Various designs for a production unit of 35 sows with extension possibilities
Consequences on labour, investments and profit earning capacity

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The authors give a survey of a study made to analyse different production models for a herd size of 35 sows.

Three types of piggeries were suggested:
- little expensive buildings, but requiring much labour
- more expensive buildings requiring less labour
- technically excellent buildings with moderate operating costs.

The management systems were the following:
- 3 batches of 12 sows (interval of 49 d);
- 7 batches of 5 sows (interval of 27 d).

and two methods used in the farrowing houses: either with or without post-weaning transfer of the piglets.

Results were the following:
- The system without post weaning transfer slightly increased the production costs.
- Normal labour payment in connection with « ready-for-use » buildings required a productivity of 18-21 bacon pigs per sow and per year.
- Ploughing back of profits by participation of the farmer in the construction of buildings led to the same income as with « ready-for-use » buildings but with 1-1.5 bacon pigs less per sow and per year.
- Use of straw litter reduced the investments by about 30 p. 100, but increased labour requirements.

Modernization of pig production:
The rationalization of pig herd management and its limits

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A survey of the results obtained after ten years of national assistance in the modernization of pig production shows that:
- the development of large herds is very low;
- the number of small herds although decreasing fastly is still large,
- a restricted number of farmers mostly combining pig and cattle production are developing intensive management systems. Most of these farmers belong to producers cooperations.

This development of the production has been achieved according to a dominant « technico-economic » model, characterized by expensive investments and purchase of livestock feedstuffs based on cereals and soybean.

Owing to a fast improvement of the herd performance, French pig production has reached the same level as that of the other E.E.C. countries. However, the prolonged maintenance of M.C.M. has led to a marked degradation in France of the ratio: price of pigs, price of livestock feeds and hence to a reduction of the national production potential.

The inflation and economic crisis have deeply changed the production conditions emphasizing the economic fragility of the most intensive production units which require a very large capital.