

Don’t get caught short staffed

Brian Foster Technical Support Manager

Working around holidays and any other unauthorised absence is not easy at any time of the year, it isn’t long before being short on staff starts to have a massive impact on both morale and production on the unit. I am well aware of these pressures and am available to help you out if necessary, whether you are looking for the odd day, a series of days, or a series of weeks (!)

I can drop in and help during the difficult times. It may be the herd is due for vaccinating, assisting with farrowing or helping to serve. Whatever the task, I have plenty of experience in every area of the unit to complete the job efficiently. “Don’t get caught short….” and speak with your vet or contact the Garth office for further information – or myself, Brian Foster 07894 462456, brian.foster@garthvet.co.uk.

NSA North Farmgate Event – Inspiring the Next Generation

Joseph Lunt BVSc PgDip (AniNutri)MRCVS

I recently had the pleasure of representing Garth Pig Practice on my voluntary day at the NSA North Farmgate event near Prescot, Liverpool, where more than 250 local schoolchildren visited to learn about British farming, food production and the livestock sector.

As part of the event, I volunteered alongside the fantastic Ladies in Pigs team, helping to deliver an interactive pork cookery workshop. Throughout the day, we worked with over 80 children, guiding them through the process of making their own pork and sage pasties. It was great to see so much enthusiasm as the children learned where pork comes from, discussed the role of pig farmers in producing safe, high-quality food, and then got hands-on creating something they could take home and enjoy.

Events such as Farmgate are an excellent opportunity to bridge the gap between farming and the public, particularly with younger generations who may have little direct connection to agriculture. The questions from the children were thoughtful and engaging, covering everything from pig welfare and feeding through to how farmers care for their animals and the environment.

The day highlighted the importance of outreach within our industry. By helping young people understand food production and animal agriculture, we can build greater appreciation for the work carried out by farmers and the wider agricultural community.





The farming Community Network (FCN is run by volunteers and is a charity that supports farmers, farming families and people in rural communities. They provide support in many areas including business, family, research, training and health which includes a partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support for support in rural communities. Farming Community Network - Farming Community Network

Managing pigs in the hot weather

With warmer weather arriving, it is important to take steps to minimise heat stress in pigs. High temperatures can reduce feed intake, affect performance and welfare. Pigs experiencing heat stress are more susceptible to a range of diseases, particularly those affecting the respiratory and digestive systems. This is linked to a reduced immune response, making it harder for pigs to defend themselves against pathogens.

One simple but effective measure is to wet down passageways and concrete areas within and around pig buildings. As the water evaporates, it helps lower the ambient temperature inside the shed, creating a cooler environment for pigs without directly wetting the animals themselves. Avoid soaking pigs, as wetting pigs can increase humidity levels within buildings, reducing the effectiveness of natural cooling and potentially creating additional stress.

Other key hot-weather management tips include:

- Ensuring drinkers are working properly and providing unrestricted access to clean, fresh water. Adequate water supply is essential at every stage of a pig's life. Water drinkers should be checked several times a day to ensure they are functioning correctly, and the number of drinkers and water flow rates should be appropriate for the group size and production stage.
- Maximising ventilation and checking that fans are operating efficiently.
- Reducing stocking density where possible. Increased floor space improves each pig's ability to dissipate heat and is particularly important for larger pigs, which are more vulnerable to high temperatures.
- Feeding during the cooler parts of the day to encourage feed intake.

Suvaxyn PRRS Update

This is now available again in 50 dose bottles after a period of being out of stock.

As a reminder, a key advantage of Suvaxyn PRRS is the flexibility to vaccinate piglets from 1 day of age. It offers protection to piglets, gilts and sows for 26 weeks.

For further information please speak to your veterinary surgeon.