ANIMAL WELFARE AND PIG PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

Article 7.X.1.

Definitions

‘Pig production systems’ are defined as all commercial systems in which the purpose of the operation includes some or all of the breeding, rearing and management of pigs (Sus scrofa) intended for production of meat.

For the purposes of this chapter, ‘management’ is defined at the farm management level and at the animal handler level. At the level of farm management, human resources management practices, including selection and training of handlers, and animal management practices, such as best practice in housing and husbandry and implementation of welfare protocols and audits, all have an impact on animal welfare. At the animal handler level this requires a range of well-developed husbandry skills and knowledge to care for animals.

For the purposes of this chapter, ‘environmental enrichment’ means increasing the complexity (e.g. foraging opportunities, social housing) of the animal’s environment to foster the expression of normal behavior, provide cognitive stimulation and reduce the expression of abnormal behavior. The endpoint aim of providing enrichment should be to improve the biological functioning of the animal (Newberry, 1995).

For the purposes of this chapter stereotypy is a sequence of abnormal, repetitive and unvarying behaviors caused by known factors such as frustration, coping attempts, or dysfunction of the central nervous system. Some stereotypies commonly observed in pigs include sham chewing, stone chewing, tongue rolling, teeth grinding, bar biting and floor licking (NFACC, 2014; Tuyttens, 2007; Mason and Latham, 2004).

For the purposes of this chapter apathy means that the animal ceases to respond to stimuli that would normally elicit a response (Wood-Gush and Vestergaard, 1989). Furthermore, apathetic behavior has been described as an abnormal or maladaptive behavior, indicated by reduced activity, lack of interest or concern (i.e. indifference) and lack of feeling or emotion (impassiveness).

For the purposes of this chapter agonistic behavior is a continuum of behaviors expressed in conflict situations, and includes offence, defence and submissive or escape components. The behaviors involved may include contact, such as biting and pushing, or non-contact, such as threats in the form of body postures and gestures. Aggressive behavior is a component of agonistic behavior (Petherick and Blackshaw, 1987).

Article 7.X.2.

Scope

This chapter addresses the welfare aspects of domestic pig production systems. However, captive wild pigs are not considered.
Article 7.X.3.

**Commercial pig production systems**

Commercial pig production systems include:

1. **Indoors**
   These are systems in which pigs are kept indoors, and are fully dependent on humans to provide for basic animal needs such as food and water. The type of housing depends on the environment, climatic conditions and management system. The animals may be kept in groups or individually.

2. **Outdoors**
   These are systems in which pigs live outdoors with shelter or shade, have some autonomy over access to shelter or shade, and may be fully dependent on humans to provide for basic animal needs such as food and water. They are typically confined in paddocks or pastures according to their production stage. The animals may be kept in groups or individually.

3. **Combination systems**
   These are systems in which pigs are managed in any combination of indoor and outdoor production systems, depending on weather or production stage.

Article 7.X.4.

**Criteria (or measurables) for the welfare of pigs**

The following outcome-based criteria, specifically animal-based criteria, can be useful indicators of animal welfare. The use of these indicators and their appropriate thresholds should be adapted to the different situations in which pigs are managed. Consideration should also be given to the design of the systems. These criteria can be considered as a tool to monitor the efficiency of design and management, given that both of these can affect animal welfare.

1. **Behaviour**
   Certain behaviours could indicate an animal welfare problem. These include changes in feed and water intake, altered locomotory behaviour and posture, altered lying time, altered respiratory rate and panting, coughing, shivering and huddling, certain vocalisations, and increased agonistic behaviours (including aggression), and stereotypic, apathetic or other abnormal behaviours (e.g., tail biting).

   Certain behaviours are indicators of good animal welfare. These may include positive social behaviour and play behaviour.

   Stereotypy is defined as a sequence of invariant motor acts, which provide no obvious gain or purpose for the animal. Some stereotopies commonly observed in pigs include sham chewing, tongue rolling, teeth grinding, bar biting and floor licking.

2. **Morbidity rates**
   Rates of infectious and metabolic diseases, lameness, peripartum peripartum and post-procedural complications, injury and other forms of morbidity, above recognised thresholds, may be direct or indirect indicators of the animal welfare status of the whole at the herd level. Understanding the aetiology of the disease or syndrome is important for detecting potential animal welfare problems. Mastitis and metritis, leg and hoof problems, shoulder ulcers in sows, skin lesions, respiratory and digestive diseases, and reproductive diseases are also particularly important animal health problems for pigs. Scoring systems, such as for body condition, lameness and injuries, and information gathered at the slaughterhouse/abattoirs, can provide additional information.
Both clinical and post mortem pathologic examination and pathology should be utilised as indicators of disease, injuries and other problems that may compromise animal welfare.

