

Pigs: Dry sows

Assessment Protocol

Guidance on sampling

- Randomly select 4-5 pens of dry sows.
- Avoid choosing hospital pens or pens in which pigs have been newly mixed (within 1 week) or treated (as a group).

Individual measures: For units with:

- Less than 20 dry sows - assess all dry sows;
- 20 - 60 dry sows - assess 20 dry sows;
- More than 60 dry sows - assess 1/3 of total dry sow number (up to a maximum of 50 sows).

Randomly assess individual pigs from across each of the selected pens. If there are fewer than 4 pens, alter the sampling strategy accordingly to achieve the total number of sows required.

3 or more sows are to be assessed jointly with the stockperson (record assessor's score only).

Pen measures: Assess all the sows in the pen.

Joint assessment between the assessor and the producer is to be carried out on at least one pen.

Enrichment use	Pen measure
Observation:	Observe and record the oral behaviour of standing and sitting pigs in the pen (ignore lying pigs). Assess quickly to avoid double counting pigs already assessed.
Record, the number of standing and sitting pigs:	
1. Using enrichment	= Investigating a suitable manipulable substrate or object provided for enrichment Include if snout/mouth is manipulating straw, hay, wood(chip), sawdust, mushroom compost, peat (or other material that enables proper investigation and manipulation) OR in contact with an object/toy such as a hanging object or ball. Only include if these objects/substrates have been provided by the producer as enrichment. In outdoor systems, include manipulation of turf or clean areas of ground (i.e. not contaminated with manure).
2. Manipulating other	= No. pigs manipulating other pigs, pen equipment / floor / muck Include if the snout/mouth is in contact with any part of another pig. Include if the snout/mouth is in contact with muck or the floor, fixtures or fittings of the pen. Pay attention at feeders or drinkers to discriminate between manipulation of pen furniture and eating/drinking. In outdoor systems, include rooting in dunging area or manipulation of areas of ground contaminated with manure.
3. Stone chewing	= Manipulating a stone or stones with the snout or mouth – often audible.

Nose ringing	Pen measure
Observation:	Observe and record if the animals are nose ringed or not.

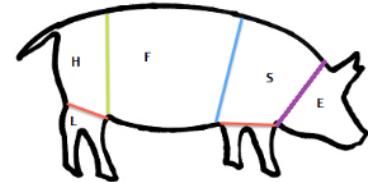
Tail docking	Pen measure
Observation:	Look at the animals from the side or behind.
Record: Record if the animals are:	
Undocked	= None of the tail is docked;
Short docked	= >50% of the tail is docked;
Long docked	= <50% of the tail is docked;
Note if there are mixed tail lengths within the pen, i.e. (long docked / short docked and docked / undocked)	

Ear- / Flank biting	Pen measure
Observation:	Assess all animals in the pen.
Record:	
If ear-biting (EB) lesions are present, and if flank biting (FB) lesions are present.	
Typical fight or clambering/mounting lesions show parallel lines, while lesions from flank biting are generally round.	

Pigs needing further care	Pen / Herd measure
Observation:	Observe all the pigs in your observation pens and any others seen, including those in hospital pens, to assess and record the number of any sick or injured pigs that would benefit from further intervention. Further interventions include further treatment, hospitalisation or culling. This could include pigs who are sick, injured or lame and are unable to compete for resources, being bullied/tail bitten or would benefit from access to more comfortable bedding and space (to rest) than that available in the pen. This assesses legislative compliance that ‘where necessary, any sick or injured pigs shall be temporarily isolated in suitable accommodation with dry, comfortable bedding’. The nature of the condition and the pen environment will affect this measure.
	Do not include sick or injured pigs already receiving suitable care.
Record:	Number of pigs seen that would benefit from further treatment, hospitalisation or culling. When identifying pigs requiring further care, please record reasons and the relevant pig or pen ID.

Hospital Pens	Pen measure
Observation:	Look at all sows in the hospital pens
Record:	Record the number of sows in the hospital pens according to reason for hospitalisation: Lameness; Thin sows; Body Wounds; Skin Conditions; Shoulder lesions; Vulva lesions; Leg swellings; Other (please specify details, e.g. severe traumatic injuries, and number of pigs affected).

Body marks	Individual measure
Observation:	Stand near the animal and visually assess one side only.
Scoring:	
0 None - Minimal	= No lesions or less than mild lesions as described below.
1 Mild	= A linear lesion longer than 10cm; Or 3 or more 3cm linear lesions; Or a circular area larger than 1cm diameter but less than 5cm diameter. Definition of lesion includes grazed/broken skin, fresh (i.e. bleeding) wounds and healing lesions (scabs). Scar tissue is not included.
2 Severe	= Circular Lesion or area of lesions \geq 5cm diameter; Or lesion extends into deeper layers of skin; Or the lesions cover a large percentage ($>25\%$) of the skin.
Body regions:	If $>25\%$ with marks, identify any noticeable pattern in the pen: Shoulder (S); Hindquarters (H); Legs (L); Flank (F); Ears and Head (E); General, if there is no obvious pattern (G).
	Typical fight or clambering/mounting lesions show parallel lines, while lesions from flank biting are generally round.
	Deep tissue injury may also need to be recorded under 'Pigs needing further care'.
	Do not include vulva or shoulder lesions (typically shoulder lesions are round rather than scrape marks).
	Record if too dirty to assess.



