

Schauer Agrotronic GmbH



Pig Equipment News

Dear Friend

Welcome to your Schauer News of August 2011.

Upcoming trade shows
Grouphousing success in US

Upcoming Trade Shows

18.08. – 21.08. Agrokomplex Nitra - Slovakia
 20.08. – 25.08. Intern. LW, Agra Gornja Radgona – Slovenia
 25.08. – 30.08. Fachmesse Zeme Zivitelka Budweis - Czech Republic
 01.09. – 06.09. Karpfhamer Fest Karpfham – Germany
 01.09. – 04.09. Norla Rendsburg - Germany
 07.09. – 11.09. Int. Landwirtschaftsmesse Ried - Germany
 09.09. – 11.09. Landwirtschaftsmesse Bjelovar Gudovac - Croatia
 07.10. – 10.10. Golden Autumn Mockow – Russia
 08.10. – 13.10. Muswiese Rot am See - Germany
 10.10. – 14.10. AgroProdMasch Moskau – Russia
 15.10. – 23.10. 41. Oberschwabenschau Ravensburg - Germany
 19.10. – 22.10. MoldAgroTech Kischinev – Moldavia
 19.10. – 22.10. Koneagria Jyväskylä - Finland
 30.11. – 04.12. Austro Agrar Tulln Tulln - Austria

Farm report – Successful implementation of ESF on mid-sized US farms

Beside the big integrators in US, there are many mid-sized sow farms in Midwest like the Sensenigs and the Brubaker. Both are located in Memphis, Missouri. They each own and run 800 sow farrow-to-finish farms. Both farms have introduced Schauer Compident ESF system successfully.



The Sensenig Farm



The Brubaker Farm

Keith Sensenig, just 18 years old owns one of the 800 sow farms and has been managing it since the age of 16. He and his father Jay initially contacted Dr. Tom Parsons from University of Pennsylvania Veterinary School when they were still living in Pennsylvania. There the idea to use ESF to feed and manage group housed pregnant sows was born. The family relocated to Missouri and started to build. Shortly thereafter they were joined by their relative, Calvin Brubaker and now are running brand new breeding facilities for 3 and 5 years, respectively.

Reasonable improvement of born piglets during the sow lifetime with Compident ESF from Schauer.

The new sow barns at Sensenig and Brubaker are both similar in design and have been populated with gilts from Hermitage Genetics. Both farms will be supplied with replacement gilts from a common multiplication farm. As this venture is just starting up they have had minimize culling, having sows in production from 6 to 10 parities. Conveniently, the Schauer group housing systems supports such long herd life times. Sensenig reports that they average parity of the herd will come down as replacement gilts become more available.

Keith Sensenig about Compident ESF: "I like it, especially the user friendly Topo software and the sturdy construction of the feeder."

The centre piece of the sow facility is the Schauer Compident ESF system. It has been in production for more than 5 years. When asking Keith about his experiences he just said: " I like it ". More detailed questioning revealed that he is

excited about the user friendly software of Compident ESF as the new TOPO software allows for unparalleled control and monitoring of the entire sow herd. Keith is also very happy about the sturdy construction of the Compident ESF feeders.

The weekly group size in the herd is 35 sows. Three to five days after insemination, the sows are moved into the gestation pens. Three different dynamic groups of bred animals are found in the barn as the herd is divided between two pens with two feeders each for gilts and small sows and one larger pen with 6 feeders for the remaining higher parity sows. Each Compident ESF feeder handles 65 to 70 sows, and is equipped with a selection unit to automatically sort sows from the group at farrowing or for any other management reason. A clever approach explained by Keith Sensenig is to place a boar in the corridor between pens for the detection of animals returning to heat. These sows are rebred immediately while they are having nose-to-nose contact with the boar without having to be removed from the pen. The farrowing rate is more than 90% (even 93% at Brubaker farm). Both farms achieve about 25 weaned piglets per sow per year.

An integrated training concept is the key factor for the successful implementation of ESF systems.

One of the most important issues for successful implementation of an ESF system is to have an integrated training concept for new gilts entering the herd. The first step starts with the Compident Trainee – a simple mechanical feeder, where the gilts just learn to enter into a confined space through a door to find feed. No electronics are required. After the first observed oestrous cycle, the gilts are moved to a special training ESF unit where they learn to use the Compident station. Initially, animals successfully utilizing the feeder are sorted to another side of the pen. This isolates the animals that require additional training and typically represents about 10 or 20 % of the group. Gilts are bred on their second heat cycle and then moved to the gilt ESF pen for gestation. Taken together, the Sensenig farms have developed an effective training program that requires a minimum of labour.

The pen design is simple with a space allowance of 1,8 m² (20 sq ft). The floors are totally slatted. A four foot corridor divides two 18 feet deep pens and provides sorting space for when animals need to be removed from the pen. The Compident ESF feeders are evenly spaced along the corridor fence line such that there is enough room at the entrance and exit of the feeders to avoid stress situations for sows. At the back of the pen there is a concrete wall and perpendicular to this wall are 7 foot dividers spaced every 20 feet. This creates 'bed rooms' for the animals to lay and allows the sows to divide themselves into smaller groups, more or less separated from the others. It was impressive how calm the sows are when lying side by side to each other. Their experience shows that the larger the group size the less rigid is the social hierarchy and fighting and biting almost disappears.

Sow and health monitoring is done by a daily walkthrough the pen.

Sow management and health monitoring is done daily by walking through the pen. If any sow shows signals of illness, she can be immediately identified in the hand held computer and selected to be automatically sorted out of the group into the corridor. There the sows easily can be investigated and medically treated. Furthermore each sow's feed consumption is also recorded in the TOPO Computer. Animals failing to eat or missing an ear tag are automatically identified by computer and appear on an alarm list.

At Calvin Brubaker's farm there is an additional speciality in the farrowing rooms. He has employed a MIK plastic flooring system, which provides extraordinary animal friendly conditions for the piglets. The piglets' rapid growth and high health status underscore the quality of the decision to utilize the MIK system.

AP the exclusive distribution partner for Compident ESF in US takes care about local services.

AP (Automated Production Systems) is the exclusive distribution partner for Schauer Compident ESF system in the US and provides outstanding local service and support. For any questions related to the computer, a direct connection can be made from the technical service representative to the TOPO feeding computer. If necessary, Schauer can also provide online support from Austria.

All together the Sensenig and Brubaker families successfully have implemented the Compident ESF technology and remain satisfied customers of the Schauer Company.



TOPO software allows for unparalleled control and monitoring of the entire sow herd.

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