3. Mortality and culling rates

Mortality and culling rates affect the length of productive life and, like morbidity rates, may be direct or indirect indicators of the animal welfare at the herd level status. Depending on the production system, estimates of mortality and culling rates can be obtained by analysing the causes of death and culling and their temporal and spatial patterns of occurrence. Mortality and culling rates, and their causes, when known, should be recorded regularly, e.g. daily, and used for monitoring e.g. monthly, annually.

Necropsy is useful in establishing the cause of death.

4. Changes in body weight and body condition

In growing animals, body weight changes outside the expected growth rate, especially excessive sudden weight loss, are indicators of poor animal welfare and health.

In mature animals, body condition outside an acceptable range or large variation amongst individual animals in the group may be an indicator of compromised animal welfare, and health, and reproductive efficiency in mature animals.

5. Reproductive efficiency

Reproductive efficiency can be an indicator of animal welfare and health status. Future performance of sows or gilts can be affected by under- or over-nutrition at different stages of rearing. Poor reproductive performance, compared with the targets expected for a particular breed or hybrid, can indicate animal welfare problems (Hemsworth et al., 1981, 1986, 1989, 1994, Munsterjelm et al., 2006).

Examples may include:
- low conception rates,
- high abortion rates,
- metritis and mastitis,
- low small litter size (total born),
- low numbers born alive,
- high numbers of stillborns or mummies.

6. Physical appearance

Physical appearance may be an indicator of animal welfare and health. Attributes of physical appearance that may indicate compromised welfare include:
- body condition,
- presence of ectoparasites,
- abnormal texture or hair loss,
- excessive soiling with faeces in indoor systems,
- reddish skin discolouration,
- swellings, injuries or lesions,
- discharges (e.g. from nose or eyes, including tear staining) (Telkäranta et al., 2016),
- feet and leg abnormalities,
- abnormal posture (e.g. rounded back, head low),
- emaciation or dehydration (in piglets).
7. Handling response

Improper handling or lack of human contact can result in fear and distress in pigs. Fear of humans may be an indicator of poor animal welfare and health. Indicators include:

- evidence of poor human-animal relationship, such as marked avoidance of handlers and vocalisation disturbed behaviour when being moved or when animal handlers interact with pigs enter a pen,
- animals slipping or falling during handling,
- injuries sustained during handling, such as bruising, lacerations and fractured legs,
- animals vocalising abnormally or excessively during restraint and handling.

8. Lameness

Pigs are susceptible to a variety of infectious and non-infectious musculoskeletal disorders. These disorders may lead to cause lameness and to gait abnormalities. Pigs that are lame or have gait abnormalities may have difficulty reaching feed and water and may experience pain and distress. Musculoskeletal problems have many causes, including genetic, nutrition, sanitation, floor quality, and other environmental and management factors. There are several gait scoring systems available.

9. Complications from common procedures

Some procedures such as surgical castration, tail docking, teeth clipping or grinding, tusk trimming, identification, nose ringing and hoof care are commonly performed in pigs to facilitate management, to meet market or environmental requirements and improve human safety or and safeguard animal welfare.

However, if these procedures are not performed properly, animal welfare and health can be unnecessarily compromised.

Indicators of such problems associated with these procedures could include:

- post-procedure infection and swelling,
- post-procedure lameness,
- behaviour indicating pain, fear and distress,
- morbidity, mortality and culling rates,
- reduced feed and water intake,
- post procedure body condition and weight loss.

Article 7.X.5.

Recommendations

Ensuring good welfare of pigs is contingent on several management factors, including system design, environmental management, and animal management practices which include responsible husbandry and provision of appropriate care. Serious problems can arise in any system if one or more of these elements are lacking.

Articles 7.X.6. to 7.X.26. provide recommendations for measures applied to pigs.

Each recommendation includes a list of relevant outcome-based criteria (or measurables) derived from Article 7.X.4.

This does not exclude other criteria being used where or when appropriate.
Article 7.X.6.

Housing

When new facilities are planned or existing facilities are modified, professional advice on design in regards to welfare and health of animals should be sought.

Housing systems and their components should be designed, constructed and regularly inspected and maintained in a manner that reduces the risk of injury, disease or stress for pigs. Facilities should to allow for the safe, efficient and humane management and movement of pigs.

