

Grange, Ireland, 28 – 30 Nov. 2017

# Rearing Pigs with intact tails

## Assessing and addressing risks

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# Change of housing system

## *Status before reconstruction*

- slatted floor, forced ventilation, 0.75 m<sup>2</sup>/pig



# *Guideline for planning a new stable*

- genetically determined needs
- innate behaviours
  - open stable
  - structured pens



## ***Main characteristics of the open stable***

- natural ventilation / outside climate / no separated inside and outside compartments
- structured pens with different areas for sleeping, eating, defecating
- straw litter in the sleeping area
- floor feeding



## ***Structured pens: sleeping / resting***

- lowerable lid without a front curtain
  - microclimate area
  - thermal comfort
  - no draught
  - good air quality
- wood sides and wood cover
  - no humidity
- straw bedding
  - enrichment material
  - insulation when needed



## ***Structured pens: defecating***

- open side of the pen
- well defined
  - light
  - air movement
  - contact to neighbour pen
  - drinkers
    - other areas stay clean and dry!!!
- easy to clean
- limited wetted floor
  - low NH<sub>3</sub> emission







## ***Structured pens: eating***

- floor feeding
- meets innate behaviour
  - foraging and eating simultaneously
- takes time
  - pigs are kept busy with natural activity
- avoids boredom and frustration
- „artificial“ distraction hardly needed
- low competition level





## *General aspects*

- open sides
  - environmental influences
    - sun, rain, day, night, people, tractors, etc.
- easy supply of extra food
  - hay, silage, beans, etc.
  - extra enrichment material
  - chewing, foraging
- good overview / control
- calm and non aggressive breed (Berkshire-cross)



## ***Conclusion***

- concept of the new stable enables the animals to do what they are genetically determined to do (innate behaviour)
- result: relaxed („happy“) pigs
  - low stress level
  - almost no tail-biting or other abnormal behaviour
  - good general fitness
- happy pigs, happy people

