

Season 6, Episode 11: Success Found in Open Gestation Systems and Swine Technology

Dr. Hyatt Frobose, North America commercial director at JYGA Technologies Inc., and Fred Kuhr, director of production at Dykhuis Farms share how they are working to improve open gestation systems and how technology is helping in production systems today.

Background

Sow death loss and emerging technologies have been at the forefront of conversations within the swine industry. Dr. Hyatt Frobose discusses a research experiment he led on open pen gestation, survey results, and how he defines success in open gestation systems. Fred Kuhr talks about the new technologies they have implemented at Dykhuis Farms, and how those open opportunities to continue expanding and increasing productivity at the production level.

JYGA Open Pen Gestation Survey

JYGA, a Canadian-based company, focuses on precision feeding, developing products that deliver the right diet to the right pig at the right time. The company began focusing on open pen gestation as it is met with caution due to the possibility of increased death loss. To work towards designing pens and feeding systems that minimize death loss, JYGA conducted a research study to find key successes, different management skills, and how those might impact death loss in a pen gestation setting.

Survey Outcomes

Thirty-eight U.S. sow farms participated in the survey, ranging from 1,300 to 6,800 sows each. The survey collected general farm information, pen management procedures, and hospital animal management information. The results indicated that neither the number of staff nor the days sows were mixed after pregnancy had a significant correlation with sow death loss. Factors that did have an impact included the health status of the farm, pen size, and the numbers of sows off feed. Opportunities exist to continue data collection.

Emerging Technologies

New technology is constantly emerging that allows producers to increase their productivity on their sites. Technology systems such as PigFlow can be used to improve employee training and response time. These programs enable live data transfer and allow employees to access pig-specific data, such as age and weight easily. While supplying each employee with a phone (non-cellular) for data entry may seem scary, Dykhuis Farms has noticed increased employee satisfaction in getting to actively use technology on farm.

Takeaways

To succeed in open pen gestation, producers must determine what works well in their system and what needs to be changed. JYGA's survey provides new opportunities to continue research and add more information to the data set currently collected. Emerging technologies enable production systems to increase efficiency in areas such as employee training and data transfer across the site. Producers should tailor their technologies to meet these needs.

To listen to this full podcast please visit: <https://globalagnetwork.com/pigx/podcast/season-6-episode-11-success-found-in-open-gestation-systems-and-swine-technology>

