

Breeding and Gestation Management Workshop

July 26-27, 2007

Southern Research and Outreach Center – Waseca, MN

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Extension

S E R V I C E

www.extension.umn.edu/swine

Successful management and care for the sow herd and efficient breeding practices are fundamentally essential. Females must be successfully reared, selected, bred, and maintained over successive reproductive cycles in order to be productive and profitable for a swine herd. Today's females are larger, leaner, and are pushed harder to maximize litter size and minimize reproductive days. Many employees do not have the background or are not properly equipped to care for these higher-maintenance females. Best management practices are constantly evolving, while utilization of new technology to optimize reproductive efficiency continues to improve our ability to more closely reach the pig's genetic potential.

This two-day intensive workshop is designed to give participants an increased understanding of the factors involved to successfully breed females and care for them during gestation. The course is appropriate for people with a limited knowledge of pork production as well as veterans wishing to review the basics and stay abreast on recent developments. Topics that will be covered in the workshop include:

Rearing Replacement Females: Nutritional needs; body condition; proper environment; evaluation and selection guidelines; biosecurity; isolation and acclimation; successful gilt introduction

Mating Systems: Pen vs. Hand vs. AI mating; Production schedules; pig flow; balancing culls with replacements; record keeping; vaccination/health management; feeders; lighting; flooring and sanitation

Breeding Practices: Environmental stressors; animal handling; estrus detection; estrus cycles; reproductive physiology; boar management (semen collection, processing, evaluation, handling and storage)

Pregnancy Management: Minimizing environmental stress; handling practices; timing issues; pregnancy detection; proper sow feeding

Preparing for Parturition: Feeding to proper body condition; preparing sows for farrowing; performance targets; records evaluations and monitoring; assessing and troubleshooting reproductive failures

Classroom instruction is provided on the first day of the program, lasting from noon – 9 pm. A hands-on session, conducted at swine research facilities, is conducted the second day of the program from 8 am to noon. The hands-on session incorporates numerous activities relating to material covered in the classroom portion of the course in order to maximize student learning and understanding. In addition, class participants will be automatically certified or recertified under the Pork Quality Assurance (PQA) program by completing the course.

University of Minnesota faculty and educators and swine industry experts provide instruction for the course. Cost of the program is \$100 per person, and includes learning materials, lunches, breaks, instructor fees, and biosecurity clothing for hands-on training sessions. For more information, contact Dr. Mark Whitney, swine extension educator, at (507) 389-5541. Individuals wishing to register for the workshop should contact the Minnesota Pork Board at (507) 345-8814.