

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.

Two 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 co-operations.

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.