

H21 - Individual adjustment of a sow's feed dose after farrowing



This sow has completely licked the trough - increase her feed dose



This sow has not licked the trough quite as much as the sow above - stay on the current feed dose

The daily feed dose must be adjusted individually to ensure an optimum feed intake of each sow.

1. Empty the troughs before the morning feeding.
2. Check that all sows get up to eat.
3. Inspect the feed trough 25-35 minutes after feeding.
4. Increase the feed dose if a sow has licked the trough completely.
5. Stay on the current feed dose if a sow has not licked the trough completely.
6. Empty the trough if there is feed left and either skip the sow at the next feeding or reduce her feed dose.
7. A good indication of whether the feed dose is optimum is when you need to empty the troughs of 5-8% of the sows. If more than 5-8% of the sows have feed left in their trough, you are feeding them too hard.



The feed dose is too low if the sow has licked the trough completely clean



This sow has not eaten all her feed - reduce her feed dose or skip her at the next feeding

All sows have licked their troughs

- The feed dose is too low and feed is not adjusted by the individual sow resulting in a risk of shoulder pressures and significant loss of body condition among the sows.
- The sows' potential for milk production is not utilised and the subsequent reproduction is disrupted.

If more than 5-8% troughs need emptying

- The feed dose is too high. It has been increased by more than 0.5 FUsow a day, which may cause the sows to stop.
- If a sow stops, there is a great risk that her potential for milk production is not being utilised and the subsequent reproduction is disrupted.

If one or a few sows stop

- Problems with water supply.
- Problems with the hygiene in the feed trough or in the feeding system/silo.
- Incorrect setting of the valve/feed box so the sow is getting significantly more feed than expected.
- The sow is sick or suffers from a gastric ulcer.
- Fat sows eat less than sows in appropriate body condition.

Additional comments - Individual adjustment of a sow's feed dose after farrowing	
	In a 28-day-lactation period, sows should generally eat minimum 190 FUsow. In a lactation period of 35 days, sows should eat minimum 230 FUsow.
1.	It is important to empty the troughs every morning before you feed the sows as you will otherwise not be able to check whether the sow eats her dose.
2.	At each feeding, check that all sows get feed, get up and start eating.
3.	<p>Only one person should be in charge of adjusting feed doses as this must be done in the same way every day. You can leave out adjustment of the feed dose during weekends, which will make the supervision and weekend tasks easier and has very little effect on the production of the sow.</p> <p>If you increase the feed dose three times a week instead of daily, it will be increased by a larger share each time and this increases the risk of the sow stopping.</p>
4.	<p>Daily increase by 0.25-0.5 FUsow. If you increase by more than 0.5 FUsow you risk that the sow stops.</p> <p>Liquid feed: Adjust via handheld terminal or PDA, and adjust directly in FUsow or in per cent compared with the feed chart.</p> <p>Dry feed: Feeding takes place in the form of a certain amount of litre per feeding. See Appendix 2 - Weighing of feed for guidance on how to convert FUsow to litre and on how to weigh the feed.</p> <p>As a general rule, increase as show below if the sow licks the trough completely clean:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 daily feedings: 0.25 litre extra a day or 0.5 litre extra every other day. If the feed dose is high, reduce the daily increase by 50%. • 4 daily feedings: 0.2 litre extra a day or 0.4 litre extra every other day. If the feed dose is high, reduce the daily increase by 50%.
5.	A trough that is licked 90% clean is an indication that the feed dose is right.
6.	<p>If the feed dose is higher than the sow's appetite, the sow will stop. Depending on temper and feeding system in the herd, you have various options:</p> <p>Liquid feed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empty the trough, skip the sow at the next feeding and keep the current feed dose. • Reduce the feed dose by a percentage corresponding to the what is left in the trough: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 20% feed left = reduce the feed dose by 20% compared with the feed chart. ○ If more than 25% is left, do not reduce by more than 25% from the chart. Reduce the day after, if necessary. • If you do not use a feed chart, regulate the feed dose by 0.5-2.5 FUsow a day depending on the amount left and days from farrowing. • For the adjustment to be effective immediately you must empty the trough immediately after reducing the feed dose. • Never force the sow to eat the feed left. <p>Dry feed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sow has left less than 50% of the feed of the last feeding. Shut off the feed and empty the trough. Assess after the next feeding if the sow is ready to continue with the current feed dose or whether to reduce it. Only skip the sow once. • If the sow has not eaten anything, shut off the feed and empty the trough. Reduce the feed dose by 30-50% over the next days. Note that the feed dose must be increased at the same speed as normally.
7.	<p>Increases of more than 0.5 FUsow per sow a day increase the risk of the sow stopping temporarily.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An indication for optimum feed dose is when 5-8% of the troughs need emptying of the feed from the last feeding. • Be careful with high feed doses - do not adjust by more than 0.25 FUsow a day regardless of whether you use dry feed or liquid feed.