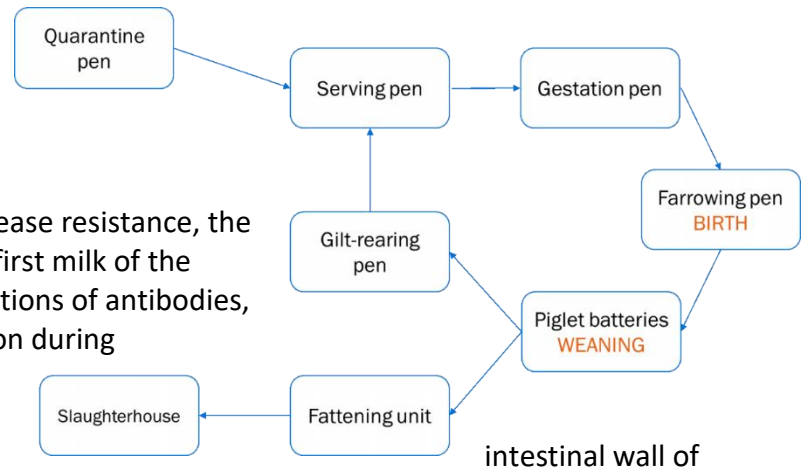


Critical points on the pig farm: Daily operations

Farrowing pens

The sows are brought into the farrowing sections around day 110 of gestation, approximately 5 days before farrowing.

To achieve good strong piglets with disease resistance, the piglets need to get enough colostrum (first milk of the sow). This milk contains high concentrations of antibodies, which protect the piglet against infection during the first weeks of life, while their own immune system is still developing. Immunoglobulins only penetrate the intestinal wall of the newborn piglet during the first 24 hours. For this reason you need to make sure that each piglet gets enough colostrum after birth.



Movement of piglets should be done between 24 and 48 hours after farrowing but keep this to the absolute minimum.

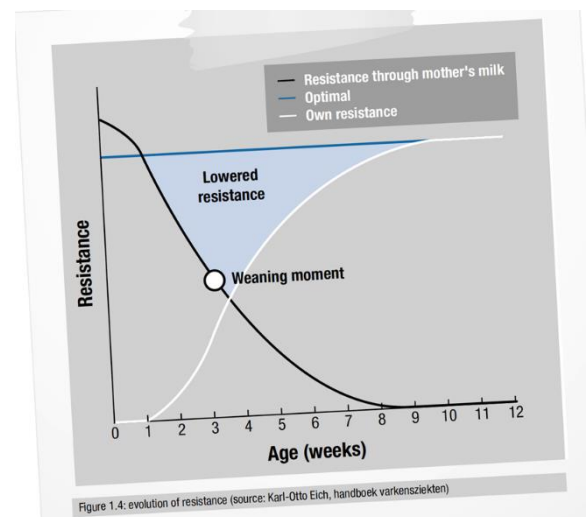
Clean and disinfect equipment after each treatment. Piglets with diarrhea or other health issues should be left till last.

Weaning of piglets

Piglets may be weaned from the age of 21 days onwards and they should be placed in a pen which has been fully cleaned and disinfected.

The period after weaning is a very difficult time for piglets:

- They are taken away from the sow, so the maternal immunity drops next to the fact that their own active immunity is not yet fully developed
 - They are put into a completely different environment
 - Pigs from different litters are mixed up
 - New fights for ranking
 - General stress
 - Change from milk to feed can disrupt their intestinal health
- ➔ Dangerous for diarrhea or other health problems



Piglet batteries/nursery

Weaned piglets have the lowest immunity and therefore they are the most susceptible to any infection.

It's important to:

- Keep mixing piglets from different litters to a minimum
- Have a good hygiene in the piglet battery/nursery
- House the piglets in dry, clean and disinfected stalls
- Apply the all-in / all-out principle very strictly
- Have the right temperature when the piglets are first put in: 28 °C
- Leave the lights on for the first few days
- Have fresh feed each day
- Use closed pen separations to limit the risk of infection

Serving pen

The sows should arrive in the serving pens in good condition, which applies to gilts as well as sows. Being underweight or overweight will cause problems in coming on heat and achieving optimum ovulation. Sows normally come on heat 4 to 6 days after weaning.

This is stimulated by:

- giving them plenty of light in the serving pen
- flushing them with a service feed or with lactation feed
- letting the teaser boar walk around in front of them
- good standing reflex

Artificial insemination is preferable:

- good working efficiency
- homogeneity of litters
- it reduces the risk of infection

Make sure the serving environment is clean so there is no transmission of pathogens.

Gestation pen

If the sows are pregnant, they should be moved to the gestation no later than 4 weeks after insemination. The gestation period lasts about 115 days, which means that sows spend about 2.5 months in the gestation pens.

Important:

- Make absolutely sure that all the sows are eating every day
- Make absolutely sure that all the animals get enough water
- Let the sows rest as much as possible, no stress situations
- Adjust the condition of the sows, so that you end up with a homogenous group in the farrowing pens

- Be very vigilant about miscarriages and estrus

Move the sows to the farrowing section 3 – 5 days before the expected farrowing date. Transfer to the cleaned and disinfected farrowing pens is a crucial phase in disease control on a pig farm.

Sows should be washed before they go to the farrowing pen. This reduces the sow's infection pressure and prevents cross-infection from sows to newborn piglets.

Washing sows:

- Wet the sows with lukewarm water
- Apply disinfectant sow shampoo (spray of foam)
- Let the shampoo soak in
- Rinse the sows off with lukewarm water
- Disinfect the sows when arrived in the farrowing pen



Gilt rearing pen

A separate building for housing young breeding gilts of 25 kg and more is an absolutely necessity. You need to be very careful with the health of the animals. Building lay-out and climate is the same as for growing-finishing pens, but there should be more available space per animal. An initial selection should be made at 25 kg and a final selection at 100 kg. If you are breeding on your own farm, the animals can be vaccinated in the breeding pen.

Growing-finishing pigs

The piglets should be housed in a dry, clean and sufficiently warm building. Fill the rooms as far as possible according to the all-in / all-out principle. Leave the lights on for the first few days after the piglets have been put into their pens. The temperature should ideally be slightly warmer than at the end of the battery phase. A fully slatted floor is preferable. The spread of other diseases is greater with a half-slatted floor than with a fully slatted solution.

Quarantine pen

All new animals brought onto the farm must be kept in quarantine for a certain period of time. This means keeping them completely separated from all the other animals on the farm.

You have to think about:

- all-in / all-out principle
- the care and checking of quarantined animals should be programmed
- Putting on separate clothes, shoes...
- The minimum duration of the quarantine period is 4 weeks
- Clean and disinfect thoroughly before putting new animals in