

# Animal Welfare (Pigs) Code of Welfare 2010, Minimum Standards



*A code of welfare issued under the Animal Welfare Act 1999, 3 December 2010*

## Minimum Standard No. 1: Stockmanship

Pigs must be cared for by a sufficient number of personnel, who collectively possess the ability, knowledge and competence necessary to maintain the health and welfare of the animals in accordance with this code.

## Minimum Standard No. 2: Feed

- All pigs must receive adequate quantities of food and nutrients each day to enable each pig to:
  - maintain good health;
  - meet its physiological demands; and
  - avoid metabolic and nutritional disorders.
- Feed must be provided in such a way as to prevent undue competition and injury.
- When the body condition of any pig falls to 2 or below (on a scale of 1–5) immediate remedial action must be taken to resolve the issue.

## Minimum Standard No. 3: Feed – New-born Piglets

- All piglets must receive colostrum or an appropriate substitute as soon as possible after birth, and within 24 hours.
- If piglets are not being fed adequately by the sow, they must be fostered, hand reared or killed humanely.
- Fostering must be carefully managed to ensure that the nurse sow accepts and is able to feed all of the piglets.



## Minimum Standard No. 4: Water

- An adequate daily supply of water that is palatable, not harmful to health and at a temperature that does not inhibit drinking must be accessible to all pigs, at all times.

## Minimum Standard No. 5: Shelter for Pigs Outdoors

- Pigs must be provided with dry and draught-free but adequately ventilated shelter.
- Pigs must be provided with the means to minimise the effects of adverse weather, including the effects of heat and cold stress.



## Minimum Standard No. 6: Housing and Equipment

- Housing systems must be designed, constructed and maintained in a manner that provides suitable (comfortable) temperatures, fresh air, and hygienic conditions.
- All group housed pigs must be able to stand, move about and lie down without undue interference with each other in a space that provides for separation of dunging, lying and eating areas.
- The minimum lying space allowance for growing pigs must be in accordance with the following formula: Area (m<sup>2</sup>) per pig = 0.03 x liveweight 0.67 (kg).
- Inspection of all pigs must be possible.
- The risk of injury, disease or stress for pigs must be minimised by appropriate design, construction and maintenance of housing and equipment.
- Pigs must be provided with natural or artificial light of appropriate intensity for a minimum of nine hours each day.
- All mechanical equipment used in pig production must be maintained in good working order.
- Alternative means of temperature regulation, ventilation, feeding and watering of stock must be available in case of power or computer failure or mechanical breakdown.
- Systems must be designed to minimise the impact of flooding in the event that water pipes or fittings burst.
- Appropriate fire prevention measures and a fire emergency plan that includes feed milling areas adjacent to pig housing, must be in place.

## Minimum Standard No. 7: Temperature

- Newborn piglets must be housed at temperatures that will assist them to reach and maintain normal body temperatures.
- Heating devices (e.g. infrared lamps, heat pads) must be securely fixed and protected from interference by the sow and piglets.
- Ventilation control or other measures must ensure housed pigs do not become overheated or cold stressed.

## Minimum Standard No. 8: Air Quality

- Adequate ventilation must be provided in order to prevent the build-up of dust, and gases such as ammonia, to levels that are harmful to pigs.
- Immediate and appropriate action must be taken to reduce ammonia levels if they exceed 25 ppm at pig level.

## Minimum Standard No. 9: Behaviour

- Pigs must be managed in a manner that provides them sufficient opportunities to express and satisfy their normal behaviours. These include, but are not limited to, feeding, drinking, sleeping, dunging and urination, vocalisation, thermoregulation, and social contact.

## Minimum Standard No. 10: Managing Interactions between Sows and Piglets

- Accommodation for farrowing and lactating sows must be of suitable design and sufficient size to allow the sow to lie down at full length and without leg restriction.
- Support, such as barriers or sloping walls to lean against, must be provided for the sow as she lies down, and she must be able to rise and stand comfortably without undue risk of injury to her litter.
- When standing in a farrowing crate the sow must not touch both sides of the crate simultaneously, and her back must not touch any bars along the top.
- The farrowing system must provide an area to which the piglets can retreat when the sow moves.
- If sows are to be confined in farrowing crates before farrowing, it must be for no more than five days.
- If sows are to be confined in farrowing crates for lactation, it must be for no more than four weeks after farrowing.
- Notwithstanding (f), nurse sows may be retained in a farrowing crate for a further week for fostering purposes. This is conditional on no more than 5% of sows in any herd at any one time being retained as nurse sows.
- Sows, in any farrowing system constructed after 3 December 2010, must be provided with material that can be manipulated until farrowing.