There should be a separate area where sick and injured animals can be treated and monitored. When a separated space is provided, this should accommodate all the needs of the animal e.g. recumbent or lame animals or animals with severe wounds may require additional bedding or an alternative floor surface.

Pigs should not be tethered as part of their normal housing systems.

Good outcomes in the welfare and health of animals can be achieved in a range of housing systems. The design and management of the system are critical for achieving that.

Pigs are social animals and prefer living in groups, therefore housing systems where pregnant sows and gilts can be kept in groups are recommended.

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): physical appearance (injuries), behaviour, changes in body weight and body condition, handling response, reproductive efficiency, lameness and morbidity, mortality and culling rates.

Training of Personnel

Pigs should be cared for by a sufficient number of personnel, who collectively possess the ability, knowledge and competence necessary to maintain the welfare and health of the animals.

All people responsible for pigs should be competent through formal training or practical experience in accordance with their responsibilities. This includes understanding of and skill in animal handling, nutrition, reproductive management techniques, behaviour, biosecurity, signs of disease, and indicators of poor animal welfare such as stress, pain and discomfort, and their alleviation.

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): handling response, physical appearance, behaviour, changes in body weight, body condition, reproductive efficiency, lameness and morbidity, mortality and culling rates and complications from common procedures.

Handling and inspection

Pigs should be inspected at least once a day when fully dependent on humans to provide for basic needs such as food and water and to identify welfare and health problems.

Some animals should be inspected more frequently, for example, farrowing sows, new born piglets, newly weaned pigs, and newly-mixed gilts and sows, sick or injured animals, pigs and piglets showing increased abnormal behaviours such as tail nibbling.

Pigs identified as sick or injured should be given appropriate treatment at the first available opportunity by competent animal handlers. If animal handlers are unable to provide appropriate treatment, the services of a veterinarian should be sought.

Recommendations on the handling of pigs are also found in Chapter 7.3. In particular handling aids that may cause pain and distress (e.g. electric goads) should be used only when other methods fail in extreme circumstances and provided that the animal can move freely. The use of electric prods, goads should be avoided.
Exposure of pigs to sudden movement or changes in visual contrasts should be minimised where possible to prevent stress and fear reactions. Pigs should not be improperly or aggressively handled (e.g. kicked, thrown, dropped, walked on top of, held or pulled by one front leg, ears or tail). Pigs that become distressed during handling should be attended to immediately.

Pigs should be restrained only for as long as necessary and only appropriate, well-maintained restraint devices should be used.

Well designed and maintained handling facilities assists proper handling.

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): physical appearance, behaviour, changes in body weight and body condition, handling response, reproductive efficiency, lameness and morbidity, mortality and culling rates.

Painful procedures

Some procedures such as surgical castration, tail docking, teeth clipping or grinding, tusk trimming, identification, and nose ringing are commonly performed in pigs. These procedures should only be performed to facilitate management, to meet market or environmental requirements and improve human safety or and safeguard animal welfare.

These procedures are painful or have the potential to cause pain and thus should be performed only when necessary and in such a way as to minimise any pain and distress to the animal, e.g. using anaesthesia or analgesia under the recommendation or supervision of a veterinarian.

Options for enhancing animal welfare in relation to these procedures include the internationally recognised ‘three Rs’ which involves: replacement (e.g. using entire or immunocastrated males vs. rather than castrated males), reduction (e.g. tail docking and teeth clipping only when necessary) and refinement (e.g. providing analgesia or and anaesthesia under the recommendation of a veterinarian) (Bonastre et al., 2016 and Hansson et al., 2011).

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): complications from common procedures, morbidity rates, mortality and culling rates, abnormal behaviour, physical appearance and changes in weight and body condition.

Feeding and provision of watering of animals

The amount of feed and nutrients pigs require in any management system is affected by factors such as climate, the nutritional composition and quality of the diet, the age, gender, genetics, size and physiological state of the pigs (e.g. pregnancy, lactation growth), and their state of health, growth rate, previous feeding levels and level of activity and exercise.

All pigs should receive adequate quantities quantity and quality of feed and nutrients each day to enable each pig to:

- maintain good health;
- meet its physiological and behavioural requirements demands; and
- avoid metabolic and nutritional disorders.

Feed and water should be provided in such a way as to prevent undue competition and injury.

