

H11 - Finishers - Daily adjustment of feed



30 minutes after feeding, there is no feed left in the trough

A high daily gain requires daily inspection and possibly adjustment of the feed for all feed valves:

1. Find the right starting point on the feed chart by entering the pigs' start weight. You can, for instance, use the average weight on the weighing note.
2. Sort female pigs and castrates and feed them according to the same feed chart.
3. It is recommended to operate with four daily feedings, for instance at 7, 11, 15 and 19 o'clock, and to feed four equal portions. In warm periods, feed 28, 22, 22 and 28%, respectively, of the daily ration.
4. There must be enough feeding points - one feeding point is min. 30 cm trough.
5. Clean the trough once a day before feeding.
6. Inspect the pigs by following one round of feeding once a day, for instance in the morning, and for 30 minutes after feeding.
7. If, after 30 minutes, there is feed left in a trough reduce the feed strength.
8. Adjust the feed strength by regulating in per cent in relation to the chart. Return to the chart within a couple of days. Most systems do this automatically (see mini manual, chapter 9). The below table provides an example of how to reduce the feed.
9. Once a week, follow one of the subsequent feedings. Follow the same instructions for adjustment.
10. Pick a feed chart that is so high that 30% of the pigs until 60 kg need to be reduced in feed strength (see H14).



30 min. after feeding

Consequences of inadequate adjustment of feed:

- Low daily feed intake and low daily gain.
- Low lean meat percentage if the pigs get too much feed after 60 kg.
- Weight variation among the pigs.
- Fights among the pigs.
- Feed wastage and mess in the pen.

Do not place a nipple drinker above the trough as water in the trough may give an incorrect impression of whether the feed strength needs adjustment. Instead place it opposite the trough.

How to adjust feed strength	
Per cent reduction	When
50 % reduction, return to the feed chart over 2-10 days	Immediately after transfer or if the pigs "stop".
20 % reduction, return to the feed chart over four days.	After 30 minutes, more than 20% of the feed is left in the trough.
10 % reduction, return to the feed chart over two days.	The pigs have eaten more than 80% of the feed, but there is still feed in the trough 30 minutes after feeding.
10 % reduction, return to the feed chart over ten days.	The pigs do not eat up after 10% or 20% reduction for 2-4 days.

If the pigs have been given dry feed in the weaner period, they will often not eat liquid feed as quickly. Reduce feed strength consistently by 50% and increase over four days in connection with transfer to the finisher facility. The transition to liquid feed can be eased significantly by giving the pigs dry feed the first couple of days.

Additional comments - Finishers - Daily adjustment of feed	
1.	Enter the correct weight to be certain that the pigs are placed correctly on the feed chart and thereby get the intended amount of feed.
2.	It is recommended to sort the pigs according to gender and feed them according to the same feed chart. Studies have demonstrated that a 3% production increase is possible when the pigs are sorted according to gender and fed on the same feed chart. When genders are mixed, female pigs are often kept away from the feed by castrates whereby their feed intake drops. It was previously recommended to feed castrates 0.10-0.15 feed units less a day than the female pigs. However, this feeding strategy results in lower gain, and this is undesirable when the producer needs to empty the facility over as short a period as possible.
3.	Time of feeding and amount fed must match the diurnal rhythm of the pigs. If, due to capacity restrictions on the feeding system, the pigs are fed 3 times a day, it is recommended to feed at 8, 14 and 20 o'clock. The drawback of 3 daily feedings is that it is more difficult for growers to eat their ration. In warm periods, the pigs have a lower appetite during the day, and it is then an advantage to change the 4 feedings and give the pigs a larger ration in the morning and evening.
4.	It is essential that all the pigs have a feeding point. Minimum 30 cm per finisher is required with restrictive feeding. Feed the pigs ad lib if there are not sufficient feeding points to counteract reduced productivity and aggressive behaviour among the pigs. Another option is to move some of the pigs to another pen to create enough feeding points. Generally, there must be so many feeding points that there are enough one week before pigs are delivered for slaughter.
5.	Clean the trough once a day to prevent feed intake from dropping. Also check that the feed floats freely to both ends of the trough. Hang chains or cast tilted edges by the troughs to prevent the pigs from defecating in the trough, particular in corners.
6.	Inspect the pigs minimum once a day: Follow a round of feeding, valve by valve, and note sick pigs that do not get up to eat. Remember, pigs with lung problems quickly lie down again and are therefore easier to spot when feeding has finished. Check if the pigs have eaten all their feed 30 minutes after feeding. Adjust the valves in pens where the pigs have not eaten all their feed.
7.	It is a good idea to measure the length of the trough and adjust the number of pigs accordingly. A trough measuring 5.10 m has room for 17 pigs until approx. 110 kg. If there are more pigs in the pen, restrictive feeding is not possible.
8.	Do not adjust the feed strength by adjusting the weight or number of the pigs as this will make it difficult if not impossible for a substitute to give the pigs the correct amount of feed. Furthermore, if the number of pigs in the pen does not match, they will not be given the right feed strength towards the end of the growth period.
9.	Once a week, follow one of the subsequent feedings to get an idea of whether the percentage of feed is right. Adjust the feeding to a speed that makes it possible to inspect the pigs during feeding, or insert breaks between each section during feeding.
10.	The easiest way to control feeding until the pigs reach their final feed dose is to pick a feed chart that is above the pigs' appetite so that you will only need to reduce the dose.