

JERSEY CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE WELFARE OF

PIGS

THE CODE

The Code of recommendations for the welfare of pigs is intended to encourage all those responsible for looking after these animals to adopt the highest standards of husbandry. It takes account of five basic needs, known as the "Five Freedoms".

The Five Freedoms are:

1. FREEDOM FROM HUNGER AND THIRST

- by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour;

2. FREEDOM FROM DISCOMFORT

- by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area;

3. FREEDOM FROM PAIN, INJURY OR DISEASE

- by prevention or by rapid diagnosis and treatment;

4. FREEDOM TO EXPRESS NORMAL BEHAVIOUR

- by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animals' own kind;

5. FREEDOM FROM FEAR AND DISTRESS

- by ensuring conditions and treatment to avoid mental suffering.

The Code identifies good stockmanship as a key factor in farm animal welfare and this code is an essential tool for every stockkeeper. All persons involved with pigs should read it carefully and to bear its recommendations in mind at all times.

Stockmanship is a key factor because no matter how otherwise acceptable a system may be in principle, without competent, diligent stockmanship the welfare of the pigs cannot be adequately catered for. The recommendations which follow are designed to help stockkeepers, particularly those who are young or inexperienced, to attain the required standards.

INTRODUCTION

1. The welfare of pigs can be safeguarded and their behavioural needs met under a variety of management systems. The system, and the number and stocking rate of pigs kept at any one time, depends on the suitability of the conditions and the skills of the stockkeeper.

2. Consideration should be given to the question of animal welfare before installing more complex or elaborate equipment than has previously been used. In general the greater the restriction imposed on the animal and the greater the complexity of the system or of the degree of control which is exercised over temperature, air flow or food supply, the less the animal is able to use its instinctive behaviour to modify the effect of unfavourable conditions and the greater the chance of suffering if mechanical or electrical failures occur. Thus systems involving a high degree of

control over the environment should only be installed where conscientious staff skilled in both animal husbandry and the use of the equipment will always be available.

3. Although very large herds can be managed successfully, in general the larger the size of the unit the greater the degree of skill and conscientiousness needed to safeguard welfare. The size of a unit should not be increased nor should a large unit be set up unless it is reasonably certain that the stockkeeper in charge will be able to safeguard the welfare of the individual animal.

4. All stockkeepers should know the normal behaviour of pigs. Badly managed and unhealthy pigs will not do well, and it is essential that the stockkeeper should watch for signs of distress, disease or aggression by other members of the group towards an animal. It is important for management purposes that stockkeepers should have ample time for the checking of stock and inspection of equipment.

5. The good stockkeeper will know the signs which indicate good health in pigs. He should be able to recognise impending trouble in its earliest stages and may often be able to identify the cause and put matters right immediately. If the cause is not obvious or if the keeper's immediate action is not effective, veterinary or other expert advice should be obtained as soon as possible.

6. Signs of illness in pigs include separation from the group, poor appetite, vomiting, constipation, diarrhoea, discoloration of the skin, shivering, sneezing, rapid or irregular breathing, persistent coughing or panting, swollen navel, udder or joints, lameness (inspection of the feet and legs is particularly important) and lack of co-ordination.

HOUSING

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL PIGS

7. Advice on welfare aspects should be sought when new buildings are to be constructed or existing buildings modified. Some intensive systems depend on specialised buildings and complex mechanical and electrical equipment, which require a high level of technical and managerial skills to ensure that husbandry and welfare requirements are met. Weighing, handling and loading facilities should be incorporated.

8. Internal surfaces of housing and pens should be of materials which can, and should, either be cleansed and disinfected or be easily replaceable when necessary.

9. Internal surfaces and fittings of buildings and pens accessible to pigs should not have sharp edges or projections likely to cause injury.

10. Good floor design and adequate maintenance are of paramount importance. The lying area should always be kept dry and pen floors, particularly the dunging area, should be drained effectively. The use of bare concrete, slatted or perforated floors, particularly when badly maintained, can cause severe problems, such as lameness or damage to the feet. Veterinary advice should be sought if any of these abnormalities occur.

11. Given the opportunity, the pig eats fibrous material, also roots about and makes a nest and uses a separate dunging area. Bedding, and especially straw, contributes towards the needs of the pig for thermal and physical comfort and satisfies some of its behavioural requirements. Buildings in use may be difficult to adapt and the use of

bedding can cause problems of drainage and hygiene. Nonetheless, systems in which straw or similar material is provided in the lying area are strongly recommended.