Pigs should be fed a diet with sufficient fibrous feedstuffs in order to reduce as much as possible the occurrence of gastric ulcers (Hedde et al., 1985).
All pigs should have access to an adequate supply of palatable drinkable water at a temperature that does not inhibit drinking and that meets their physiological requirements and is free from contaminants hazardous to pig health (Patience, 2013).

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): changes in body weight and body condition, physical appearance (dehydration in piglets), behaviour (agonistic behaviour at feeding and watering places and abnormal behaviour such as tail biting), mortality and culling rates, and morbidity rates (gastric ulcers).

**Environmental enrichment**

Animals should be provided with an environment that provides complexity, manipulability and cognitive stimulation (e.g. foraging opportunities, social housing) to foster normal behaviour (e.g. rooting and biting or chewing), reduce abnormal behaviour (e.g. tail, ear, leg and flank biting and apathetic behaviour) and improve biological function (Dudnik et al., 2006; Elmore et al., 2011; Newberry, 1995; Van de Weerd et al., 2006; Wittaker et al., 1999).

Pigs should be provided with multiple forms of enrichment that aim to improve their welfare of the animals through the enhancement of their physical and social environments, such as:

- sufficient quantity of suitable materials to enable pigs to fulfil their innate needs to explore and look for feed (edible materials), bite (chewable materials), root (investigable materials) and manipulate (manipulable materials) (Bracke et al., 2006); novelty is another aspect that is very important in so as to maintaining interest in the provided material(s) (Trickett et al., 2009; Abou-Ismail and Mendl, 2016; Tarou and Bradshaw 2007);
- social enrichment which involves either keeping pigs in groups or individually with visual, olfactory and auditory contact with other pigs;
- positive human contact (such as pats, rubs and talking when the opportunity arises) (Hemsworth and Coleman, 2011; Hemsworth and Coleman, 1994).

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): physical appearance (injuries), behaviour (stereotypies, tail biting), changes in body weight and body condition, handling response, reproductive efficiency, lameness and morbidity, mortality and culling rates.

**Prevention of abnormal behaviour**

In pig production there are a number of abnormal behaviours that can be prevented or minimised with appropriate management procedures.

Many of these problems are multifactorial and minimising their occurrence requires an examination of the whole environment and of several management factors. However some recommendations to that may reduce their occurrence of some of these behavioural problems include:

1) Oral stereotypies (e.g. bar biting, sham chewing, excessive drinking) in adult pigs can be minimised by providing environmental enrichment and increasing feeding time and satiety by increasing fibre content in the diet or foraging roughage (Robert et al., 1997; Bergeron et al., 2000).

2) Tail biting may be reduced by providing an adequate enrichment material and an adequate diet (avoiding deficiencies of sodium or essential amino acids amino acids), and avoiding high stocking densities and competition for feed and water (Walker and Bilkei, 2005). Other factors to consider include animal characteristics (breed, genetics, gender) and social environment (herd size, mixing animals) (Schroder-Petersen and Simonsen, 2001; EFSA, 2007; Taylor et al., 2010), general health, thermal comfort and air quality.

3) Belly nosing and ear sucking may be reduced by increasing the weaning age, and providing feed to piglets prior to weaning to avoid the abrupt change of feed (Marchant-Forde, 2009; Sybesma, 1981; Worobec, 1999).
4) Vulva biting may be reduced by minimising competition in accessing the feeding area (Bench et al., 2013; Leeb et al., 2001; Rizvi et al., 1998).

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): physical appearance (injuries), behaviour (abnormal behaviour), morbidity rates, mortality and culling rates, reproductive efficiency and changes in body weight and body condition.

Article 7.X.612.

Housing (including outdoor production systems)

When new facilities are planned or existing facilities are modified, professional advice on design in regards to welfare and health of animals should be sought.

Housing systems and their components should be designed, constructed and regularly inspected and maintained in a manner that reduces the risk of injury, disease and stress for pigs. Facilities should allow for the safe, efficient and humane management and movement of pigs. In systems where pigs could be exposed to adverse weather conditions they should have access to shelter to avoid thermal stress and sunburn.

There should be a separate pen or area where sick and injured animals or animals that exhibit abnormal behaviour can be isolated, treated and monitored. Certain animals may need to be kept individually. When a separated space is provided, this should accommodate all the needs of the animal e.g. recumbent or lame animals or animals with severe wounds may require additional bedding or an alternative floor surface and water and food must be within reach.

Pigs should not be tethered as part of their normal housing systems.

Good outcomes in the welfare and health of animals can be achieved in a range of housing systems. The design and management of the system are critical for achieving these outcomes.

