

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Electronic Sow Feeding (ESF) with the TEAM System allows you to individually feed and manage sows in group housing. Adopting a successful ESF system aides in the total reproductive management of sows and gilts in group pens. Decades of research show ESF can exceed the performance of traditional stall systems, and as consumers continue to demand alternatives to gestation stalls, ESF has become the best alternative when group housing is needed and individual care is desired.

### **1 HOW MANY SOWS CAN BE FED WITH ONE TEAM FEEDING WORKSTATION?**

Based on our extensive research with electronic sow feeding since the 1980s, we have discovered that 60-65 parity segregated animals optimize TEAM feeding stations. Disadvantages were discovered when stocking more than 65 animals per feed station. For example, finding animals in groups larger than 65 and pig flow without mixing or sorting for larger groups are more difficult. Parity segregated animals allows for better target feeding and lessens neck fighting and vulva biting.

Additionally, the average eating time for 65 animals suggests that this is the optimum group size. Measuring actual total time of feeding station use for any 24-hour period may suggest that open time exists on the feed station and that larger groups can be fed. This conclusion, however, ignores periods during which animals have no desire to eat and the time required for entry and exit from the feed station. Sows and gilts prefer to eat at certain times of the day. If there are more than 65 animals using a feeding station, some animals will be forced to eat during periods of rest.

### **2 HOW LONG DOES EACH ANIMAL HAVE TO EAT HER DAILY RATION WITH TEAM?**

24 hours per day x 60 minutes per hour = 1,440 minutes. If 50 sows are stocked on a TEAM ESF station, each has 28.8 minutes per day to eat. If there are 60 sows, that equates to 24 minutes per day. At 70 sows, each sow has 20.5 minutes to eat. Some sows eat slowly while others eat quickly. The system handles all types of eating behavior.

### **3 DO ANIMALS TYPICALLY EAT THEIR ENTIRE DAILY RATION IN ONE VISIT TO THE STATION?**

Many times, sows and gilts do not eat their full allotment on the first pass through the station. However, if she does not eat her full allotment on the first pass, she can finish it later in the 24-hour period.

### **4 HOW DO ESF OPERATORS ENSURE ALL ANIMALS HAVE EATEN EVERY DAY?**

TEAM feeding stations dispense a small amount of water into the trough with each feed dump. This quickens eating time and encourages faster clean up. Additionally, daily reports generated in the TEAM software application ensure all animals have passed through the station and consumed their daily allotment

of feed. Any animals who have not passed through the feeding station are "flagged" so farm personnel can find and check on the animal.

### **5 HOW DO ESF OPERATORS TRAIN GILTS TO USE ESF WORKSTATIONS?**

Training gilts is easy with TEAM. Start gilts on a feeding workstation early at 22-24 weeks of age until they are to be moved to breeding stalls. Always allow ample time for training to allow gilts to walk through the station and become comfortable with their surroundings. Removeable gates should be used to funnel gilts into the station. Lighting is also important for training and using ESF. Although TEAM workstations are equipped with interior lights, the entire barn should always be well lit, with lights above each station to minimize dark areas. Well lit barns are key for peak reproductive performance.

Osborne Technical Service assists in the installation and commissioning of complete TEAM systems and provides important training to farm personnel, with a special focus on training animals.

### **6 WHAT KIND OF DATA CAN I CAPTURE WITH THE TEAM SOFTWARE APPLICATION?**

With proper system management, reports and information can be generated on sows that include: feed consumption, gestation length (in days), number of services, wean-to-mating, lactation length and much more. Request the TEAM System Catalog for additional information on the TEAM Software application.

### **7 DO I NEED A SEPARATE SOFTWARE PROGRAM BESIDES TEAM?**

The TEAM Software application can manage complete sow records. However, if you are already using a software program such as PigCHAMP, PIGKNOWS, MetaFarms, or Herdsman, information captured with TEAM can be exported as a .csv file.

### **8 WHAT KIND OF TECHNICAL SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE FOR TEAM USERS?**

Osborne Technical Service is always just a phone call or e-mail away when you are a TEAM customer. Technical Service can also service you remotely with web based software that is simple to use. Ask about our Planned Service Maintenance Program for TEAM customers. Exclusive benefits like spare parts discounts, reduced rates for on-site visits, and more are included upon signing up.

# 9

## WHAT DOES A COMPLETE TEAM ESF SYSTEM LOOK LIKE?

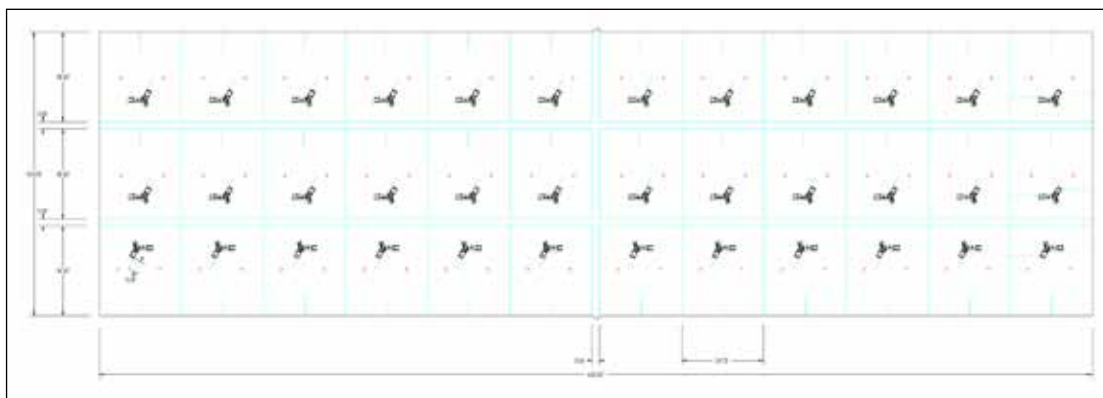
The versatility of many equally acceptable barn layout configurations may be one of the greatest benefits of feeding sows with TEAM. Such versatility permits the low cost conversion of existing gestation or finishing barns to ESF, rather than investing in expensive conventional stalled barns. TEAM works well on fully slatted or partially slatted floors, and the feeding workstations can be placed in many different locations throughout the pen. By taking into account space allocation, pen shape, floor type, feed delivery, ventilation, animal flow, facility cost, lighting, and more, an Osborne Design Specialist assists each customer on proper design so each piece of equipment operates at peak performance. Additional key factors to consider with barn layout include:

**Creating “zones”** - Station placement creates zones inside the pen based on sow behavior. Penning should minimize sows from circling through the system multiple times a day, yet not obstruct animal flow into or out of the stations, or create excessive walking distances. Feeding and watering zones are common in the front or center of the pen, while loafing zones should be along the back wall of the pen.

**Static or dynamic groups** - TEAM works with both static or dynamic groups. The benefits of either setup can be utilized with TEAM. An Osborne Design Specialist can assist in layouts for either static or dynamic groups.

**Ample lighting** - Adequate lighting is a factor not only in training sows and gilts, but in reproductive performance. Not only will animals be more comfortable in well lit barns, but personnel caring for the animals will too.

### SMALL PEN LAYOUT



### LARGE PEN LAYOUT

