

Garth out and about for you

Garth Partnership always strives to keep informed and up to date by attending a range of conferences, meetings and shows. Although it is impossible to list them all, these are some of the activities over the last few months:

The Netherlands

Riki went to Deventer in the Netherlands in October on a 2 week Pig Diseases and Production course run by Intervet/Schering-Plough. It gave her the opportunity to exchange experiences with pig vets from all over the world working for different businesses in the pig industry such as Smithfield, Brazil Foods, Animal Health in Netherlands and private practice in South Africa. By visiting Dutch pig farms interesting ideas were observed such as a wide wire mesh over concrete slats in half slatted pens to stop unwanted mucking behaviour in the solid area. Or the Dutch vet drinking the water of the pigs to test the quality. Not a bad idea given the fact that pigs have about 9000 more taste buds than humans...



Tasting the water in flatdecks

Denmark

Gemma has just been on a 3 day trip looking at pig farming in Denmark where producers were only allowed to dock half the length of the tail by law and vaccination for circovirus is only done by about 30% of farms.

Germany

Guy and Ian went to the EuroTier, the world's leading exhibition for animal husbandry and management in Germany in November (more on page 2).



UK

Paul Pemberton attended a meeting of the Society of Feed Technologists on pig nutrition in the slightly less glamorous setting of Coventry in November.

Garth was also well represented at the Pig Veterinary Society (PVS) autumn meeting with four of our seven pig vets in attendance, where Mike Wjnberg from BQP/Tulip highlighted the importance of cooperation between producers and processors.

Slaughter line disruptions cause major costs to abattoirs. The main reasons for slowing down line speed (other than breakdowns) are diseased carcasses that need trimming, primarily with severe pleurisy, but also leg injuries and hernias. Informing the abattoir of any incoming casualties is very helpful for them. Other problems are full stomachs causing contamination of the carcass.

The smooth running of the plant is very much dependant on the constant supply of pigs over the day and delayed deliveries can cause serious problems. This last point may draw howls of derision from some producers whose pigs are regularly "rolled over" by some processors. Ultimately, however, if the abattoirs can reduce their costs by keeping the lines moving there should be more cash in the pot to pay to producers.

