

How to Evaluate Facility Maintenance for Animal Well-Being

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Introduction

The welfare of animals is a major aspect that pork producers need to evaluate on a daily basis. It is very important to closely evaluate swine facilities for aspects that need to be fixed to enhance the welfare of the animals housed within the building.

Objective

To provide users with information on what to look for when evaluating a swine facility for factors influencing animal well-being.

Evaluation Facilities

What are the swine facility factors that need to be evaluated for possible maintenance to enhance animal well-being?

Floor surface

- Floor is too slick and causing feet and leg problems.
- Floor is too rough (exposure of aggregates in floor) and causing feet and leg problems.
- Bolts placed in the floor or attached to slats are too long.
- Bolt does not have a nut.
- Slats are broken.
- There is a sharp edge between slats and solid concrete floor.



Pen partitions

- Rods or pipes are broken or bent.
- Bolts are extending into pen or gestation crate.
- Bottom rod/pipe is too high off surface of floor.
- Pen partitions in farrowing facility are broken.

Water system

- Rate of water flow is too slow.
- Nipple and cup waterer is malfunctioning (partially plugged, flow rate to high or low; leaking).

- Availability of water is inadequate.
- Water lines are leaking.

Ventilation system

- Air inlets are malfunctioning.
- Fans are not correctly working.
- Rate of ventilation (cubic feet per minute) is inadequate during some seasons of the year.
- Controllers are not correctly working.
- Curtains have holes; thus, segments of the building are too cold during the winter months.



Heating system

- Pilot light is not working.
- High/low thermometer is not correctly working.
- Temperature data logger is not correctly working.

Cooling system

- Evaporative pads have dry spots or holes.
- Controls do not correctly work.
- Temperature sensors are not correctly placed.
- Temperature sensors are not correctly working.
- Water supply lines to drippers and sprinklers are not in good order/repair.
- Some of the drippers and sprinklers are not working.

Feeding system

- Some of the gestation feed drop boxes and feed drop tubes are not correctly working.
- Some of the automated lactation feeders are not correctly working.
- Some of the feed augers are not correctly working.
- Some of the feed bins are not in good working order.
- Some of the lids on feed bins do not stay closed during inclement weather.