Pigs Sows and gilts are social animals and prefer living in groups (Stolba and Wood-Gush, 1989; Newberry and Wood-Gush, 1988; Gonyou, 2001), therefore housing systems where pregnant sows and gilts should preferably be housed can be kept in groups are recommended (Anil et al., 2005; Barnett et al., 2001; Boyle et al., 2002; Broom et al., 1995; Karlen et al., 2007; Marchant and Broom, 1996; McGlone et al., 2004; AVMA, 2015). Sows and gilts can be successfully mixed early after breeding, without any reproduction consequences (Spoelder et al., 2009).

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): physical appearance (injuries), behaviour, changes in body weight and body condition, handling response, reproductive efficiency, lameness and morbidity, mortality and culling rates.

Article 7.X.13.

Space allowance

Space allowance should be managed taking into account different areas for lying, standing, and feeding and elimination. Crowding Stocking density should not adversely affect normal behaviour of pigs and durations of time spent lying.

Insufficient and inadequate space allowance may increase stress, the occurrence of injuries and have an adverse effect on growth rate, feed efficiency, reproduction and behaviour such as locomotion, resting, feeding and drinking, agonistic and abnormal behaviour (Gonyou et al., 2006; Ekkel, 2003; Turner, 2000).
1. **Group housing**

Floor space may interact with a number of factors such as temperature, humidity, floor type and feeding systems (Marchant–Forde, 2009; Verdon, 2015). All pigs should be able to lie down rest simultaneously, and each animal lie down, to stand up and move freely. Sufficient space should be provided to enable animals to have access to feed, water, to separate lying and elimination areas and to avoid aggressive animals.

If abnormally aggressive behaviour is seen, corrective measures should be taken, such as increasing space allowance and providing barriers where possible.

In outdoor systems where pigs have some autonomy over diet selection, stocking density should be matched to the available feed supply.

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): reduction or variation in body weight and body condition, increasing agonistic and abnormal behaviour such as tail biting, injuries, morbidity, mortality and culling rates, and physical appearance (e.g. excessive presence of faeces on the skin).

2. **Individual pens**

Pigs should only be housed in individual pens if necessary. In individual pens, pigs must be provided with sufficient space so that they can stand up, turn around and lie comfortably in a natural position, and that provides separate areas for separation of dunging elimination, lying and eating areas.

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): increasing abnormal behaviour (stereotypies), morbidity, mortality and culling rates, and physical appearance (e.g. excessive presence of faeces on the skin, injuries).

3. **Stalls and (crates)**

Feeding, gestation and insemination stalls and farrowing crates. Stalls should be sized appropriately to allow pigs to be able to:

- be able to stand up in their natural stance without contact with either side of the stall or crate,
- stand up without in their natural stance without contact with touching the top bars,
- stand in a stall without simultaneously touching both ends of the stall or crate,
- lie comfortably on their sides without disturbing neighbouring pigs.

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): physical appearance (e.g. injuries), increasing abnormal behaviour (stereotypies), reproductive efficiency, lameness and morbidity, mortality and culling rates (e.g. piglets).

**Article 7.X.14.**

**Flooring, bedding, resting surfaces**

In all production systems pigs need a well-drained dry and comfortable place to rest.

Floor management in indoor production systems can have a significant impact on pig welfare (Temple et al., 2012; Newton et al., 1980). Flooring, bedding, resting surfaces and outdoor yards should be cleaned as conditions warrant, to ensure good hygiene, comfort and minimise risk of diseases and injuries. Areas with excessive faecal accumulation are not suitable for resting.

Floors should be designed to minimise slipping and falling, promote foot health, and reduce the risk of claw injuries.

If a housing system includes areas of slatted floor, the slat and gap widths should be appropriate to the claw size of the pigs to prevent injuries.

Slopes of the floor pens should allow water to drain and not pool in the pens.
In outdoor systems, pigs should be rotated between paddocks or pastures to ensure good hygiene and minimise risk of diseases.

If bedding or rubber matting is provided it should be suitable (e.g. hygienic, non-toxic) and maintained to provide pigs with a clean, dry and comfortable place on which to lie.

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): physical appearance (e.g. injuries, presence of faeces on the skin, bursitis), lameness and morbidity rates (e.g. respiratory disorders, reproductive tract infections).