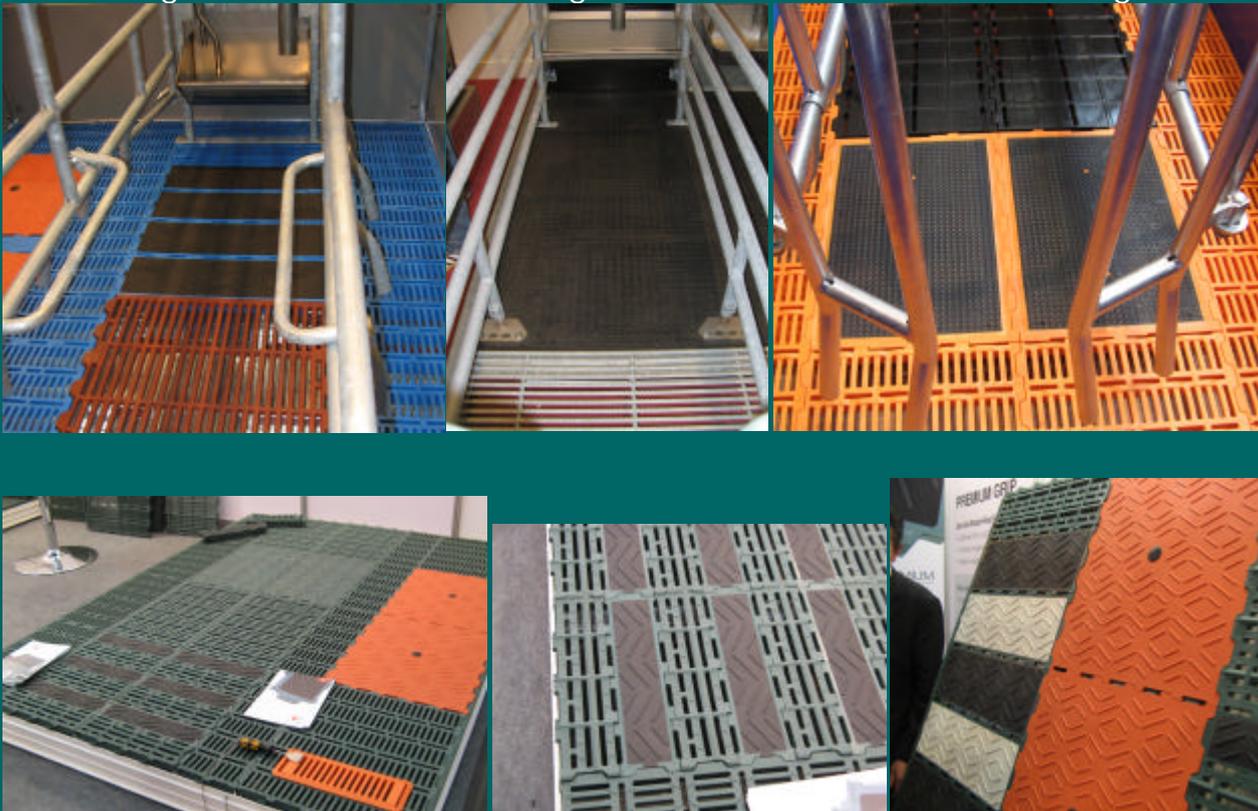
EuroTier 2010, Germany

Thanks to Guy, we can have an insight into new and interesting products presented at the EuroTier. If you are interested in any of the products, please contact Guy. He can help with putting you in contact with the manufacturer or distributor.

New drinker designs to protect pigs from injuries



A wide range of rubber-based flooring for better sow comfort in farrowing crates



Flooring for finishing pigs

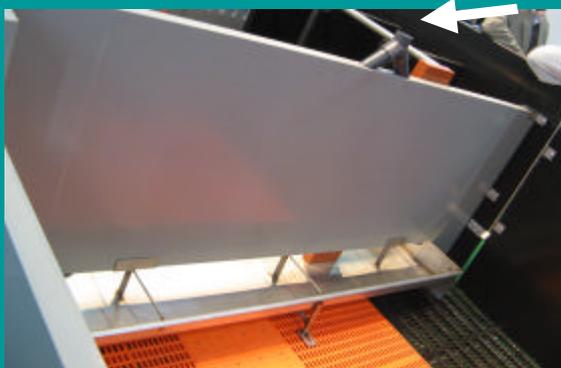
Rubber mats fixed over concrete slats



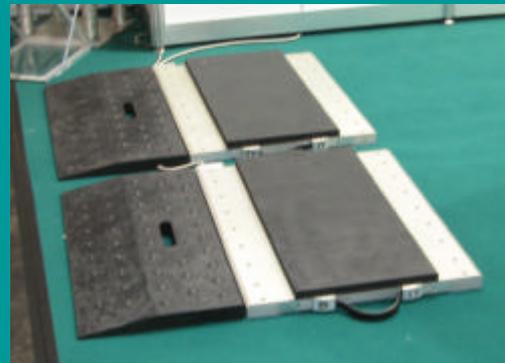
New concrete slat designs



Pen division with build-in feed pipe



Digital weighing scales



Feed hopper with metal bars to stop pigs stepping in trough.

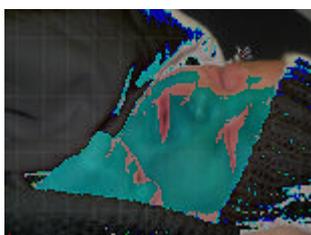


Streptococcus suis risk to farm workers

Also from PVS came a reminder that *S. suis*, which is usually seen on farm causing meningitis in suckling and newly-weaned pigs, is a zoonotic infection. This means it can be contracted by humans. Generally people with a compromised immune system (very young or old, chronically ill, recent operation) should be careful.

The disease is spread mainly by direct contact, so hand-washing with soap and water after handling pigs should be routine. Most cases of infections in humans are acquired through cuts and abrasions, so if you have any wounds on your hands wear gloves to handle sick pigs. However, the bacteria can also be carried on the breath, so try to avoid breathing the same air as sick pigs while handling them, and beware the sneezing pig!

Office news



Congratulations to Helen from the PA's office on the arrival of her daughter Lauren on 23rd November.

With Helen on maternity leave we welcome Imogen to the practice to take over Helen's role.

**Prescriptions are
only
3-monthly at Garth**

We know many of you have been coping with very cold weather and frozen pipes and breakages. You have our sympathy for all the extra work involved and we have all noted that a high standard of care of the pigs has continued and with pigs looking well on our visits despite the extreme conditions. This is often a very good achievement and reflects an impressive amount of effort by everyone.



**Garth Partnership wishes you a very MERRY CHRISTMAS and
A HAPPY NEW YEAR!**