



Monitoring Lactation Feed Intake

Lactation feed intake charts can be an effective tool in lactation sow management. By using a lactation feed intake chart we can maintain a record of individual sow lactation feed intake, thereby helping to maximize sow intake. Maximizing intake helps to:

- Reduce body weight loss
- Increase milk yield
- Increase growth rate of piglets
- Decrease piglet mortality
- Improve subsequent reproductive performance

Feed intake charts can be used to help analyze feed intake patterns and catch problems before they become detrimental to production. The main purpose of the charts is to monitor daily feed intake, this information may also be used to help determine the correct nutrient density of the lactation ration for a particular barn. These numbers can also help the manager track seasonal changes in intake identifying the need for changes to feeding management or formulation for summer versus winter. Specific intake targets for each day of lactation should be incorporated into the feed intake chart to help farrowing personnel.

Below is an example of lactation feed intake chart. The target intake levels should be set in conjunction with the nutritionist.

Instructions:

- a. Post the Lactation Feed Intake Chart near the sow's feeder.
- b. Begin using the chart the first feeding after farrowing.
- c. Mark an "x" at the point that corresponds to the number of pounds of feed given at each feeding
- d. Target feed intake lines are a guide only. Feed intake will vary from sow to sow. Try to "read" appetite of the sow by taking into consideration leftover feed, level of activity, body condition, number of piglets, environment in room, and past history.

Original sow feeding chart courtesy of PIC Canada (see below)

VIDO SWINE TECH GROUP

Linking knowledge to practical solutions