**Article 7.X.15.**

**Air quality**

Good air quality and ventilation are important for the welfare and health of pigs and reduce the risk of respiratory discomfort, and diseases and abnormal behaviour. Dust, toxins, microorganisms, and noxious gases, including ammonia, hydrogen sulphide, and methane caused by decomposing animal waste, can be problematic in indoor systems due to decomposing animal waste (Drummond et al., 1980).

Air quality is influenced strongly by management and building design in housed systems. Air composition is influenced by stocking density, the size of the pigs, flooring, bedding, waste management, building design and ventilation system (Ni et al., 1999).

Proper ventilation is important for effective heat dissipation in pigs and to prevent the build-up of effluent gases (e.g. ammonia and hydrogen sulphide), including those from manure and dust in the housing unit. The ammonia level concentration in enclosed housing should not exceed 25 ppm. A useful indicator is that if air quality at the level of the pigs is unpleasant for humans it is also most likely to be a problem for pigs.

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): morbidity, mortality and culling rates, physical appearance (excessive soiling and tear staining), behaviour (especially respiratory rate, or coughing and tail biting), change in body weight and body condition.

**Article 7.X.16.**

**Thermal environment**

Although pigs can adapt to different a range of thermal environments, particularly if appropriate breeds and housing are used for the anticipated conditions, sudden fluctuations in temperature can cause heat or cold stress.

1. **Heat stress**

   Heat stress is a serious problem in pig production. It can cause significant discomfort, as well as reductions in weight gain and fertility, or sudden death (Werremann and Bazer, 1985).

   The risk of heat stress for pigs is influenced by environmental factors including air temperature, relative humidity, wind speed, ventilation rates, stocking density, shade and wallow availability in outdoor systems, and animal factors including breed, age and body condition (Heitman and Hughes, 1949; Quiniou and Noblet, 1999).

   *Animal handlers* should be aware of the risk that heat stress poses to pigs and of the thresholds in relation to heat and humidity that may require action. If the risk of heat stress reaches too high levels the *animal handlers* should institute an emergency action plan that gives priority to access to additional water and could include provision of shade and wallows in outdoor systems, fans, reduction of stocking density, water-based cooling systems (dripping or misting), and provision of cooling systems as appropriate for the local conditions.

   Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): behaviour (feed and water intake, respiratory rate, panting, agonistic behaviour), physical appearance (presence of faeces on the skin), morbidity, mortality and culling rates, and reproductive efficiency.
2. Cold stress

Protection from cold should be provided when these conditions are likely to create a serious risk to the welfare of pigs, particularly in neonates and young pigs and others that are physiologically compromised (e.g. ill animals). This protection can be provided by insulation, extra bedding, heat mats or lamps and natural or man-made shelters in outdoor systems (Blecha and Kelley, 1981).

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): morbidity, mortality and culling rates, physical appearance (long hair, piloerection), behaviour (especially abnormal postures, shivering and huddling) and changes in body weight and body condition.

Article 7.X.17.

Noise

Pigs are able to cope with a range of adaptable to different levels and types of noise. However, exposure of pigs to sudden or loud noises should be minimised where possible to prevent stress and fear reactions. Ventilation fans, feeding machinery or other indoor or outdoor equipment should be constructed, placed, operated and maintained in such a way that they cause the least possible amount of noise (Algers and Jensen, 1991).

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): behaviour (e.g. fleeing and vocalisation), physical appearance (e.g. injuries), reproductive efficiency, changes in body weight and body condition.

Article 7.X.18.

Lighting

Indoor systems should have light levels sufficient to allow all pigs to see one another, to investigate their surroundings visually and to show other normal behaviour patterns and to be seen clearly by staff to allow adequate inspection of the pigs. The lighting regime should be such as to prevent health and behavioural problems. It should follow a 24-hour rhythm and include sufficient uninterrupted dark and light periods, preferably no less than 6 hours for both.

A minimum of 40 lux of lighting is recommended for a minimum of 6 hours per day (Martelli et al., 2005; Taylor et al., 2006).

Artificial light sources should be located so as not to cause discomfort to the pigs.

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): behaviour (locomotive behaviour), morbidity rates, reproductive efficiency, physical appearance (injuries) and changes in body weight and body condition.

Article 7.X.19.

Farrowing and lactation

Sows and gilts need time to adjust to their farrowing accommodation before farrowing. Nesting material should be provided where possible some days before farrowing (Yun et al., 2014). Sows and gilts should be observed frequently around their expected farrowing times. As some sows and gilts need assistance during farrowing, there should be sufficient space and competent staff.

When new buildings are planned, loose housing systems for farrowing sows and gilts should be considered (Baxter et al., 2012; Cronin et al., 2014; KilBride et al., 2012; Morrison et al., 2013; Weber, 2007).

