

REDUCE FEED WASTE

There are steps you can take to reduce the risk of damaging feed on-farm. If 5% of feed is damaged and lost to dust and waste it can cost up to £5000/year on a 500 sow unit; this could increase to £20000 plus if finishers are included, equating to an extra cost of 1 p/kg deadweight.

Use this guide to walk your system and reduce the risk of waste. Working with your feed supplier and delivery driver can help a great deal.

Delivery Points: Bin

Blow Pipe: Make sure your blow pipe is easily accessible for the driver and that it is a sensible length. The more pipe to blow down the more the feed will rattle around and potentially become damaged.

It is better if the driver only uses one flexible feed delivery outlet pipe to aid this.



Inlet Pipe: Check bin intake pipes regularly and make sure that they are well secured to the bin, free from any external damage/holes, as these will manifest over time and could eventually lead to major problems. Worn pipes are a major problem and it is common to see silage tape or rubber inner tube protecting holes in these inlet pipes; proper repair will reduce waste.



Curved pipes are best as the more right angles that feed is knocked against the more the feed is damaged.



Rivets and bolts: Make sure the fittings are smooth and not sticking out excessively. Obtruding objects such as bolts will cause damage.

Bins are designed to draw from the centre. Although it may seem like a good idea to keep some feed back to act as cushioning for the incoming delivery, it can mean feed remains in the bin for over three months (past the use by date for most feeds) so should be kept to a minimum; this is especially important to bear in mind with medicated feeds.

Communication

Keep communicating with your feed contact and delivery driver, especially if you make changes to bin positions or if you have cleaned or repaired your bins. **Biosecurity** and **health and safety** are in everyone's best interest.

Make it a pleasant experience for the lorry driver visiting your unit, eg hard standing and clear access to the site. Ensure signs/labels are clear, coding each bin to state how much and what product the bin holds. Signs are available from some feed companies.

Dust?

Occasionally extra dust can be seen in bins when using in-feed medication. You must sweep bins prior to accepting a new load of unmediated feed. Medicated feed must be kept in separate, clearly labelled and identified, bulk storage or bags.



Bin Cleaning

The poultry industry is highly advanced when it comes to bin hygiene and the pig industry should take a lead from this. At the very least the bins should be emptied and a mould inhibitor added in the spring and after summer every year.

Ideally the bins should be brushed out where possible and gold standard is to wash and dry the bin prior to adding a mould inhibitor.

All feed companies have sophisticated quality control systems in place to clean and disinfect lorries inside and out. Farms need to match this with better bin hygiene.

Aluminium bins are more prone to “sweating” so these should be monitored more closely for mould growth.



Delivery speeds

It is important to understand how long it should take for certain loads to be blown off certain lorries. The rule of thumb is three minutes per tonne. Therefore an 18 tonne load should take about an hour.

However this depends on the pressure and some lorries will run on different revs to produce the same speed. Large sow rolls may need the auger on low throughout the delivery but pencil/small creep feed should not need the auger until the final part of the delivery.

Too much pressure and using the auger unnecessarily can damage feed so take time to talk to your delivery driver and find out the standard times for your bins. Discuss the loads and the time of dispatch with your driver so you can understand the normal process.

The Assured British Pig standards state feed must be stored in conditions which do not allow or cause:

- Cross contamination
- Loss of feed product identity
- Ingress of water
- Foreign matter contamination
- Access by pests or other animals

Under the feed hygiene regulations producers must be registered with their local authority as a user of feed.

