

# SWINE FACILITIES

- I. IN ORDER TO BE SUCCESSFUL, IN TODAY'S SHOW RING, THE EXHIBITOR CAN NO LONGER BUY SUPERIOR LIVESTOCK AND EXPECT THEM TO COME OUT ON TOP BY JUST THROWING THE FEED TO THEM. WE ALL KNOW THAT THE RACE IS WON AT HOME IN THE FEED PAN. IN ORDER TO MANAGE A FEEDING PROGRAM TO ITS FULLEST POTENTIAL, ONE MUST HAVE THE FACILITIES TO PROMOTE GAIN AND THE MANIPULATION OF GAIN.

THERE IS NO PERFECT FACILITY FOR ALL SWINE PROJECTS, YOU MUST TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS WHEN BUILDING.

1. GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION
  - A. SUMMER AND WINTER TEMPERATURES
2. SOIL TYPE AND CONDITIONS
3. ZONING LAWS
4. ACCESSIBILITY – DAILY CHORES AND TRAILERING
5. WASTE DISPOSAL
6. ACCESS TO FULL FRESH WATER
7. PEN SIZE AND SHAPE

## II. GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION:

THE AREA OF THE STATE THAT YOU LIVE IN WILL DICTATE THE TYPE OF FACILITIES THAT YOU WILL NEED. IN SOUTHEAST TEXAS, YOUR WINTER PEN MAY RESEMBLE A SUMMER FACILITY IN THE PANHANDLE. MAXIMUM AND MINIMUM TEMPERATURES FOR THE FEEDING PERIOD MUST BE CONSIDERED AND FACILITIES SHOULD BE BUILT TO ADJUST TO BOTH TEMPERATURES WITH LITTLE EFFORT.

DURING EXTREME COLD, WIND AND/OR RAIN, BLOCKS SHOULD BE IN PLACE AS WELL AS SOME FORM OF HEAT SOURCE, (EX. HEATLAMPS, HEATER, OR AT LEAST A 150 WATT LIGHT BULB).

DURING SUMMER CONDITIONS, LOTS OF SHADE IS A MUST (IF PIGS ARE USING THEIR ENERGY TO FIGHT THE COLD AND HEAT THEN FEED CONVERSION IS BEING COMPROMISED). FANS AND MISTERS ARE GENERALLY THE CURE-ALL TO COMBAT HEAT. WATER HOLES WILL WORK, BUT GENERALLY ADDS TO OTHER PROBLEMS SUCH AS FLIES, SMELL AND AS A STRUCTURE HAZARD.

## III. SOIL TYPE AND CONDITIONS:

YOUR SOIL WILL ALSO HELP DETERMINE THE TYPE OF FLOORING AND BEDDING THAT WILL BEST HELP YOUR FEEDING SITUATION. YOUR PEN SHOULD BE BUILT TO BE KEPT AS CLEAN AND DRY AS POSSIBLE WITH AS LITTLE LABOR INVOLVED AS POSSIBLE. ONCE AGAIN YOUR GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION COMES INTO PLAY WITH SOIL CONDITIONS.

IN DEEP SANDY SOILS YOU MAY NOT NEED TO USE ALTERNATIVE FLOORING, ON THE OTHER HAND, IT'S HARD TO FEED WHITE PIGS IN BLACKLAND AND OR CLAY-BASED SOILS.

MY PERSONAL PREFERENCE, IN ALL AREAS, IS TO HAVE A CONCRETE-BASED FEEDING FLOOR AND THEN BED IT WITH EITHER SHAVINGS OR WHITE WASHED BANK SAND. THE CONCRETE BASE MAKES IT EASIER TO CLEAN AND DISINFECT BETWEEN SEASONS AND IT REDUCES THE ROOTING PROBLEM THAT CREATES SO MANY LEG INJURIES.

#### IV. ZONING LAWS OR DEED RESTRICTIONS:

ALWAYS CHECK WITH DEED RESTRICTIONS AND LOCAL ZONING LAWS BEFORE GOING THROUGH THE EXPENSE OF BUILDING YOUR PEN BECAUSE THERE ARE A LOT OF PROJECTS FED AROUND SUBURBAN AREAS. THIS CAN AND WILL BECOME A PROBLEM. MOST TIMES, A LETTER TO THE CITY OR CIVIC ORGANIZATION STATING THAT IT IS AN FFA OR 4-H PROJECT THAT WILL BE ON FEED FOR LESS THAN 4 MONTHS WILL BE ENOUGH TO SQUEEZE BY THE RESTRICTIONS.

#### V. ACCESSIBILITY:

IT IS ALWAYS BEST TO HAVE YOUR PROJECT CLOSE TO HOME, PREFERABLY WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE. IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO DO A GOOD JOB FEEDING PROJECTS THAT ARE HOUSED OFF-SITE.

