



## Pig Improver

### Early Pig Care in Detail: Hydration and Early Feed Intake Nourishing for Success



It's obvious that proper hydration and good early feed intake will put every weaned pig on the road to success.

In previous Pig Improvers, we have reviewed the importance of good early pig care in achieving optimal lifetime performance.

We have covered:

- ✓ Executing a proper placement plan
- ✓ Managing your barn temperature and comfort zones

The other important aspects of good early pig care are:

- ✓ Good hydration
- ✓ Proper early feed intake

Today, let's review how to best achieve both. How many answers will you get right in this final Early Pig Care quiz?

**1. True or False? Water consumption only matters in terms of reducing risk of scours.**

**False.** While risk of scours increases when young pigs cannot easily access water, it will also reduce feed intake. Water consumption is also important for good overall health. Remember, younger pigs have higher water:feed ratio needs than older animals.

**2. There should be \_\_\_ pigs per drinker (bowl or nipple drinkers).**

- a) 5-7
- b) 30-35
- c) 10-12
- d) 20-25

The answer is (c). PIC's recommendation is 10-12 pigs per drinker.

**3. True or False? A standard water flow should be about 500-1,000 ml/minute.**

**True.**

**4. True or False? You must always provide supplements in water or feeders.**

**False.** Some producers provide supplements in water to help improve hydration and provide key electrolytes during the first 48 hours. Some producers also provide supplements in top dressing through the feed during the first two or three days to promote feed intake. However, if pigs are healthy and achieving recommended water and feed intake then supplements are not generally needed.

**5. It can take up to \_\_\_ hours for 85% of pigs to find water.**

- a) 10
- b) 35
- c) 45
- d) 20

The answer is (b). It can take up to 35 hours for the large majority of a typical group of weaned pigs to find water after arrival.

**6. Correct or Incorrect? Swinging nipple or bowl drinkers must be placed at the proper angles and height relating to the smallest pig in the pen.**

The statement is correct. Placement must be suited to the smallest pig in the pen.

## Water Source Height (Based on smallest pig in pen)



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<b>Nipples- 90° angle</b>	<b>Shoulder level</b>
<b>Nipples- 60° angle</b>	2-3 inches above should level
<b>Bowls</b>	40% of shoulder level

**7. Mat training is an effective way to ensure proper early feed intake and identify poor competitors. How much feed should be provided per 40 pigs, 4 to 6 times a day for three to seven days post-weaning?**

- a) 0.1 lb.
- b) 5 lbs.
- c) 7.5 lbs.
- d) 1 lb.

The answer is (d).

**8. Mats should allow for at least \_\_\_\_ of area per pig.**

- a) 0.1 ft<sup>2</sup>
- b) 0.4 ft<sup>2</sup>
- c) 1.0 ft<sup>2</sup>

The answer is (b).

**9. True or False? Mat training encourages pen activity to increase feed intake and allows early identification of the poor competitors, but feeder trough training does not.**

**False.** Both feeding strategies, when executed properly, should increase feed intake and allow the poor competitors to be easily identified.

**10. Correct or incorrect? The basic principles of mat feed training and feeder trough training are the same.**

**Correct.** In both cases, activity is created 4 to 6 times a day during the first three to seven days after reception to promote good early feed intake.

**11. With gruel feeding (for the bottom 10-15% of pigs, and for sorting pens and sick pigs), you should mix \_\_\_\_ ounces of feed and 24 ounces of water for every 15 pigs, three times a day for two or three days.**

- a) 15 ounces

- b) 8 ounces
- c) 20 ounces
- d) 25 ounces

The correct answer is (b). Remember feeder space is crucial: all pigs need to be able to have feeder access at the same time. This means 3 inches of linear feeder space or one space per pig in pan feeders.

**12. True or False? Gruel feeding should be used during at least the first 14 days after placement.**

**False.** If gruel feeding is used for more than 3-4 days after placement, pigs are likely to reduce their feed intake because they will wait for the gruel mix. Remember gruel feed isn't as nutritious as normal feed because of the lower dry matter content.

Linear Feeders



Pan Feeders



REMEMBER

Early pig care SUCCESS involves five major areas of care:

**How Can We Ensure Success in the First 10 Days?**

5 points



Ensure your weaned pigs receive proper food and water, as well as all other aspects of early pig care by well-trained staff.

That way, the genetic potential of your PIC pigs is maximized as they stay on the road to optimal lifetime performance.

For more support on proper early pig care or any other topic needed to support your business achieving its goals, please reach out to your account manager.

Our future – and yours – has never looked so bright, as PIC continues to deliver on our promise to Never Stop Improving.