Shoulder lesions	Individual measure
Observation:	Stand near the animal and visually assess one side only for shoulder lesions. Typical shoulder lesions are round rather than scrape marks which are more indicative of fighting or treading.
Scoring:	
0 None	= No skin damage on the shoulder;
1 Mild	= Grazed or broken skin or swelling on the shoulder;
2 Severe	= Grazed or broken skin or swelling on the shoulder $>5\times5\text{cm}$; Or deep tissue injury – these may also need to be recorded under 'Pigs needing further care'.
Record if too dirty to assess.	

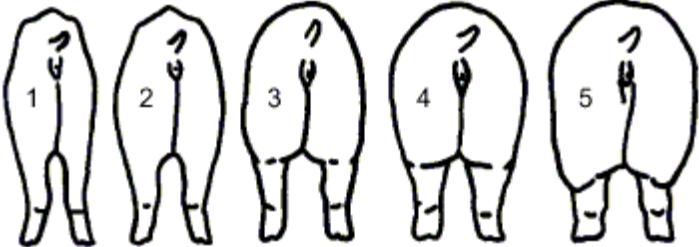
Vulva lesions	Individual measure
Observation:	Visually assess the vulva region.
Scoring:	
0 None	= No damage to the vulva;
1 Mild	= Recent damage to the vulva including fresh or scabbed bite wounds but not including old scarring;
2 Severe	= Vulva lesion $>3\text{cm}$ length or 1cm diameter; Or deep tissue injury – these may also need to be recorded under 'Pigs needing further care'.

Manure on the body	Individual measure
Observation:	Stand near the animal and visually assess one side only. This can be done from outside the pen if visibility is adequate.
Scoring:	
0 Clean	= <20% of the body is soiled;
1 Dirty	= ≥20% and <50% of the body is soiled with fresh/old slurry/urine/faeces;
2 Very dirty	= ≥50% of the body is soiled with fresh/old slurry/urine/faeces.

Leg swellings	Individual measure
Observation:	Stand near the animal and visually assess the front and hind limbs, on one side only, for leg swellings
Scoring:	
0 None	= No evidence of swelling;
1 Small	= Swelling present up to 5cm in diameter (walnut-sized);
2 Large	= Swelling present larger than 5cm diameter (walnut-sized) or any swelling that is eroded.

Skin conditions	Individual measure
Observation:	Stand near the animal and visually assess one side only. This can be done from outside the pen if visibility is adequate. Assess the total amount of the body affected in relation to the rest of the body.
Scoring:	
0 None	= No evidence of skin inflammation or discolouration;
1 Mild	= More than zero but less than 10% of the skin is inflamed, discoloured or spotted;
2 Severe	= More than 10% of the skin has an abnormal colour or texture.
Record if too dirty to assess.	

Lameness	Individual measure
Observation:	Make the individual pigs rise if necessary to observe them up and walking (unless there is an obvious reason why a pig should not be made to rise). Ensure the sample is not just formed of pigs already standing.
Record:	Number of lame pigs
When identifying lame pigs, include those which are:	
	Standing but not bearing full weight on the affected limb and/or appears to be standing on its toes; And / Or Walking with a shortened stride with minimum weight-bearing on the affected limb and a swagger of the hindquarters (may still be able to trot and gallop); And / Or Severely lame with no weight-bearing on the affected limb. These may also need to be recorded under 'Pigs needing further care'.
Do not include pigs that are showing only stiffness or uneven gait.	

Body condition	Individual measure
Observation: Visually assess from the side and behind. Manual assessment can help distinguish borderline scores.	
Record:	<p>Thin = Score 1 or 2: Ribs, backbone, 'H' bones and 'pin' bones obvious (or easily detected with pressure);</p> <p>Moderate = Score 3: Ribs, backbone, 'H' bones and 'pin' bones barely visible (or barely felt with firm pressure);</p> <p>Fat = Score 4 or 5: Ribs, backbone, 'H' bones and 'pin' bones cannot be seen (or felt even when pressure is applied) or fats deposits are clearly visible.</p> 

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Mortality	Records
Record:	<p>Percentage mortality (died but not actively culled) on farm in the last 12 months.</p> <p>Percentage culls in the last 12 months.</p> <p>Record the predominant cause of mortality.</p>