12. Paints and wood preservatives which may be toxic to pigs should not be used on surfaces accessible to them. Particular care is necessary to guard against the risk of poisoning from old paintwork in any part of the building or when second-hand building materials are used.

13. In case a 999 call has to be made notices should be prominently displayed in all livestock buildings stating where the nearest telephone is located. Each telephone should have fixed by it a notice giving instructions on the best route to the farm and a description of the location of the telephone.

14. There is usually some warning of interruptions in the supply of feedingstuffs and, so far as possible, arrangements should be made to lay in adequate stocks of food or water to offset the worst effects of such a contingency.

Ventilation and temperature

15. Excessive heat loss or gain should be prevented either by the structural insulation of the external walls, roof and floor of the lying area or by the provision of adequate bedding. Effective ventilation of all buildings and the avoidance of draughts are essential. There should be an alarm system independent of the mains electricity supply to warn the stockkeeper of failure of any automated equipment. Expert advice may be necessary to ensure correct temperature, air flow and humidity for the type of stock housed.

16. Pigs which have very limited ability to sweat are acutely susceptible to heat stress and an adequate airflow should be maintained or alternative cooling methods used to ensure that pigs in buildings do not become overheated in hot weather.

17. Extremes of air temperature or of humidity (as in the 'sweat box'), particularly those liable to cause heat stress, should not be deliberately maintained.

18. The temperature ranges given below all incorporate the minimum temperature appropriate over a range of circumstances. Feed intake, air speed, floor type, group size and live weight markedly affect temperature requirements and it is essential that these factors are taken into account in determining the minimum temperature appropriate in each case. Perforated / slatted floors and low feed levels increase temperature requirements and straw bedding, high feed levels and high body weights decrease requirements. For most circumstances an appropriate temperature can be found within the range given below:

Category of pig	Temperature	
	temperature	
	(°C)	(°F)
Sows	15-20	59-68
Sucking pigs in creeps	25-30	77-84
Early weaned pigs	27-32	81-90
Weaned pigs (6 weeks and over)	21-24	70-75

Finishing pigs (porkers)	15-21	59-70
Finishing pigs (baconers)	13-18	55-64
Finishing pigs (heavy hogs)	10-15	50-59

19. In intensive housing systems it is important to avoid wide or abrupt fluctuations in temperature within any 24 hour period. When pigs are moved to new accommodation the possibility of cold stress occurring as a result of sudden changes in the thermal environment should be lessened by the provision of bedding such as straw, or by preheating the building.

20. When removing slurry from under slats, special care is essential to avoid fouling the air with dangerous gases which may be fatal to man and animals, and it is important that the building should be thoroughly ventilated during this operation.

Lighting

21. Pigs should not be kept permanently in darkness. Throughout the hours of daylight the level of indoor lighting, natural or artificial, should be such that all housed pigs can be seen clearly. Adequate lighting for satisfactory inspection should be available at any time.

Mechanical equipment and services

22. All equipment and services including feed hoppers, drinkers, ventilating fans, heating and lighting units, fire extinguishers and alarm systems should be cleaned and inspected regularly and kept in good working order. All automated equipment should incorporate a fail-safe device maintained in working order and, where the pigs' welfare is dependant upon such equipment, an alarm system to warn the stockkeeper of failure. Alternatively ways of feeding and of maintaining a satisfactory environment should be ready for use in the event of breakdown.

23. All electrical installations at mains voltage should be inaccessible to pigs and properly earthed.

MANAGEMENT

Feed and Water

24. When pigs are fed by any system which does not allow prolonged and unrestricted access to feed, all pigs should be able to feed at the same time. Care should be taken, when introducing pigs to unaccustomed housing, to ensure that they find the feed and water points.

25. Whatever feeding system is adopted, all pigs should receive a daily diet which is nutritionally adequate to maintain health.

26. It is important for pigs to have sufficient fresh clean water, or other wholesome liquid, for their daily needs. It is an advantage to design the water supply so that medication can be added if required. Where water is not freely available, for example by means of bowls or drinkers, at least 2 ½ litres of water should be added to each kilogram of meal. The following is a guide to minimum daily water requirements for sows:

- Non-pregnant 5 litres
- In pregnancy 5 - 8 litres
- In lactation 15 - 30 litres

27. Where drinking points are used for growing pigs, particularly those on dry feed, it is recommended, as a general guide, that a drinking point should be available for each ten pigs.

