KENPAL FARM PRODUCTS INC

PORK BRIEFS

The Latest Information on Swine Nutrition

CAN PHASE FEEDING SOWS SAVE MONEY?

By Ken Palen

New and ongoing Canadian research, conducted by Dr. Ron Ball and colleagues at the University of Alberta, indicates that opportunities to save money by phase feeding sows do exist. Dr. Ball recently reported that phase feeding gestation sows to their changing energy needs, can save up to 20 kg of feed per sow per gestation. Dr. Ball uses an example of 20 kg of feed saved, multiplied by $250.00 per tonne cost of feed, equals a $5.00 per sow savings, then multiplied by 2.5 gestations per year, resulting in a potential savings of $12.50 per sow per year. (Source: Advances in Pork Production 2009, Volume 20, page 83) Some other research that this group is conducting is in the area of amino acid requirements for gestating sows with a goal of helping us understand how much added amino acids we can use in different phases of gestation while maintaining sow productivity and longevity.

This new opportunity raises several practical questions.

a) Are we now doing phase feeding, with our gestation sows, with one diet?
b) Do we have the bin space and feeding system to make and feed two or even three diets for gestation sows?
c) Can we topdress gestation sows extra nutrition for the last 30 days before farrowing?
d) Is it possible to feed two different lactation rations with one for first and second parity sows and the other for parity three plus sows?
e) Could we topdress first and second parity sows in lactation?

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Volume 2, Issue 7
October 2009

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As producers consider these opportunities of phase feeding sows, the practical implications must also be considered.

The main benefit to phase feeding gestation sows seems to be to feed a lower protein (amino acid) diet with a lower volume of feed from early in gestation to day 85 in gestation. Then switch to a higher protein (amino acid) diet at an increased feeding rate (i.e. 20% increase) to help promote the growth of the developing fetuses (sows unborn litter).

In the area of lactation phase feeding, the main benefit would be achieved by feeding first and second parity sows more nutrition (protein, amino acids, energy and minerals) due to their lower intakes in the farrowing pens plus the fact that they are still growing body muscle. Special first parity formulations or topdresses may also include other new technology in amino acids nutrition that may help piglet growth rates.
The just weaned sow has been shown to be another opportunity to create a phase to help increase productivity. Flushing sows from weaning to breeding with extra starch, sugars and certain types of fatty acids may help reproduction and litter size of the next litter.

There is no question that the productivity increases we have seen in sow production over the past five to ten years have been huge. Total pigs born have moved up from ten or eleven pigets to twelve or thirteen piglets and resulting demand on milk production of the nursing sows has also been increased.
Today's modern sows are also starting the farrowing cycle with less backfat to draw on. Any small decrease of intakes can result in sows using body muscle to feed their young.

Understanding the nutritional requirements of sows better in the future will help us continue to move forward while making sure we are doing the best for our sows that we can. Adding high levels of amino acids in dry sow diets were used in the past with mixed results. Over time this new research may help to shed light on this area of nutrition.

References:

"Applying New Research to Reduce Sow Feed Costs". Ronald Ball et. al. Advances in Pork Production 2009, Volume 20

Kenpal Client Considerations

For many years, Kenpal clients have benefited from the flexibility of topdressing to meet requirements of different phases of sow production. Herd size and number of bins or rations are not a factor when topdressing.

Lactation Sows

Topdressing first and second litter sows with **Kenpal's sowSTART** may provide the extra amino acid nutrition required by the sows to help prevent them from losing body muscle. The extra vitamin nutrition in sowSTART can also help boost appetite. The extra fat can help produce the extra milk needed for today's higher live biths that we are seeing on customer farms. Topdress 0.5 kg per head per day once daily or 0.25 kg morning and evening until weaning for best results.

Weaned Sows

Kenpal's litterSTART has continued to impress many Kenpal clients by helping to increase litter size, reduce days to first breed and improve farrowing rate.

litterSTART can be topdressed or mixed into the feed to provide 0.25 kg/head/day to newly weaned sows. Feeding litterSTART from the day of weaning until up to seven days after weaning provides the best opportunity for benefits. Blending one half lactation and one half gestation feed along with litterSTART would be an excellent weaning ration. Typically, these newly weaned sows will continue to eat an average of 3.5 kilograms per day.

From Breeding Until 30 Days Bred

This is a critical time for gestation sows. Newly fertilized eggs are grabbing onto the placenta to be fed until birthing. It is important not to mix sows or stress them during this time, or pregnancies may be lost or lower birth rates can occur. If you need to mix sows, do it immediately after breeding or after 30 days bred. Feeding is also important at this time. Feeding too little can deprive the fertilized eggs of the nutrition they need to stay strongly attached to the placenta and grow. Most genetic lines of sows would benefit from being fed 2.0 to 2.5 kilograms of feed from breeding until 30 days bred of a properly designed gestation feed.

From 30 Days Bred Until Day 84 Bred

Feeding sows according to condition is the goal here. If a steam up ration is used four weeks before farrowing, a bit lower level of protein can be fed here, but only to the mature sows. The first and second parity sows actually need a bit more groceries due to the fact they are still growing body muscle. The older sows would benefit from a higher trace mineral fortification due to their poorer utilization of these nutrients. Kenpal can formulate different rations for first and second litter sows and other sows by separate mixes or topdresses. Topdressing older gestation sows with **Kenpal's yieldSTART S** would provide extra trace minerals at this critical time. Feeding all sows according to body condition during this time is good.

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84 Days Until Farrowing

Increasing total feed intake by up to 20% during the last 30 days before farrowing has been shown to increase the evenness of the newborns, especially as we achieve larger litters. Sows must be in the right condition to start this program because if they are too fat they will really pack it on before farrowing which could cause problems. Another approach could be to increase feed by 10% only 2 weeks before farrowing. Mother nature will tell you if you are doing either method wrong by showing hard udders on sows at farrowing or slowing farrowing time down due to sows that are too fat. Typically, lactation rations are used to steam up the sows. If a separate ration can not be used, then using **Kenpal's sowSTART** as a topdress to all sows two to four weeks before farrowing is an option.

SOW SUPPLEMENT

litterSTART™

John & Lisa Veeke with daughters Shannon, Briana and Shelby

Easy-to-use nutritional topdress for sows and gilts helps improve reproductive performance

Here is what swine producer John Veeke has to say about litterSTART sow supplement:

There is always room for improvement and litterSTART delivers improved breeding." Reviewing the PIG CHAMP™ records shows an increase in farrowing rates from 85% to 89.1%, as well as an increase in pigs weaned per mated female per year from 22.7 to 23.7 pigs. "I highly recommend this product to any producer, even if you think that you are getting your maximum breeding now."

John Veeke
Anlee Farms
Arkona, ON

the START line™

Published by:

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