

# Successful Sow Management



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A successful hog operation begins with productive gilts and sows. Making sure animals are healthy from breeding to farrowing will ensure that piglets get off to the best start possible. The Crystal Creek® Paladin® Swine Program provides a high-quality

nutrition model that produces vigorous animals. Crystal Creek® has proven products and services to offer swine producers that give a strong return on investment.

## *Effective Parasite Control*

Parasite control is important for the health and productivity of sows in any breeding operation. Having an effective deworming protocol can help decrease potential economic loss. In U.S. swine herds, 80 to 90% of hogs were found to be infested with internal parasites. Internal parasites have been estimated to cause an annual loss of \$538 million. It is recommended to deworm sows between two to four weeks before breeding. The same should be done for boars. Another critical time to practice deworming is two to four weeks before farrowing. Deworming at this time can reduce the risk of sows passing a parasite infestation onto their piglets. The use of Pivot-FL™ and Crystal Creek® Crystal Pellets™ can assist in supporting the health of the sow in an operation's deworming protocol.

External parasite control should also be considered in an operation's parasite control program. Mites, lice and flies all have a negative impact on animal health and performance, which can result in an economic loss. Mange mites alone can reduce the average daily gain in growing swine by 11%. House flies and stable flies can cause an approximate 2% decrease in average daily gain when compared to those that implement some type of fly control. To help protect your sows against external parasites, bring them into farrowing crates washed and



cleaned. Wash sows and gilts with a gentle soap, and then apply Crystal Creek® Lice and Mange Wash™, three days prior to their expected farrowing date. Follow up with Crystal Creek® Fly Repellent™ to provide further parasite control. These products will help protect your sows against external parasites and keep them comfortable and productive.

## *Beneficial Cleaning and Disinfection Protocols*

Piglets should be born in a clean environment. Crates or pens should be washed to remove any caked-on dirt or manure prior to use. Pens should then be cleaned with a chlorinated alkaline foaming detergent such as Chlor-A-Foam™ with hot water, using a foam gun. Cover the pen and soak for approximately 10-15 minutes. Rinse with water. Last, but certainly not least, use the Crystal Creek® HabiStat™ chlorine dioxide solution to disinfect the pen. The solution should be used at a minimum concentration of 100 ppm and sprayed on all pen surfaces for maximum protection. Allow to air dry before bringing animals into pens. More information on the use and effectiveness of the Crystal Creek® cleaning and disinfection products can be found in the April 2019 Crystal Creek® Newsletter article "Understanding Biofilms in Agriculture." Producers should have pens cleaned and disinfected three days before sows are expected to farrow.

## Quality Nutrition and Animal Health Supplements

Providing sows with high-quality nutrition is crucial to the development and health of their piglets. Protein and energy values will need to be increased throughout the sow's pregnancy. After farrowing, sows can experience a decreased feed intake and go into an extreme negative energy balance, resulting in poor milk production and other health issues. While water is considered the number one nutrient for livestock, it is often overlooked. Providing ad lib water access and monitoring that adequate water intake is taking place, is very important. Studies have shown that sows with low water intake during the first five days after farrowing will have piglets with reduced growth. Working with a nutritionist to ensure all nutrient needs are being met will help sows during gestation and lactation, resulting in healthier, larger litters. To learn more about what the Crystal Creek® Paladin® Swine Nutrition Program has to offer, visit our website at [crystalcreeknatural.com](http://crystalcreeknatural.com).

In addition to high-quality minerals and nutrition options, Crystal Creek® has animal health supplements that can be helpful with both pre and post-farrowing care:

- 1) Super Boost™: Available in both loose powder or capsule form, Super Boost™ is used to help provide vitamins and microorganisms to support sows once they farrow. Feeding approximately 10 grams per day to a sow can help encourage and support appetite. Once the sow farrows in, milk production requires a high amount of nutrients. What is not met through the diet, will be pulled from the sow's body. This can result in downer sows. The condition osteomalacia; the result of small fractures in the back leg bones and lumbar vertebrae, is known to cause downer sow syndrome. A properly balanced diet paired with Super Boost™ can help decrease the risk of having a downer sow, while also supporting milk production.
- 2) Crystal Pellets™: This product contains a concentrated, proprietary Aloe Vera source with natural ingredients that have been shown to have properties that help assist in decreasing inflammation, encourage stimulation of the immune system and support an increased absorption of vitamins and minerals in the gastro-intestinal tract. Crystal Creek® recommends feeding Crystal Pellets™ when sows are brought in for farrowing and to continue to feed for up to three weeks after farrowing. Feeding during this time period will help combat the extra effects of stress from farrowing and will also help support colostrum production and encourage feed intake. It is recommended to give Crystal Pellets™ orally at a rate of 1 oz. per 100 lb. of body weight. This rate can be doubled if sow is showing signs of illness or highly stressed.
- 3) Fresh-N-Easy™: Available in a capsule form, this calcium supplement is used to offer support during times of hypocalcemia. Sows can develop hypocalcemia, often called milk fever, similar to cattle, due to the demand of milk production at and after farrowing. Having a balanced ration is critical for prevention of this disease, but if it occurs, Fresh-N-Easy™ can be given at farrowing and then again 24 hours later. Sows often will become constipated when hypocalcemia occurs, so adding bran to the diet can help minimize those effects as well.

Combining a high-quality nutrition program with the proper supportive health products will help make farrowing easier and produce more successful litters. Crystal Creek® has a comprehensive line of products to help protect your bottom line. Call Crystal Creek® today to discuss how to get your pigs off to a good start.

*References available upon request.*