

Batch Farrowing Place The cull sow issue

Setting batch breeding targets is only part of the breeding problem, achieving the batch breeding target can be a real challenge. The cull sow can be an important component of achieving the batch breeding target.

What options are there in the timing of culling?

On many farms sows are culled at the point of weaning, perhaps the decision is made even during lactation. But what guarantee does this decision give you? Very little!

There are three major times when culling should be considered:

- At the end of the breeding week
- At the first heat check
- At the pregnancy check

What is the practical consequences of these culling policies on your farm?

Time of culling:	What can I guarantee?		
	Number of sows bred	Number of sows pregnant	Number of sows which farrow
Lactation or weaning	No	No	No
End of breeding week	Yes	No	No
24 days post-weaning	Yes	No/maybe	No
28 days pregnancy check	Yes	Yes	No
<i>At farrowing</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes

What is the financial consequences of these culling policies?

The yellow boxes can be customised to fit your farm's opportunities

Batch time	1	week					
Farrowing places per batch	20						
Food eaten per day by a sow	2.5	kg					
Cost of sow feed	200	£ per tonne					
Cost of sow feed per day	0.50	£ per day					
Total costs per day	0.68	£ per day	65	(assumed % feed costs)			
AI costs per sow	10	£ 2 inseminations at	5	£ per insemination			
					In term of feed costs with AI cost included		
					Sow feed reduction/day equivalent		
Costs of keeping	1	additional sow per	20	sows farrowed			
Cull sow lactation/weaning	\$ 4.73	Sow has to be detained	7	days to allow for udder regression	24	kg	2.49
Cull end of breeding week	\$ 20.13	Sow has to be detained	15	days to allow for medicine withdrawal	101	kg	2.46
Heat check (24 days)	\$ 24.85	Assuming 5 days wean to service			124	kg	2.45
Pregnancy check (28 days)	\$ 27.55	Assuming 5 days wean to service			138	kg	2.44
Point of farrowing	\$ 86	Assuming 5 days wean to service			431	kg	2.31
Current sow culling time	\$ 30.38	for an average retention	45	days per culled sow			
Income							
Pigs weaned per farrowing place	10						
Post-weaning finishing target	95	%					
Dead weight	80	kg					
Cost of production	1.24	£ per kg					
One sow failure to farrow	330	£ increase in costs					
Farrow per batch	20	sows					
Ideal cost of production	18848	£ per batch if minimum production					
New cost of production	18235	£ per batch for each empty farrowing place					
New cost of production	1.26	£ kg with one empty farrowing place					