28. Feed and water should not be completely withdrawn from sows which are being dried off.

Husbandry

29. Pigs should be closely inspected at least daily, preferably when feeding, for signs of injury, illness or distress.

30. Pigs should be kept in stable groups with as little mixing as possible. They should be handled quietly and firmly, with care to avoid unnecessary pain or distress.

31. Sick or injured pigs should be treated without delay. Accommodation, including a deep-strawed box, should be available to enable them to be isolated if necessary.

32. Where it is necessary to mark pigs for permanent identification, the ear may be tattooed, tagged, notched or punched, or the body may be tattooed. Slap marking is an acceptable method where identification is required immediately prior to transporting the pigs to slaughter. These operations should be carried out by competent operators, exercising care to avoid unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress to the pigs at the time of marking or subsequently.

33. Castration is a mutilation and should be avoided wherever possible. If it cannot be avoided, it must be carried out in accordance with the law by a veterinary surgeon or by a competent trained operator where a layman is permitted to undertake the operation (see notes on legislation below).

34. Tail-docking has been adopted primarily to reduce the risk of tail biting. The objective should be to avoid the need for this mutilation, but, where it is recommended by a veterinary surgeon it must be carried out in accordance with the law by a competent trained operator, cleaning and disinfecting equipment between each pig.

35. Tooth clipping or grinding is used to minimise the risk of damage to the sow's teats and to the litter-mates. Where it is necessary, this mutilation should only be performed by a veterinary surgeon or by a competent trained operator (see note on legislation below).

36. Sows and gilts should be managed so as to be in suitable bodily condition at the time of farrowing. Stockkeepers should be experienced and competent in the techniques of farrowing and should pay particular attention to hygiene, especially at assisted farrowing. Mechanical farrowing aids should only be used by a competent person who has received proper instruction in their use.

Farrowing pigs and sucking piglets

37. Farrowing quarters should have some means of protecting the piglets. Where farrowing rails or similar devices are used the escape area should be at least 300 mm wide.

38. Sows should be settled into clean and comfortable farrowing quarters well before the piglets are due to be born the recommended minimum period is 3 days prior to parturition. Straw or other suitable bedding is recommended to provide for the sow's comfort.

39. Where farrowing crates are used they must be long enough to allow sows to lie in a fully out stretched comfortable position. This will depend on the weight of the sow. the recommended crate length to allow sows to adopt a comfortable posture is:-

Sow weight (Kg)	Length of Crate (mm)
150	1552
200	1706
250	1837
300	1951
350>	2300

Any crossbars at the top of the crate must be a minimum of 150mm above the back of a sow when standing in the normal position.

40. Farrowing quarters should have some form of protection for piglets. A temperature suitable for piglets should be maintained by the provision of a well designed creep area plus supplementary heating.

41. Problems associated with weaning are related to the age at weaning, and the earlier the weaning age the better must be the system of management and nutrition if welfare problems are to be avoided. Piglets should not be weaned from the sow at less than four weeks although orphaned, sick and surplus piglets requiring special attention are obvious exceptions.

Growing Pigs

42. The total floor space should be adequate for sleeping, feeding and exercising. Minimum sleeping areas, excluding exercise and dunging areas, should be of sufficient size to accommodate all the pigs lying on their sides. The following is a guide:

Lying area per pig by live weight, to which should be added areas for exercise and dunging

Live weight Kg	Lying Area Metre square	Total Area Metre square
10	0.10	0.15
20	0.15	0.22
40	0.25	0.30
60	0.35	0.55

80	0.45	0.67
100	0.50	0.75

43. Cage rearing systems commonly cause injury to the feet and legs of piglets and may give rise to behavioural abnormalities. Although perforated floors can, in some cases, reduce the incidence of disease in the post-weaning period, systems which provide a bedded lying area or warm insulated solid floor are strongly recommended.

Dry sows and gilts

44. Where sows and gilts are kept in groups, aggression can present a severe problem. Much depends on the temperament of individual animals; but the stockkeeper should ensure that persistent bullying leading to severe injury or deprivation of food does not take place. Separate penning may be required when persistent bullying takes place. Facilities in which animals can be fed individually and thereafter released are strongly recommended.

