

WHY IS SOW BODY CONDITION IMPORTANT?



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IMPROVED PRODUCTION FROM LEANER BODY CONDITION

Sow condition is often perceived as a preference of the sow farm manager. Some prefer lean sows while others prefer a larger sow. Does it really matter? If the goal is to increase feed intake at lactation, then the answer is yes. Productivity gains can often be made by establishing a leaner standard for body condition when gilts or sows enter farrowing. The backfat depth recommendation for the 241 line is 11-15MM when she is ready to farrow. At this condition, farm managers can increase feed intake at lactation but also save on feed budget during the gestation phase while still meeting the maintenance needs of the sow and the developing pigs.

THERE IS A POSITIVE CORRELATION BETWEEN A LEANER SOW AT FARROWING AND IMPROVED PRODUCTIVITY

Sows fed to meet, but not exceed, their maintenance energy requirements (3.5-4 lb/day) during the maintenance stage of gestation will have a higher ADFI during lactation and can produce the following benefits for a commercial system:

FEED SAVINGS

An estimate for gestational feed savings would equate to a total of 115 lbs per turn. A LSY of 2.4 would equate to \$27.60/sow/year.

The increased lactation feed intake of 1lb/day for 21 days would add \$7.50/sow of feed cost for a net savings of **\$20.10/sow/year**.

INCREASED WEAN WEIGHTS

Extra 0.5 lbs. of wean weight/pig at \$0.5/lb= **\$7.50/sow/year** at 30 psy

IMPROVED SUBSEQUENT LITTER SIZE

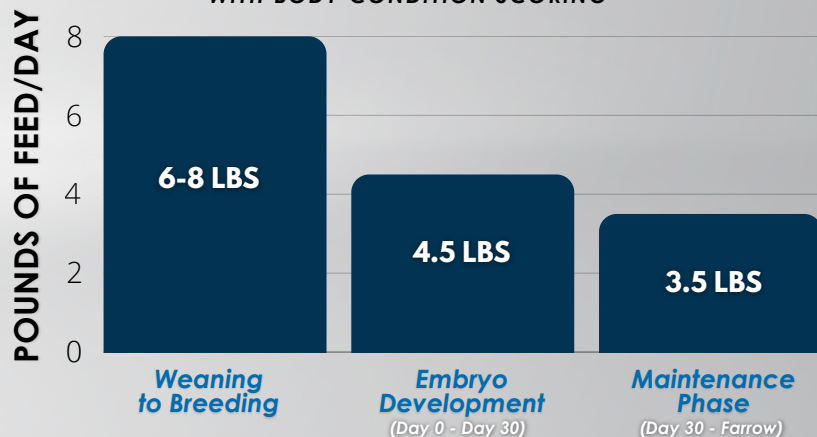
Extra 0.25 pigs/litter=0.6 pigs BA/year x PWM=0.5 extra PSY= **\$15/sow/year**

FEWER DAYS TO ESTRUS POST-WEANING

Average 1 day sooner, 1 non-productive day is \$2, so 2.4 litters per year = **\$4.80/sow/year**

DAILY FEED DROP RECOMMENDATIONS

FEED AMOUNTS SHOULD BE COORDINATED WITH BODY CONDITION SCORING



STAGE OF GESTATION

*Please discuss with your nutritionist/veterinarian before implementing recommendations

HOW TO VISUALLY BODY CONDITION SCORE

- When BCS scoring it is important to stand behind the female. She should have an hourglass shape from her shoulders to midsection/ribs to her hips.
- When viewing her topline from the back, it should taper off from her spine gently. Light pressure should be needed to feel the spine and hip bones.
- A protruding spine that requires no pressure to feel is too thin, a wide flat shelf of a top where it is hard to feel the spine or hip bones indicates she is too heavy.