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): mortality and culling rates (piglets), morbidity rates (metritis and mastitis), behaviour (stereotypies, restlessness and savaging), reproductive efficiency, physical appearance (injuries).
Weaning can be stressful for sows and piglets, and good management is required. Problems associated with weaning are generally related to the piglets' size and physiological maturity. Early weaning systems require good management and nutrition of the piglets.

An average piglet should be weaned at three weeks or older (Hameister et al., 2010; Smith et al., 2010; Gonyou et al., 1998; Worobec et al., 1999). Delaying weaning to the age of four weeks or more may produce benefits such as improved bowel gut immunity and reduced less diarrhoea and a less preventive use of antimicrobial agents (EFSA, 2007; Hameister et al., 2010; McLamb et al., 2013; Smith et al., 2010; Gonyou et al., 1998, Bailey et al., 2001).

Regardless of age, low weight piglets require additional care and can benefit from being kept in small groups in specialised pens until they are able to be moved to the common nursery area.

Newly weaned pigs are susceptible to disease challenges, so adherence to high-level hygiene protocols and appropriate diet is important. The area that piglets are weaned into should be clean, dry, and warm.

All newly weaned pigs should be monitored during the first two weeks after weaning for any signs of ill-health or abnormal stress.

Outcome-based criteria (or measurable): mortality and culling rates (piglets), morbidity rates (respiratory disease, diarrhoea), behaviour (belly nosing and ear sucking), physical appearance (injuries) and changes in body weight and body condition.

Mixing of unfamiliar pigs can result in fighting to establish a dominance hierarchy, and therefore mixing should be minimised as much as possible (Moore et al., 1994; Fabrega et al., 2013). When mixing, strategies to reduce aggression and injuries should be implemented, and animals should be observed after mixing and interventions applied if the aggression is intense or prolonged, and pigs become injured supervised.

Measures to prevent excessive fighting and injuries can include (Arey and Edwards, 1996, Verdon et al., 2015):

- providing additional space and a non-slippery floor,
- feeding before mixing,
- feeding on the floor in the mixing area,
- provision of straw or other suitable enrichment materials in the mixing area,
- providing opportunities to escape and to hide from other pigs, such as visual barriers,
- mixing previously familiarised animals whenever possible,
- mixing young animals should be mixed as soon after weaning as possible,
- avoiding the addition of adding one or small number of animals to a large established group.

Outcome-based criteria (or measurable): mortality, morbidity and culling rates, behaviour (agonistic), physical appearance (injuries), changes in body weight and body condition and reproductive efficiency.
Article 7.X.22.

Genetic selection

Welfare and health considerations should balance any decisions on productivity and growth rate when choosing a breed or hybrid for a particular location or production system.

Selective breeding can improve the welfare of pigs for example by selection to improve maternal behaviour, piglet viability, temperament and resistance to stress and disease and to reduce tail biting and aggressive behaviour (Turner et al., 2006).

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): physical appearance, behaviour (e.g. maternal and agonistic behaviour), changes in body weight and body condition, handling response, reproductive efficiency, lameness, and morbidity, mortality and culling rates.

Article 7.X.23.

Protection from predators and pests

In outdoor and combination systems pigs should be protected from predators.

Pigs should also be protected from pests such as excessive numbers of flies and mosquitoes.

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): morbidity, mortality and culling rates, behaviour, and physical appearance (injuries).

Article 7.X.24.

Biosecurity and animal health

1. Biosecurity and disease prevention

Biosecurity plans should be designed, implemented and maintained, commensurate with the best possible herd health status, available resources and infrastructure, and current disease risk and, for listed diseases in accordance with relevant recommendations in the Terrestrial Code.

These biosecurity plans should address the control of the major sources and pathways for spread of pathogenic agents including:

- pigs, including introductions to the herd, especially from different sources,
- young animals, semen coming from different sources,
- other domestic animals, wildlife, and pests,
- people, including sanitation practices,
- equipment, including vehicles, tools and facilities,
- vehicles,
- air,
- air, water supply, semen, feed and bedding,
- waste, including manure, waste garbage, and disposal of dead animals,
- semen.
Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): morbidity, mortality and culling rates, reproductive efficiency, changes in weight and body condition, physical appearance (signs of disease).

a) Animal health management

Animal health management should optimise the physical and behavioural health and welfare of the pig in the herd. It includes the prevention, treatment and control of diseases and conditions affecting the herd (in particular respiratory, reproductive and enteric diseases).

