

The six hypotheses for further productivity.

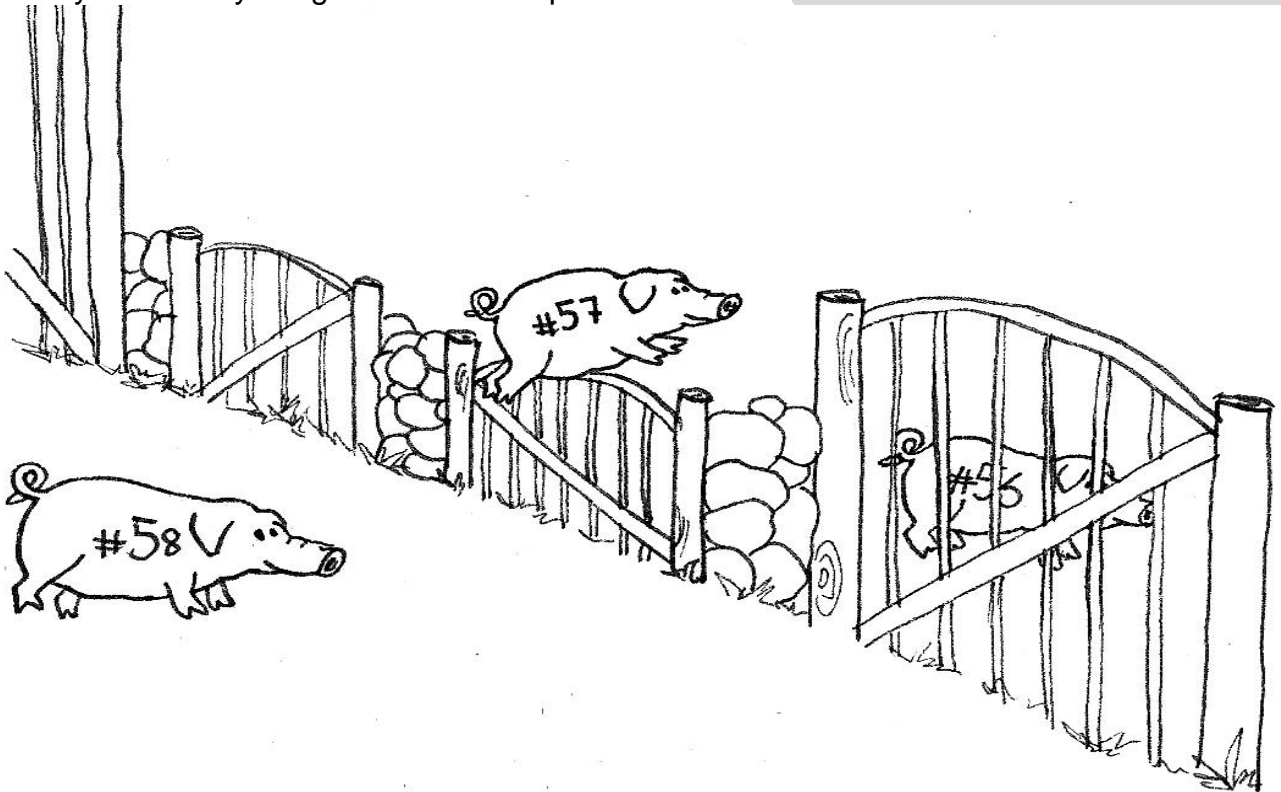
My idea was to write a short essay but I must admit that I can't, so I will instead write about the critical six components. I will write about those things that I think are most important to have as high priority but what the farmers often "overlook".

These things are;

Water, food/ feeding, environment, health, genetic and management/ "the human factor.

I have tried to make a priority of them but know this isn't so simple as it sounds. I will start with water because this, I am sure, should be priority one.

My saying has always been; decrease the human factor. The reason is that people are born "lazy" and mostly that is why things do not run as planned inside the sow herd.



This drawing tells that people but also pigs are "lazy" and always will try to jump over the fence where it is lowest

Here in this first section I will try to show with my ideas why it often goes wrong with water and the possible solutions.

