

This Farrowing Crate's Also a Growing Pen

"It gives you the best of both worlds," says Martin Draude, inventor of the new Converta-Pen.

Initially, it serves as a farrowing crate. Then, a week or so after farrowing, one side of the crate can be swung out to give the sow more room to move around, yet provide a corner creep for the pigs. At weaning, the opposite side of the crate swings out to create an open 5 ft. by 9 ft. pen (also available 5 by 8).

"A key advantage of the Converta-Pen is its flexibility. If you should decide to get out of farrowing at some future date, for example, you could still use the crates as open pens for growing and finishing feeder pigs."

Draude points out. "Or, if you're farrowing and run into a bind on space, you can open up one Converta-Pen and run two sows and their litters together."

Sells for \$400 per unit, including the sow feeder.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tri-State Ag Associates, 2372 Chelsea Ave., Freeport, Ill. 61032 (ph 815 233-9980).

In Canada, Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dyna-Fab Industries, Box 730, Watson, Sask., S0K 4V0 (ph 306 287-3983).

"AUTOMATIC STALL FEEDING WITHOUT STALLS"

New Labor-Free Way To Feed Dry Sows

A new labor-free sow feeding system developed in Europe and now being sold in the U.S. and Canada features "automatic stall feeding without stalls".

Called Porcode, it allows gestating sows to be loose housed, yet still be programmed for individual feeding. The amount fed per sow per day can be doled out once, twice or three times daily. However, a once a day regime has been most popular with producers who have used Porcode, says Craig Anderson, of Cattle Code America, marketers of the new system.

Each sow wears a collar with a batteryless responder attached. When she enters the feeding station and is identified via the responder as being eligible for feed, the rear gate locks shut so no other sow can enter the station. The computer then delivers a signal to the feed auger to dispense — 1/10 lb. at a time in about 15 second intervals — the sow's preset ration. Two different ingredients, such as ground oats and concentrate, can be programmed for specific amounts for each sow. After a preset amount of time when she's cleaned up her ration — usually in 3 to 5 min., depending on how much she's fed — the gate unlocks and the next sow waiting "in the wings" moves in to take her turn.

If the sow at the feeder backs a couple inches away from the feeder before she's cleaned up her allotted ration, the dosing auger will stop and the gates will unlock. This means that only a small 1/10 lb. dose of feed will be left in the feeder for the next sow — regardless of whether the "eating" sow consumed none or only half of her allotted ration.

Automatic, twice-a-day daily printouts pinpoint which sows consume less than 90% of their

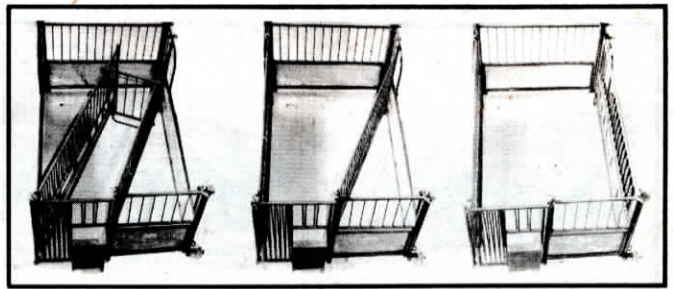


Porcode has one entry gate for "eating" sow and one for sow waiting her turn.

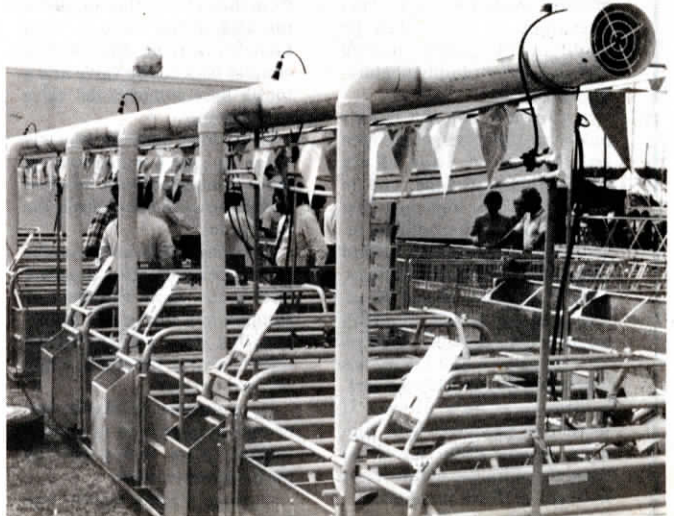
programmed ration, allowing the manager to identify off-feed sows the very first day the problem occurs.

One feed station and large feed computer will handle right at 50 sows. The combination sells for right at \$6,000, or about \$120 per sow. However, the computer is large enough for three feeding stations and upwards of 150 total sows. Additional feeding stations are \$2,500 each. "On a per sow basis for 100 or more sows, the Porcode system with computer is cost competitive with individual stalls or tethers. Plus, you get advantages conventional stalls don't offer", Anderson points out. "Here, sows are free to move and thus have fewer foot and bone problems.. Feeding is automatic and labor free, and there's very little building cost in adapting the Porcode to existing facilities."

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Cattle Code America 9515 Seymour Avenue, Schiller Park, Ill. 60176 (ph 312 671-6444).



Crate serves initially as farrowing crate (left). A week after farrowing, one side of crate can be removed (center). At weaning, opposite side of crate swings out to crate 5 by 9 ft. pen (right).



Fan at end blows air into PVC system and down drop pipes.

ON-THE-SPOT VENTILATION

New Sow Cooler Blows Moisture Into Crates

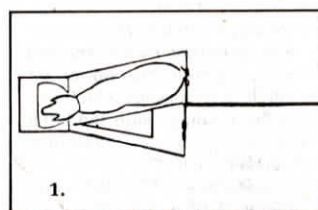
A new "comfort zone" sow cooler keeps sows cool by blowing moist air directly into individual farrowing crates.

The system consists of one large 8 or 10-in. dia. length of PVC and a drop pipe for each crate. A fan is fitted to one end of the larger pipe and a cap at the other. Air is blown into the pipe and down the drop pipes. Water nozzles are fitted to the top of the big pipe near each down pipe and are set to mist water into the pipe whenever the fan runs. The system can also be set up without water, if desired. Air "directors" at the bottoms of the down pipes can be swiveled to direct

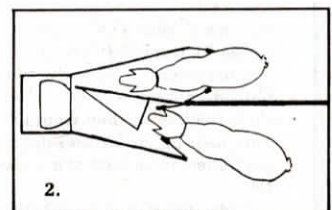
moisture laden air to the spot desired for the greatest respiration relief.

Each system is custom-built to fit the length and width of a particular farrowing operation. Water nozzles are available in 1/2 gal. and 2 gal. per hour rates. The 8-in. dia. cooler pipe can be installed in lengths up to 60 ft. and the 10-in. pipe in lengths up to 100 ft. The system sells for \$50 to \$60 per crate, depending on the installation.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, AAA Associates, 1445 South Third Street, Niles, Mich. 49120 (ph 616 684-4073).



1.



2.

1. Sow enters feed station through one set of gates, pushing central division to one side. 2. After she's finished, the gates unlock and new sow enters from opposite side, encouraging first sow to leave.