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## Minimum Standard No. 11: Managing Dry Sows

- (a) Sows may only be confined in mating stalls for service for no longer than one week.
- (b) Where sows and mated gilts are group housed, they must be managed to minimise the effects of aggression.
- (c) Where sows and mated gilts are housed in dry sow stalls, they must be able to stand in their natural stance without contact with any side of the stall and be able to lie comfortably on their sides without disturbing neighbouring sows.
- (d) Sows in stalls must have a dry, smooth, non-slip sleeping area.
- (e) Between 3 December 2012 and 3 December 2015 mated sows and gilts must not be confined in dry sow stalls for more than four weeks after mating.
- (f) After 3 December 2015 mated sows and gilts must not be confined in dry sow stalls after mating. If individually confined in a pen, sows must have sufficient space so that they can stand up, turn around without touching the walls, and lie comfortably in a natural position, and be provided with separate dunging, lying and eating areas.
- (g) Individual pigs that are not coping well must be provided with alternative management.
- (h) Pigs must not be restrained by tethering.

## Minimum Standard No. 12: Managing Boars

- (a) Boars must be provided with sufficient space so that they can stand up, turn around and lie comfortably in a natural position, and that provides for separation of dunging, lying and eating areas.
- (b) Boars must not be tethered or kept in stalls.



## Minimum Standard No. 13: Handling

- (a) Pigs must be handled at all times in such a way as to minimise the risk of pain, injury or distress to the animals.
- (b) Pigs, including piglets, must not be picked up or suspended by one front leg, ears or tail.
- (c) Handling facilities must be available to deal with all pigs and piglets undergoing routine procedures and for animals that are sick and requiring treatment.
- (d) Stress of handling must be minimised by appropriate design of the facilities, especially entrances and raceways.

## Minimum Standard No. 14: Moving Pigs

- (a) Only the minimal force required must be used when moving pigs.
- (b) Pigs must not be prodded in sensitive areas, including the eyes, nose, anus, vulva or testicles.
- (c) Electric prodders and whipping must not be used.

## Minimum Standard No. 15: Weaning

Weaning must be managed in a way that avoids undue stress on the sow and piglets and minimises negative impacts on their health and welfare.

## Minimum Standard No. 16: Elective Husbandry Procedures

- (a) Elective husbandry procedures must only be carried out where they are justifiable to prevent undesirable consequences that could subsequently result in animal suffering.
- (b) Tail docking of pigs over seven days of age or surgical castration at any age must be carried out by a veterinarian.
- (c) Clipping or grinding of needle teeth must be carried out before five days of age.
- (d) If nose rings, clips or wires are used they must be placed through the cartilage at the top of the snout or in the tissue separating the nostrils.

## Minimum Standard No. 17: Pre-Transport Selection

- (a) Pigs must be inspected prior to transport to ensure all are fit to be transported.
- (b) All pigs must be able to stand and bear weight on all four limbs and be fit enough to withstand the journey without suffering unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress.
- (c) Sows likely to give birth during the journey must not be selected for transport.

## Minimum Standard No. 18: Management of Health and Injury

- (a) The owner or person in charge must check pigs at least once each day for signs of ill-health or injury and must undertake timely preventative or remedial action as appropriate.
- (b) Those responsible for the care of pigs must be competent at recognising the signs of good health, ill health, or injury and must consult a veterinarian as appropriate.
- (c) Medication must only be used in accordance with registration conditions, and the manufacturer's instructions or professional advice.
- (d) Piglets must receive sufficient iron to prevent anaemia.
- (e) Contaminated bedding, faeces and urine must not accumulate to the extent that they pose a threat to the health and welfare of pigs.



## Minimum Standard No. 19: Emergency Humane Destruction

- (a) When pigs have to be killed it must be done by persons competent in the handling and killing of pigs and death must be confirmed by inspection of the animal.
- (b) When a pig needs to be killed it must be handled, restrained and killed in such a manner as to minimise unnecessary pain and distress prior to death.
- (c) Pigs must be rapidly rendered insensible and remain in that state, until death.
- (d) Animals rendered insensible by a blow or shot to the brain must be bled out immediately to ensure death occurs before recovery from stunning.