MAKE SURE THAT YOUR PEN IS DESIGNED WITH A HOG'S MOVEMENT IN MIND. A 260 POUND PIG BASED ON FOUR LEGS, 18 INCHES OFF THE GROUND WITH AN ATTITUDE CAN GO JUST ABOUT ANYWHERE IT WANTS. ALL ALLEY-WAYS SHOULD HAVE END GATES AND BE JUST WIDE ENOUGH TO GET A WHEEL BARROW IN AND OUT FREELY. TOO WIDE OF AN ALLEY-WAY MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO MOVE THE UNRULY ONES FROM PEN TO PEN. ALWAYS USE SORTING PANELS WHEN POSSIBLE.

LOCATE YOUR PEN WHERE IT IS ACCESSIBLE TO LOADING AND UNLOADING. IT IS A GOOD IDEA TO HAVE A RAMP THAT CAN BE USED TO UNLOAD PICKUPS AND TRAILERS.

REMEMBER TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION, THE MORE SHADE THE BETTER. TREES MAKE GOOD SHADE IN THE SUMMER AND GREAT WIND BLOCKS IN THE WINTER.

#### VI WASTE DISPOSAL:

WASTE DISPOSAL CAN BE A HUGE PROBLEM OR NO PROBLEM AT ALL. THIS DEPENDS ON YOU AND THE SIZE OF YOUR PROJECT.

FOR JUST A FEW HEAD, BUY A GOOD WHEEL BARROW AND AN APPLE FORK AND USE IT TWICE A DAY. CONTACT A LOCAL GARDENER TO SEE IF HE/SHE WOULD LIKE TO START COMPOST THAT THEY CAN REMOVE FROM YOUR

PROPERTY PERIODICALLY. THIS REDUCES YOUR LABOR AND WHO KNOWS, YOU MAY RECEIVE ALL THE FREE VEGGIES YOU CAN EAT!

ON THE LARGE SCALE (EX. SOWS, FEEDER PIGS, ETC.) CONTACT AN AGRICULTURE ENGINEER OR LOCAL SWINE PRODUCER FOR THE BEST SUGGESTION. REMEMBER, THERE ARE LAWS GOVERNING WASTE DISPOSAL.

## VII FRESH WATER AND FEED:

DRINKING WATER CAN CREATE PROBLEMS WITH FEED CONVERSION AND DISEASE.

ALL TYPES OF AUTOMATIC WATERS ARE AVAILABLE. WATER NIPPLES, FLOAT TANKS, BARREL WATERS, ETC., ALL WORK WELL AND THE ONE THAT BEST SUITS YOUR PEN SHOULD BE USED.

EXAMPLES OF VERY POOR AND UNSANITARY WATERING SYSTEMS WOULD BE THE SUNKEN 5 GALLON BUCKET OR THE SPLIT WATER HEATER TANK. THE SUNKEN 5 GALLON BUCKET SOMETIMES DOUBLES AS THE HOLE IN GROUND IN THE OLD OUTHOUSE. YOU WOULDN'T DRINK OUT OF A DIRTY GLASS, SO DON'T EXPECT YOUR PIG TO EITHER. IF YOU ARE RUNNING A WATER HOSE TO YOUR WATER NIPPLE, MAKE SURE IT IS BURIED OR ENCASED IN SOME TYPE OF LARGER WATER PIPE TO ACT AS A SHIELD FROM THE SUN. THE SUN CAN HEAT THAT WATER TO AN UNDRINKABLE TEMPERATURE.

**FEEDERS:** FULL FEEDERS SHOULD BE USED EARLY ON AND THEN MOVE TO SOME TYPE OF HAND FEEDER LATER IN THE FEEDING PERIOD.

## VIII PEN SIZE:

PEN SIZE DEPENDS ON THE FLOORING AND BEDDING DESIRED AND THE NUMBER OF PIGS PER PEN. 60-100 SQ. FEET PER PIG ON CONCRETE AND POSSIBLY 20-50 SQ. FEET MORE, IF ON DIRT. ALWAYS PROVIDE EXTRA ROOM FOR DAILY EXERCISE.

## IX. PEN TREATMENTS:

WHEN DISINFECTING PENS AND EQUIPMENT BETWEEN SEASONS, CLEAN AND WASH THOROUGHLY WITH A PRESSURE WASHER IF POSSIBLE. DISINFECT WITH SOME TYPE OF COMMERCIAL SWINE DISINFECTIVE SUCH AS TEK-TROL OR EVEN CLOROX BLEACH.

IF YOUR PEN IS A DIRT BASE, SPREAD WHITE POWDERED LIME EVENLY AROUND THE PEN AND TILL THE PEN UNDER. REPEAT IN 2 WEEKS IF POSSIBLE AND YOU SHOULD BE READY TO GO.

FIRE ANTS ARE A BIG PROBLEM ACROSS MOST OF THE STATE. YOU CAN TREAT YOUR PEN WITH SEVERAL PESTICIDES THAT ARE NOT HARMFUL TO ANIMALS.

X. CLOSING:

IN CLOSING, JUST REMEMBER TO KEEP YOUR ANIMAL CLEAN AND COMFORTABLE. NO MATTER WHAT THE WEATHER CONDITIONS MAY BE, KEEP THEM COMFORTABLE!!