Open Housing
Our Perspective

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The Progressive Group

~45,000 sows under our "umbrella" – farrow to iso-wean
- Export market
- Nursery and finishing spaces
- Valley Lee Berkshire

Provide services including production advice, business support and marketing.

- Gestal - 8 farms
  - 3 Prop-12 farms
- Maximus – 2 farms
- Shoulder Stalls – 2 farms
- 6 more farms to convert

The Inevitable Transition

Conversions – Things to Consider

- Existing Structures
  - Assess Infrastructure
- ESF or Shoulder Stalls?
- Current Footprint or Expand?
- Herd Size
- Ventilation
- Flooring
- Pen Layouts
- Dunging Patterns
- Water Supply and Placement

Types of Conversions

New Build

Current Footprint (moved animals off site and converted)

Expansion/Conversion

Prop 12

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New Build

Turned misfortune into opportunity

- Fully slatted
- Designed from scratch
- Did keep a portion of population off-site
  - "If we did it again, would have done complete depop"

New Build

- Maximus system
  - Farrowing and open housing
- Geothermal heating
- Underground plenum for cooling
  - Water build up an issue
- Training sows
- Training staff
- Integrated data
- Some mechanical issues

Current Footprint

Animals Stay On-site
Shoulder Stall Conversion

Current Footprint

Animals Moved Off-Site and Converted

- finisher barn training barn
- Bred and preg-checked in main farm
- Moved sows between 30 and 60 days pregnant to off-site conversion
- 3 X 3000 sow continuous flow farms done this way

Current Footprint

- Gutted and renovated breeding rooms in a 40-day time frame to bring back sows prior to farrowing (100 days gestation).
  - 4 batches of sows (4 rooms)
  - 644 sows (4 trucks)
  - All trained in finisher site
  - Brought back to main farm to farrow

1	2
3	4

Current Footprint (moved animals off-site and converted)

- Positives
  - Inventory stable
  - Production continues
  - Wide open rooms for ease of conversion/biosecurity

Current Footprint (moved animals off-site and converted)

- Negatives
  - Timeline is very important (no room for error or delays)
  - Some pregnancy losses due to transport and stress
  - Biosecurity risk with transport
  - Training 644 sows all at the same time
  - Cost of finisher barn conversion and transport

Expansion/Conversion

- 2 X 600-sow Farrow to Finish Expansion/Conversions
- 3000-sow to a 5000-sow Farrow to Iso-wean Expansion
- 1700-sow (multi-site production to a 1-site production) Expansion

600 Sow Farrow to Finish to 2500 sow Farrow to Iso-Wean (2 farms)

- Added farrowing space
- Converted Grower and Finisher Rooms
- Gradual Conversion
- Increased Sow Inventory Over Time
  - Continuous Flow to 4-week batch
  - 4-week batch converted to 2-week batch

New Farrowing

- Positives
  - Able to increase inventory for better contract negotiations
  - Great flooring
  - Herd stability
  - No shipping
  - Gradual training

- Negatives:
  - Over-ventilated for reduced number of animals
  - Construction delays and production delays can cause time constraints with emptying grow/finish rooms/converting rooms and loading pregnant sows into renovated spaces

(GIVE YOURSELF A BUFFER)

Expansion/Conversion

Expanded current footprint

- Fully slatted open housing/freedom stall breeding
- Additional farrowing space

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- Positives:
  - Ventilation designed for open housing
  - Clean and easy to manage
  - Allows for timeline delays/issues
  - Small groups of animals being trained at one time
  - Proper slats/slat width for sow health and welfare

Expansion/Conversion

Expansion/Conversion

Negatives

- Converting partial rooms of breeding crates tricky for biosecurity
- Slat width usually not correct for walking on continuously/sow fighting
- Disruptive for production flow and logistics
- Fully slatted flooring harder to back-feed in the event of health challenges

Expansion/Conversion

- Converted some breeding crates to open housing to minimize requirement of extra square footage (cost)
  - Some solid sections (hallways and solid areas of removed breeding crates)
  - Ventilation not designed for proper dunging patterns leads to messy pens and extra scraping
- Easier for back-feeding

Electronic Sow Feeding Versus Shoulder Stalls

Electronic Feeding Stations

When it works, its great

Uniform Body Conditions

Targeted feeding

Customizable feed curves

The system will feed her no matter what as long as…

Technology

Station goes down/stocking density

Communication disruptions

"bugs"