45. Pigs must not be tethered or kept in stalls with the exception of sows during the farrowing period. Systems, such as kennels, straw-yards or yard-and-cubicles in which animals' behavioural and exercise needs can be more fully met are strongly recommended,

46. Sows should be given a minimum total floor area of 2.5 m² for first and second parity animals with the area rising to a minimum of 3.5 m² for mature adult sows. The lying area of the pen should be at least equal to the square of the length of the pig, this roughly equates to a minimum of 1.5 m² for each adult sow. A suitable quantity of straw or other bedding material should be provided unless the floor on which the sows are lying is insulated and the building temperature can be maintained at the correct level.

47. In order to avoid undue excitement, which can lead to injury, breeding sows and gilts should be fed simultaneously wherever possible.

Boars

48. As a guide, individual accommodation for an adult boar should have a floor of not less than 7.5 m² if used for living purposes only. If used for both living and service purposes the floor area should be not less than 10 m² with the shortest side not less than 2.5 metre. In either case the pen divisions should not be less than 1.5 metre high. Boar pens should not be sited or constructed in such a way as to isolate the boar from sight or sound of other stock or of farm activity.

49. In a single-purpose pen, bedding should be provided in the lying area. In a dual purpose pen, an adequate part of the floor area should be bedded, and the whole floor area should be kept dry, or sufficient bedding provided to give an adequate grip during service. The use of a service crate may be advantageous.

50. Where injury to other animals is likely to occur, boars' tusks should be trimmed by a veterinary surgeon.

EMERGENCIES/FIRE PREVENTION

51. Farmers should make advance plans for dealing with emergencies such as fire, flood or disruption of supplies, and should ensure that all staff are familiar with the appropriate emergency action.

52. Fire precautions should be a major priority for every stockkeeper. Expert advice should be sought from the States of Jersey Fire Brigade.

53. In the design of new buildings, or the alteration of existing buildings, there should be provision, wherever possible, for livestock to be released and evacuated in case of emergency. Materials used in construction should have sufficient fire resistance to enable emergency procedures to be followed. It should, however, be borne in mind that it will not always be possible to make full use of escape routes, since experience shows that pigs in the immediate vicinity of a fire may either refuse to move or, if moved, try to return to their accustomed quarters.

54. All electrical, gas and oil services should be planned and fitted so that if there is overheating, or flame is generated, the risk of flame spreading to equipment, bedding or the fabric of the building is minimal. It is advisable to site power supply controls outside buildings. Consideration should be given to installing fire alarm systems which can be heard and acted upon at any time of the day or night.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PIGS KEPT OUTDOORS

55. Where pigs are kept outside there should be sufficient floor space within the huts provided to allow all animals in a group to lie down together at any one time. Adequate bedding materials to enable the pigs to maintain body temperature should be provided.

56. Huts should be secured to the ground by means of stakes or pins and their entrance should be position away from the direction of the main prevailing winds.

57. Adequate shelter in winter and shade in summer should be available to all pigs. All pigs can suffer from heat stress, the provision of a wallow or sprinkler in hot weather can be beneficial and also help to prevent white pigs suffering from sunburn.

58. Strange boars should not be mixed with other boars as this can lead to fighting and unnecessary injury. Groups of boars reared together can be left as a group as the pecking order has been established.

59. Individual huts should be provided for sows, when they are near to giving birth. It is preferable that an individual paddock is provided for a gilt giving birth,

60. A sow should have bedding available on entering her farrowing paddock to enable her to exhibit her natural nest building behaviour. A temperature suitable for piglets should be maintained in the nest by the provision of adequate bedding materials, preferably straw. Excessive bedding in the first 3 to 4 days after the piglets are born should be avoided as newly born piglets can get tangled up resulting in overlaying by the sow. Fresh bedding should thereafter be provided 2 to 3 times a week.

61. Suitable restrainer boards should be used at the entrance of the farrowing hut to prevent very young piglets from straying and becoming lost and chilled.

62. Stocking rates for land used for pig breeding throughout the year should not exceed 2.25 sows and boars per vergee. A stocking rate of 7 growing pigs per vergee is recommended for land used to rear young pigs from weaning up to slaughter at between 80 and 100 Kg. Increased stocking rates can be used on land that contains pigs for less than one year.

