

## Checklist Pig Vitality

By filling in this checklist, you will see an increase in key performance indicators and business performance (profitability). A cross or tick in column 'Yes' means a task has been completed that helps to limit the loss of piglets in the farrowing process. 'No' means there is potential improvement in the farrowing protocol that could be made to limit the loss of piglets during farrowing. Some improvement points have more impact than others.

### Scope of Pig Vitality

The checklist is based on extensive research using the best practice found across 84 farms. The farm staff completed a questionnaire and during a vet visit to the farm; the vets completed a questionnaire looking at factors that led to reduced piglet mortality. After analysis of the 84 completed questionnaires, the most relevant factors linked to the loss of piglets in the farrowing house were identified in the checklist. This checklist gives you the opportunity to work with goals to reduce the loss of piglets.



The less relevant questions consisted of factors such as: number of sows on the farms, percentage of sow mortality, usage of nesting material, using a heat mat at birth, working in the farrowing stalls is mostly done by women, feeding schedules during labour, amount of feed per sow per year, increasing the feeding schedule after birth, extra drinking water around birth, using dry feed or liquid feed, mains water vs borehole water and number of days the water troughs are dry in the farrowing stalls before a new sow enters.

1. General farm instructions

	No	Yes
a) There are a minimum of 4.2m <sup>2</sup> piglet places per sow		
b) There is different terminal sire than Pietrain used		

2. Gilt and dry sow selection

	No	Yes
a) Sow or gilt from own herd		
b) Purchased sows served first in quarantine stall		
c) Sows selected for breeding have a minimum 14 teats		
d) Strict adoption (cross fostering) protocol is followed		
e) First insemination in farrowing crate at weaning		

3. Feeding, housing and management of pregnant sows

	No	Yes
a) Structured 2 days of boar contact and stimulation before insemination takes place		
b) Pregnant sows fed twice per day		
c) The feeding system is calibrated a minimum of twice a year		

4. Farrowing unit building management

	No	Yes
a) The farrowing crate has a minimum area of 4.25 cubic metres		
b) The balance (floating) floor is in place for the first week (to minimise crushing deaths)		
c) The sows lie on slats not concrete		
d) The floor in the farrowing crate is non concrete slatted floor		
e) There is a ventilation system other than natural ventilation (use of doors)		
f) The floor is in a good state of repair/maintenance		



## 5. Farrowing management

	No	Yes
a) Minimum of 10 inspection rounds per day around farrowing		
b) Around farrowing and after the first 2 days, there is someone present for a minimum of 9hrs per day in the farrowing house		
c) The sows, for the last 2 days before farrowing get enough feed (more than 1.5kg of feed per day)		
d) The sows are washed with water that has a temperature of 30°C		
e) Maximum 10% of the sows have a farrowing longer than 6 hours		
f) Vitality of newly born piglets is scored out of 4 (1 being bad and 4 being good)		
g) The % of light piglets(<1000g at birth) is maximum 10%		
h) The piglets after birth are kept in a creep area at 32° C		
i) The % of sows that do not eat after birth is maximum 5%		
j) The temperature of the sows that do not eat well after birth is measured		
k) The % of sows with udder problems around birth is maximum 4%		
l) The % of sows that in day one after birth are laying on their stomach (sternally) is maximum 4%		
m) The % of sows with leg problems is maximum 5%		
n) The manure consistency around birth and pregnancy and is loose/soft enough. Sows are not constipated		

## 6. Management after farrowing

	No	Yes
a) Piglet numbers and information are recorded within 12 – 24 hours		
b) Data is collected according to on farm protocol		
c) Split suckling is applied to all litters		
d) The amount of piglets per sow is based on the amount of functional teats		
e) All piglets are left to suckle on the sow until they reach weaning age		
f) Piglets are getting supplementary feed		

## 7. Health and piglet procedures

	No	Yes
a) Boars do not get castrated		
b) If they are being castrated this follows a clear protocol		
c) Birth diarrhoea isn't present in any gilt pigs		
d) Symptoms of scour are not present in any pigs		
e) Maximum 2% of pre weaning mortality caused by diarrhoea		
f) Maximum 5% of mortality post weaning is caused by diarrhoea		
g) The order of husbandry duties around the farm follows the biosecurity protocol (High risk animals first, low risk animals last)		
h) The control of risk in farrowing is youngest to oldest		
i) Access by stockmen to the farrowing crates is kept to a minimum		
j) Day to day care of litters with diarrhoea are met only after non-infected litters.		

The Pig Vitality (Bigvitaliteit ) checklist has been put together by Wageningen Livestock Research, De Varkenspraktijk, VGTZ, AdVee Dierenartsen, Varkensartsen, De Oosthof Dierenartsen, SUVITA Varkensartsen, Lintjeshof Dierenartsen, Dierenartsencombinatie ZuidOost en de KNMvD vakgroep gezondheidszorg varken in opdracht van en gefinancierd door het Ministerie LNV, de Stuurgroep Bigvitaliteit en de Partners Bigvitaliteit.

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