



# PORK BRIEFS

The Latest Information  
on Swine Nutrition



## EXTRA PIGLETS BORN BRING EXTRA CONSIDERATIONS

Ken Palen, Kenpal Farm Products

In some parts of the world new hyperprolific sows are reaching over 14 to 15 total piglets born per litter and 13 to 14 piglets born alive. However, these new opportunities have created new considerations on both management and feeding issues. Recently at the London Swine Conference in April 2009, Mr. Guy-Pierre Martineau, a researcher from France, talked about some of these issues. Some key points discussed from research done on hyperprolific sows by Mr. Guy-Pierre Martineau and his colleagues are as follows:

- From 1996 to 2007, there has been an increase of 0.2 total born piglets per year in the sows studied.
- With every extra piglet per litter, the litter weight of all piglets was reduced by 32 grams per pig on average.
- As litter size increases there is an increase in number of smaller piglets being born, less larger piglets, and more variation in the litter.
- Increased litter size also increased the need for sows to have over 14 teats. Some Research indicates that up to 40% of the litters born on hyperprolific sows may have over 14 piglets born. (Boulet, 2008 IFIP-GTrT France)
- More sows are farrowing at 116 to 117 days gestation instead of 114 days.

In conclusion from his talk, Mr. Guy-Pierre Martineau asked the question "Have we put too much emphasis on maximizing litter size and compromising piglet viability?" In France they are considering stopping the race for more piglets born per litter.



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### Inside this Issue

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**The Ontario Pork  
Congress will be the  
official launch of  
firstSTART P piglet  
milk replacer.**



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Increases in productivity are also being seen here in Canada and the United States. This is why hog numbers are continuing to grow while sow numbers remain constant or lower. Why sows are putting out more live births this year is a mystery to most. Is it due to the Circovirus vaccine? Or maybe it's due to better quality feed this year? While we may not have the answer to this question let's enjoy this extra productivity while we can and benefit from the learning opportunity it gives us.

## **EXTRA PIGLETS – OPTIONS**

### **CHECK UDDERS**

- Older sows may have nipples that have been crushed or are not working completely.
- In order to get colostrum, piglets can be split suckled at birth or cross fostered on sows with smaller litters if available, or both.

### **MAKE EXTRA SOW CAPACITY**

- Wean a first litter gilt at 14 days in lactation.
- Move piglets from a 7 day lactating sow to this gilt.
- Gather up the extra newborn piglets after they have had their colostrum and put them on this sow.

## **FEED MILK REPLACER**

### **ALL PIGLETS ON SOWS**

- Milk Replacer given from day one (24 hours) until weaning (at 21 days) free choice has shown to increase weaning weights of piglets on an average of 1 kg each. (University of Georgia, 1990 – 1994)
- A properly designed milk supply system is required for this application with proper cleaning done daily.
- Economics must also be considered with piglets in this study consuming between 2.5 litres of liquid (0.375 Kg dry matter) and 9.9 litres of liquid (1.49 Kg dry matter) per pig for the period, depending on cooler or warmer seasons – more liquid milk replacer was consumed during warmer days.

### **SPLIT WEANED PIGLETS**

- Research done at University of Illinois, 1996, showed a 22% increase in Average Daily Gain (ADG) on piglets when the largest half of the litter was weaned at 14 days and fed milk replacer and the smaller piglets were left on the sow to suckle until they were all weaned at 21 days.
- With large litters, up to half the piglets could be weaned at 7 to 14 days and put on milk replacer. This is now successfully being done at younger ages with improved formulas of milk replacer.

### **FALL BACK PIGLETS**

- Fall back piglets seen by 7 days old can also be weaned on milk replacer. This is quite often done in piggy boxes above farrowing crates in the farrowing room, but can also be weaned into a weaning room.



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## PIGLET MILK REPLACER 24/18



**The Ontario Pork Congress will be  
the official launch of firstSTART P.**

69819 London Rd, Centralia, ON N0M 1K0  
Toll Free: 1-800-265-2904  
Email: [kpalen@kenpal.on.ca](mailto:kpalen@kenpal.on.ca)  
[www.kenpal.on.ca](http://www.kenpal.on.ca)

Introducing

**firstSTART™ P**

***With larger litter sizes, comes  
the need for a solution to feed  
smaller piglets.***

**Here is what swine producer Brian  
McNichol has to say about firstSTART P  
Piglet milk replacer:**

*We have worked with Kenpal for all our feed  
since the mid 1980's and when we were looking  
for a new supplier for piglet milk replacer, Ken  
suggested we give their new milk replacer  
product firstSTART P a try.*

*We find that firstSTART P works just as well  
as the other milk replacers available and at a  
better price. With other products we have tried  
the piglets look swollen, but with firstSTART P  
they fatten up nicely!*

*We use the milk replacer with the piglets that fall  
back on the sows. With the larger litters we see,  
it is important to have this option available and  
we find that these runt piglets can usually be  
weaned at the same time as the rest of the litter.*

Brian McNichol  
Blyth, Ontario

If you would like to try firstSTART P with your  
pigs, contact your Kenpal Sales Representative.

**firstSTART™ P**

## WHERE DO EXTRA PIGS GO?

- With nurseries and grow out barns typically running to capacity, where do the extra piglets that are weaned find a place to go without overcrowding the facility?
- If larger litters continue, the number of sows farrowing would need to be reduced or the space available increased to compensate for this.

## IN SUMMARY

While travelling the back roads this year we are seeing some of the largest, best looking litters on sows we have ever seen. Why this is happening, I don't know. Mr. Guy-Pierre Martineau's talk at the London Swine Conference was timely, showing the challenges of having more pigs born. Are our sows more hyperprolific than last year? We will have to wait and see. In the meantime some of what was discussed in this article may be helpful. When implementing new management procedures it is always best to have a meeting with your veterinarian to discuss if any of these new procedures would have an impact on your herd health. Have a great summer!

## REFERENCES:

Managing Highly Prolific Sows. Guy-Pierre Martineau, Brigitte Badourard. Department of Health, Production and Economics National Veterinary School. London Swine Conference – Tools of the Trade. 2009.

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## It's a fact - Another Kenpal Customer has Success with Lacta-Fat™

**Lacta-Fat in the Lactation Sow Diet has increased the sows milk production and increased litter weaning weight by over 10%.**

**Kevin Van Bakel  
Dublin, Ontario**



**Call your Kenpal Sales Representative today for more information**

**Published by:**



69819 London Road, RR #1, Centralia, Ontario, Canada, N0M 1K0

Tel: (519) 228-6444 or 1-800-265-2904 • Fax (519) 228-6560 • Email [kpalen@kenpal.on.ca](mailto:kpalen@kenpal.on.ca) • [www.kenpal.on.ca](http://www.kenpal.on.ca)

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