in the herd (§ 26 stk. 2, BEK 323) [2].
8.	§ 20, BEK 323 [2]. In farrowing facilities brought into use before May 15, 2003, this requirement must be fulfilled no later than January 1, 2013 (§ 20, stk. 2, BEK 323) [2], [3].
9.	Tooth grinding is allowed if it is documented that sow teats or other pigs' heads have been injured due to lack of tooth grinding. Tooth grinding must be performed by a vet or by a person trained/experienced in grinding teeth. Clipping of canine teeth is illegal [2]. Before grinding, you must have taken steps to prevent injuries to sow teats and other pigs' heads.
10.	Preventive measures must be taken to solve tail biting problems. If it is necessary to practise tail docking, it must be done within the first 2-4 days of life. Tail docking must be performed by a vet or a person trained and experienced in tail docking. Dock as little as possible of the tail and no more than half of the tail [4].
11.	Castration must only be performed by a vet or a person trained and experienced in castrating piglets with appropriate tools and under hygienic conditions. After the seventh day of life, castration must be performed by a vet and prolonged analgesia must be administered. Castration must not be done by tearing of tissue [4]. Since June 2009, pain relief has been administered to all Danish pigs during castration. This is a requirement from the German market and a prerequisite for Denmark to be able to maintain the export of pork to Germany.
12.	Piglets must not be weaned from the sow before they are minimum 28 days old, unless the welfare or health of the mother or the piglets would otherwise be adversely affected [2]. However, piglets may be weaned from the sow up to seven days earlier if they are moved into specialised facilities that have been emptied, cleaned and disinfected and that are separated from facilities where sows are kept.
13.	§15: In pig farms where visiting rules with quarantine periods from visits to other pig farms are being observed, the person in charge of the pigs must be in possession of a captive bolt pistol and be instructed in how to use it. §52: When the animal has been stunned, bleeding must be initiated as quickly as possible after stunning and it must be quick, heavy and complete. Under all circumstances, bleeding must be complete before the animal gains consciousness [5].
14.	§ 24, BEK 323 [2]. This is included in the checklist for use in the spot check programme performed by the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration. It is estimated that cleaning of sows and gilts upon transfer to the farrowing facility is done as needed, and that this is only rarely needed.
15.	§25, BEK no. 1735 [6].
16.	In the farrowing facility, the feed must have a max. zinc content of 150 mg per kg feed, while it is allowed to use 2500 ppm zinc per kg feed in the first 14 days post-weaning provided that it is prescribed by the herd vet. This means that if weaning feed contains more than 150 mg zinc per kg feed, it must not be used in the farrowing facility. [7]