Tags

People

Stockmanship combined with understanding the technology a must

It's not a set it and forget it system

Shoulder Stalls

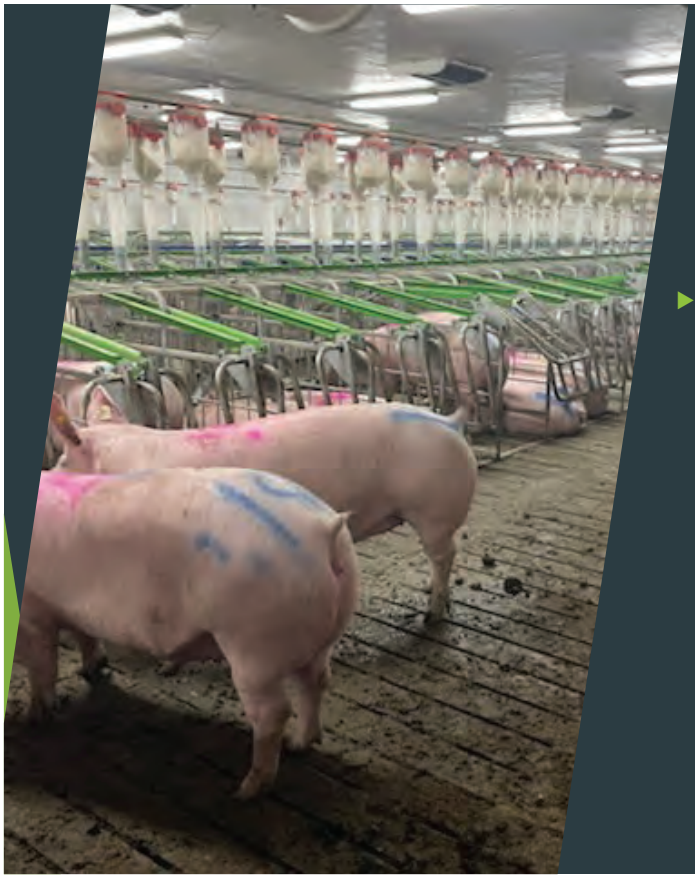
- Cut off the back 2/3 of current gestation crate and create a pen containing 11 – 24 sows
- Leave slatted "back area" as a loose pen for the sows
- Anchored the front part of the crates down
  - Solid flooring versus slats

Shoulder Stalls

- Positives
  - Cost and time benefits
  - Troughs stay in place
  - Current feed system stays in place
  - No training (animals and people)
  - No tags required
  - Ability to back-feed pre-farrow

Shoulder Stalls

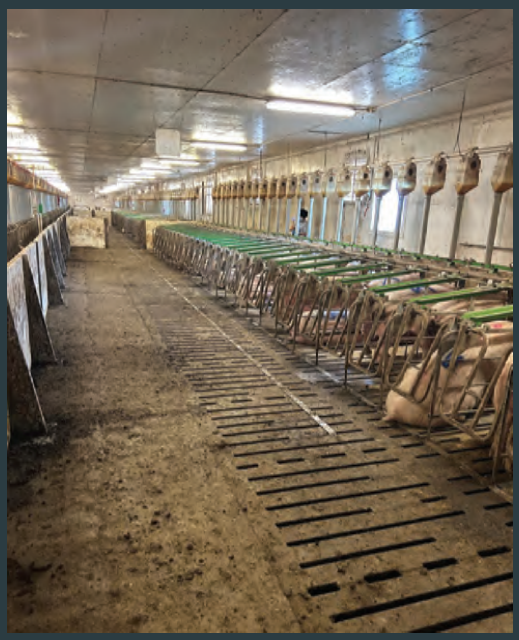
- Negatives
  - Body condition variability
  - Bully sows
  - Square footage/space allowance
  - Anchoring
    - Solid versus slatted flooring
  - Dead stock removal
  - Maintenance



Proposition 12 – 3 sites

- 2 sites – built brand new freedom stall area
  - Proper slats
  - Brand new crates
  - Works very well

Proposition 12 – 3 sites



- 1 site converted old breeding into freedom stalls
  - Removed row of stalls to create “pen”
  - Slats not ideal, solid flooring not ideal
    - Issues with lameness due to fighting
  - Works ok

Water Line Placement

- Pit charging is essential to keep down gases
- Water line placement is important for adding water to pits as well as keeping solid areas dry

Converting Can Be Scary!!

- Be informed
- Do your homework
- Plan
- Give yourself time
- Try to have all construction materials on site


Thank You!
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