There should be an effective programme for the prevention and treatment of diseases and conditions, formulated in consultation with a veterinarian, when appropriate. This programme should include the recording of production data (e.g. number of sows, piglets per sow per year, feed conversion, and body weight at weaning), morbidity, mortality and culling rate and medical treatments. It should be kept up to date by the animal handler. Regular monitoring of records aids management and quickly reveals problem areas for intervention.

For parasitic burdens (e.g. endoparasites, ectoparasites and protozoa) and fly control, a programme should be implemented to monitor, control and treat, as appropriate.

Lameness can be a problem in pigs. Animal handlers should monitor the state of feet and legs and take measures to prevent lameness and maintain foot and leg health.

Those responsible for the care of pigs should be aware of early specific signs of disease or distress, such as coughing, abortion, diarrhoea, changes in locomotory behaviour or apathetic behaviour, and non-specific signs such as reduced feed and water intake, changes in weight and body condition, changes in behaviour or abnormal physical appearance.

Pigs at higher risk will require more frequent inspection by animal handlers. If animal handlers suspect the presence of a disease or are not able to correct the causes of disease or distress, they should seek advice from those having training and experience, such as veterinarians or other qualified advisers, as appropriate.

Non-ambulatory pigs should not be transported or moved unless absolutely necessary for treatment, recovery, or diagnosis. Such movements should be done carefully using methods that avoid dragging the animal or lifting it in a way that might cause further pain, suffering or exacerbate injuries.

Animal handlers should also be competent in assessing fitness to transport, as described in Chapter 7.3.

In case of disease or injury, when treatment has failed, is not feasible or recovery is unlikely (e.g. pigs that are unable to stand up, unaided or refuse to eat or drink), the animal should be humanely killed as soon as possible in accordance with Chapter 7.6.

Outcome-based criteria (or measurables): morbidity, mortality and culling rates, reproductive efficiency, behaviour (apathetic behaviour), lameness, physical appearance (injuries) and changes in body weight and body condition.

b) Emergency plans for disease outbreaks

Emergency plans should cover the management of the farm in the event of an emergency disease outbreak, consistent with national programmes and recommendations of Veterinary Services as appropriate.
Article 7.X.25.

**Contingency Emergency plans**

Where the failure of power, water and or feed supply systems could compromise *animal welfare*, pig producers should have contingency plans to cover the failure of these systems. These plans may include the provision of fail-safe alarms to detect malfunctions, back-up generators, contact information for key service providers, ability to store water on farm, access to water cartage services, adequate on-farm storage of feed and an alternative feed supply.

Preventive measures for emergencies should be input-based rather than outcome-based. Contingency plans should be documented and communicated to all responsible parties. Alarms and back-up systems should be checked regularly.

Article 7.X.26.

**Disaster management**

Plans should be in place to minimise and mitigate the effect of disasters (e.g. earthquake, fire, flooding, blizzard and hurricane). Such plans may include evacuation procedures, identifying high ground, maintaining emergency feed and water stores, destocking and humane *killing* when necessary.

*Procedures for humane killing procedures for* of sick or injured pigs should be part of the disaster management plan.

Reference to emergency plans can also be found in Article 7.X.25.

Article 7.X.27.

**Euthanasia (Humane killing)**

Allowing a sick or injured animal to linger unnecessarily is unacceptable. Therefore, for sick and injured pigs a prompt diagnosis should be made to determine whether the animal should be treated or humanely killed.

The decision to kill an animal humanely and the procedure itself should be undertaken by a competent person.

For a description of acceptable methods for humane *killing* of pigs see Chapter 7.6.

The establishment should have documented procedures for on-farm humane *killing*. Staff should be trained in the humane *killing* procedures appropriate for each class of pig.

Reasons for humane *killing* may include:

- severe emaciation, weak pigs that are non-ambulatory or at risk of becoming non-ambulatory,
- severely injured or non-ambulatory pigs that will not stand up, refuse to eat or drink, or have not responded to therapy-treatment,
- rapid deterioration of a medical condition for which treatments have been unsuccessful,
- severe, debilitating pain,
- compound fracture,
- spinal injury,
- central nervous system disease,
– multiple joint infections with chronic weight loss,

– piglets that are premature and unlikely to survive, or have a debilitating congenital defect, and

– as part of disaster management response.

For a description of acceptable methods for humane killing of pigs see Chapter 7.6.

– Text deleted.
Scientific references