Water.

Quality of water:

Water is essential- if no water no life and no productivity. Quality of water is very important. Many wells are not checked regularly and sometimes we see surface water run into the wells. This should be fixed as fast as possible.

Many farms have a water reservoir to minimize the risk of water shortage and it is forgotten that this can be a potential contamination

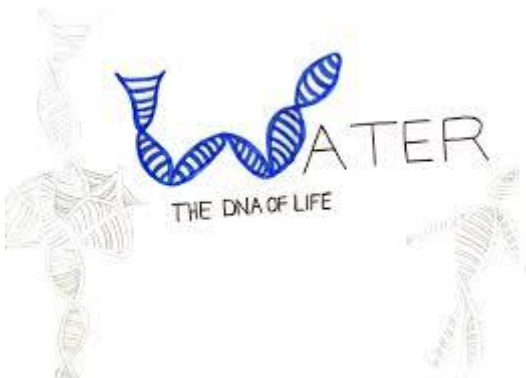
Water quality is often only checked near the well but this should also be done inside the stable at the furthest point the water travels. The reason for this is that we many times pollute the water by using different additives such as vitamins, acid, iron and others. These additives are meant to make life "easier for us, but can encourage bacteria to grow if we don't check this. Also "blind" pipes mean that we have some pipes that only contain stagnant water which can cause problems. The water valves can also make problems when the valves are standing in water because the water can run backwards and then pollute the quality of the water. A small but very important thing is, if polluted water is used for liquid feeding it can cause problems because the fermentation will maybe also amplify the "bad bacteria" that are in the water.

Naturally occurring organic elements inside the water can cause problems too if the contents of these are too high. This can for example decrease of the affect of the vaccine and antibiotic used inside the herd.

So, what to do:

First, recognise that water is essential and we should control all aspects several times a year. When you have the problem (everybody will see it sometimes) then find the source of pollution and get rid of it. A good solution can also be to clean the water pipes at regular intervals with an effective cleaner. Some use UV- light or an Ozone- generator to make sure that the water are clean when it goes into the stable but also remember to maintain this equipment.

How you maintain water quality is not important but it is important that you understand that water is essential for the productivity. If YOU don't want to drink the water inside the stable then something is wrong.



Amount of water:

Normally it is very simple to calculate how much water a sow needs. If she eats 1500 kg of feed a year, I normally say that for each kg she needs 3.5 litres of water. The difficulty here is that we normally feed at the same time in several stables and therefore we see a drop in the water pressure so that the sow doesn't drink the amount of water that she must do if the feed intake is to be as good as possible (sows can also be "lazy" and don't want to stand up longer than necessary). This may cause problems with diarrhoea because of this link between feed intake and

water.

Drinking nipples that are not suitable for the sows can often be seen!

Drinking nipples that are blocked or give too little water because of sediment inside the water pipes

"Stale old water" because the pen hasn't been used for a while because of washing of the pen!!

Washing stables at the same time we are feeding in the same air space

Leaks in the water system that mean any calculation of water used is not correct.

There are many of these examples and therefore:-

So, what to do:

Make sure that your water system is not leaking and, as said earlier, make some plans as to how often you clean and control the system. Every time you move a sow to a new pen then check the drinking valve. Have some manometers on your water system in some strategic places so you can check the water pressure regularly. Try to feed the stable first where water intake is most important for the sows e.g.farrowing stable because of the high feed intake required.(Remember that a lactating sow can drink up to 40- 50 litres a day!). A possibility can also be to install some aqua flow. In this way we are sure that the sow always has water but will also minimize the swings in water pressure. A small and cheap advice can be to use clothespeg on the water valve 1 hour before entering a sow in a new pen. This will empty the pipes of “old water”



Yes, the knowledge is there. USE IT

This was a small line of thought about priority one; Water. Many farms don't have enough focus on this issue because they are too busy with a lot of other things that themselves could “easily” be solved if they hadn't forgotten that water is the first priority.

Water is life.

The next article I will try to come with some thoughts about food/ feeding that also many times sets a limit on the productivity.