



Sow housing is one of the most controversial issues in the pork industry. As animal activist organizations like the Humane Society of the United States work to change production practices and ban the use of gestation stalls – alternative methods are emerging.

Dr. Tom Parsons, faculty member from the University of Pennsylvania says they divide them in to competitive and non-competitive feeding situations. “Competitive based feeding situations tend to be small pen based systems,” he says. “The feed is usually dropped on the floor in some configuration.”

[AUDIO: Dr. Tom Parsons, University of Penn \(4:17mp3\)](#)

Parsons tells Brownfield the non-competitive alternatives usually involve larger groups.

The two most commonly used systems are a self-catching or free-access stall which looks similar to a conventional gestation stall but give the sow the ability to enter and exit at will.

The other alternative, Parson says, is Electric Sow Feeding. “There animals are identified with a RFID tag (an electronic ID tag) where they go into the feeding station one at a time,” he says. “The computer then checks their feed allotment for the day and then they are fed a specific amount. Once they are finished eating they exit the feeding station and another sow can enter.”

He says there is a wide spectrum of producers and an assortment of technologies available. “The best thing for the producer is to learn as much as they can about the attributes of these different systems,” he says. “And then choose the system that makes the most sense to them.

Dr. Parsons made his comments at the Midwest Pork Conference held earlier this month in Danville, Ind.



Share this:

Email

Facebook

Twitter 2

Google +1

Filed Under: [Feature Programs](#), [Rural Issues](#) Tagged With: [gestation stalls](#), [Hogs/Pork](#), [Indiana Pork](#), [sow housing](#)

## Speak Your Mind

Name \*