64. Electric fencing should be erected according to manufacture's instructions and be efficiently maintained to stop pigs from straying. Pigs should be trained with reference to the effects of electric fencing for 2 to 3 days before they are turned out into field paddocks.

HANDLING AND TRANSPORTATION

General requirements for the Handling and transportation of pigs

65. Pigs should not be handled or transported using excessive noise or force or in a way which causes or is likely to cause injury or suffering to that animal.

66. No pig should be transported unless it is fit for the intended journey and suitable provision has been made for its care during the journey and on its arrival at the place of destination.

67. A pig shall not be considered fit to travel if it is ill, injured, infirm, fatigued or is likely to give birth on the journey.

68. The means of transport, or the receptacle in which the pig is placed, shall be constructed, maintained and operated so as to avoid injury and unnecessary suffering and to ensure the safety of the animals during transport, loading and unloading. It should also be escape proof.

69. Any floor on which the pigs stand or walk during loading, unloading or transport shall be sufficiently strong to bear their weight and constructed, maintained and operated to prevent slipping and injury.

70. Means of transport and other receptacle used to contain pigs should be free from any sharp edges and projections likely to cause injury or unnecessary suffering.

71. Means of transport or receptacle used to contain pigs shall have sufficient lighting to enable the proper care and inspection of any animal being carried.

72. Means of transport and receptacles shall be constructed, maintained and operated so as to allow appropriate cleaning and disinfection.

73. The accommodation for the carriage of pigs shall be such that the animals are provided with adequate space to stand and lie down in their natural position. In order to comply with these minimum requirements, the loading density for pigs of around 100 Kg should not exceed 235 Kg per square metre. The breed, size and physical condition of the pigs may mean that the minimum surface area given above has to be increased. In very warm weather conditions an increase in the above surface area of approximately 20% will be required because of the pigs susceptibility to heat stress.

74. Means of transport and receptacles used to contain pigs must provide adequate ventilation and sufficient air space above the animal to allow air to circulate properly.

75. Partitions shall be used, if they are necessary, to provide adequate support for animals and/or to prevent animals being thrown about during transport. Partitions

should be of rigid construction strong enough to withstand the weight of any animal thrown against it and positioned so that they do not interfere with ventilation.

76. Every ramp which is carried or forms part of a vehicle used to transport pigs shall be constructed, maintained and operated to prevent slipping. Ramp angles should not exceed 20°. Any steps or gaps should be designed to avoid injury and suffering to the animal being moved. The sides of any ramp should be protected to prevent animals from falling or escaping.

77. No excessive force should be used to load, unload or transport pigs. The use of any stick, goad or other instrument or thing to hit or prod pigs is not recommended. The use of barriers, erected prior to pigs being moved, with hand boards and flat slapsticks to aid movement is the preferred method of loading pigs. Slap sticks must not have sharp projections or pointed ends

78. The following animals should not be carried in an individual vehicle, pen or receptacle with other animals: a breeding boar over the age of 6 months (including boars with other boars, unless they have been reared in a compatible group) or a sow accompanied by her piglets

79. Pigs should be segregated from other species, unless separation from their companion animal would cause either of the animals distress. A carcass of a dead animal should not be transported with live pigs. Animals that die in transit must be removed as soon as possible.

80. Pigs should be segregated whilst in transit with due regard to their differences in age, size and temperament, with partitions used if necessary, to avoid injury and unnecessary suffering that could be caused to one or all of the animals.

81. Whilst in transit all animals should be in the charge of a person who has been suitably trained to provide the necessary care and attention to safeguard their welfare.

LEGISLATION

82. The following legislation is of relevance:

- Animal Welfare (Jersey) Law 2004
- Animal Health (Jersey) Law 2016
- Veterinary Surgeons (Jersey) Law 1999
- Community Provisions (Welfare of Animals during Transport) (Jersey) Regulations 2013

83. Notes:

The following operations may be performed without anaesthetic by a veterinary surgeon or other suitable trained person.

- The castration of a pig using a scalpel up to the animal reaching one week of age.
- The tail docking of piglets in the first 1 to 3 days of life.
- The tooth clipping of piglets in the first 1 to 3 days of life.

12-02 AWC (19/06/07) (legislation amended 19/10/17)