

Walking Pens

Practical experience has shown that lean pigs with excitable genetics will be easier to load into trucks and handle at the packing plant if the producers have walked through the pens every day during finishing. This is especially important in a wean to finish operation where the piglets remain in the same building from weaning to finishing. Only 10 to 15 seconds per pen per day is required. The principle is to train the pigs to calmly get up and flow around the person. If the person stands still as he/she trains the pigs to chew on boots instead of moving. It is important to keep moving in the pens. The person should move at the same speed as a pigs normal walking speed. The person walking the pens should also walk through the pens in a different random direction each day. The handler's goal is to teach the pigs to drive. One large pork operation with a high percentage of pigs carrying the stress gene found that walking the pens greatly reduced death losses during transport and in the plant yards.

Source:

Handling Pigs for Optimum Performance

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