Castration of Piglets

What is castration?

Castration is the surgical removal of the testicles from boar piglets.

Why is it performed?

Removal of the testicles reduces the potential for odor and taint associated with male hormones in boars after puberty.

When is it performed?

In general, piglets are castrated within the first 7 days of life and at the same time that other procedures such as needle teeth clipping and tail docking are performed.

How is castration performed?

Step 1: Make sure that you have the proper equipment
• Scalpel handle and blade
• Paper towel or other wipe
• Container of disinfectant for equipment

Step 2: Piglet handling
• Grab the piglet by the back legs
• Hold the piglet in an upside down position
• Push the testicles into the scrotum with your thumb and keep them there (see picture)

Step 3: Determine if both testicles are located in the scrotum
• Look at the scrotum to see if 2 pecan-sized structures are seen
• Feel the structures and decide if they are the same size and firmness
• Make sure that both testicles are freely moveable within the scrotum

Step 4: Castration
• Make an incision (cut) into the scrotum over each testicle (see picture)
• Apply pressure behind each testicle with your fingers or instrument and push each testicle out of the hole made with the blade
• Grasp each testicle with your hand or instrument and pull it
• Each testicle should be removed with all of its attached cord and discarded
• The incisions are left open to heal and sprayed with iodine

For more information, please search for the following resources on PIG:
www.porkgateway.com: e-Learning Course: Farrowing Management

References: