

H4 - Fast intervention against tail biting



If tail biting is observed

1. Move the pigs biting tails.
2. Move tail-bitten pigs to a hospital pen.
3. Treat sick pigs.
4. Inspect the pigs minimum twice a day.
5. Provide "first aid":
 - Something that can be chewed into pieces.
 - Paper bags, newspapers.
 - Straw/hay
 - Branches with cortex, Christmas trees.
 - Corncobs



Be aware of

- Heat stress.
- Large fluctuations in temperature during the day.
- Draught (upper picture).
- Poor air quality.
- Overstocking in all or some pens (lower picture).
- Lack of or dirty rooting and enrichment materials.
- Too few feeding points/changes in feed.
- Gastro-intestinal diseases among the pigs.
- Mixing of pigs.
- Risk of electrostatic

Additional comments - Tail biting

- 1. Move the pigs biting tails.** Take your time to locate the pig(s) by observing the pigs in a calm period - it can take up to 5 minutes. Often only one or few pigs in the pen bite tails; and often a small female pig is the one biting tails.

Move the animal(s). This solves the acute problem, but the cause is not yet identified.

- 2. Move to hospital pen / relief pen.** Immediately move sick pigs and pigs with tail bites to a hospital pen.

- 3. Treatment in due time.** Immediately start treatment and move pigs to a hospital facility when tail biting is observed. Consider whether pigs are treated sufficiently early in the disease course.

- 4. Minimum 2 daily inspections.** In periods with tail biting, minimum 2 daily inspections are required to be able to treat and/or cull pigs.

The best time for inspection is between 8 and 10 or 15 and 17 o'clock when the pigs are naturally active.

- 5. Remember the value of new enrichment materials.**

Try to have different effects ready, and think about the different requirements of the pigs (hard, soft, wet, dry). Rope, Christmas trees, corncobs, silage etc. will meet the requirements.

Christmas trees used as first aid materials may cause problems with emptying of slurry.

Dirty enrichment materials are not attractive and do not work according to the intent. Fasten the material to prevent it from being moved or becoming dirty.

