



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Weight Watcher™ Growth Management System

The **Osborne Weight Watcher™ System** is much more than just an auto-sort scale. Weight Watcher is a growth management system for finishing pigs in large groups and is your complete tool for feeding pigs based upon their actual weights, which produces more uniform loads for your packer. The system will help you match your packer's matrix, cutting market sort loss, and market more uniform pounds of pork.

◆ HOW IS THE WEIGHT WATCHER SYSTEM DIFFERENT THAN A FOOD COURT SYSTEM?

A food court system has several distinct disadvantages that make it different than the Weight Watcher System:

Intimidator pigs:

Because the food court provides both food and water in a very compact area, dominant pigs in the group have no incentive to leave and can easily control access to the feeders. This almost ensures a wider spread of weights. *With Weight Watcher, feeders are distributed more widely so dominant pigs cannot control feed access.*

Training:

An automatic market scale used in the food court system requires highly accurate weights since market decisions are based on only one pass through the scale. Moving across such a scale with multiple moving gates requires training. Training occurs because feed is the incentive. This means that feed restriction is necessary, often in the final weeks before the market date. *However, with Weight Watcher, the Survey Scale is always present and for several weeks, pigs move freely through it. By the time weighing begins, pigs are comfortable with the scale and by market time, no special training is required so pigs are always on full feed.*

Facilities Utilization:

Automatic market scales and the food court system both combine to increase facilities utilization costs because increasing the number of "tail-enders" is a likely outcome for the system. *The goal of the Weight Watcher system is to minimize the distribution of weights in the group and to arrange the feeding program so that "tail-enders" are actively eliminated.*

◆ HOW MANY ANIMALS CAN BE STOCKED ON WEIGHT WATCHER SYSTEM?

A maximum of 500 finishing animals per Survey Scale is recommended. Pigs are on the scale for an average of 5 seconds and pass through it many times a day, so overstocking the system with more animals than recommended can limit the movement of animals back and forth from feed to water through the Survey Scale.

◆ HOW LONG IS THE SURVEY SCALE IN USE DURING A TURN?

The scale will remain active until market time, at which point the scale is set to "Market Mode" and pigs are sorted for market.

◆ WHEN CAN PIGS START WITH THE WEIGHT WATCHER SYSTEM? CAN IT BE USED FOR WEAN-TO-FINISH?

Yes, the system can be used for Wean-to-Finish, but it is important that all pens and equipment be open until pigs reach 50 lbs. (23 kg). In Finishing barns, at the beginning of the turn, pens and



equipment should also remain open for a few days so the animals are allowed to explore. This will also ensure that all animals are eating and drinking, and are able to learn where feed and water are located before the system is set to grow or maintain pig weights. Contact your Osborne Sales Representative for specific procedures for animal training and system startup.

◆ CAN I USE THE WEIGHT WATCHER SYSTEM TO SORT GILTS?

Survey Scales can be equipped to utilize RFID technology. An antenna inside the Survey Scale records each animal's passage through the Survey Scale. With Osborne's Daily Weigh II software package, gilts can be easily tracked and eventually selected based on their growth rate.

◆ HOW DO I ADDRESS ANIMAL CARE IN A LARGE 500-HEAD PEN?

Although the Weight Watcher system requires a specific design of split feeding and watering zones, options like sorting panels or penning can be added in the feeding areas when pig care for large groups is a concern. Osborne's experienced design team can customize each system layout to help address concerns for animal care.

◆ IS THERE A WAY TO VISUALLY IDENTIFY ANIMALS?

A spray marker kit is available for Survey Scales which can be used to visually identify animals. For example, all "lightweights," that do not meet the median weight as determined in the DailyWeigh software can be marked.

◆ WHAT HAPPENS IF THE SYSTEM LOSES POWER?

It is always recommended that each building have a reliable back-up power source with a transfer switch in the case of power failures. Additionally, Osborne's patented, pneumatically operated By-Pass Gate automatically opens if the system loses power, ensuring animals have free access to feed and water.

◆ HOW DOES A WEIGHT WATCHER SYSTEM LOOK?

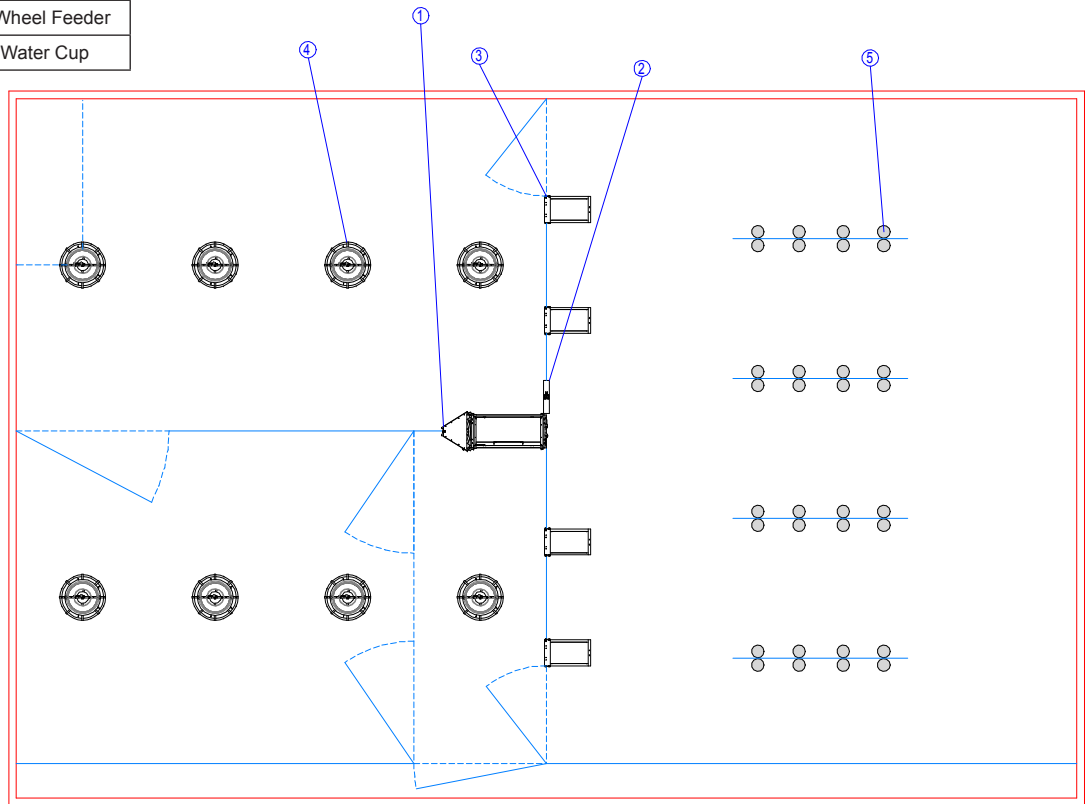
Penning is arranged to partition a room into two zones: a watering zone (about 50% of the room) and a feeding pen (about 50% of the room). This penning contains one-way gates opening into the watering zone, which ensures pigs naturally pass through the Survey Scale to get back into the feeding zone.

Penning also divides the feeding pen into two areas: an area for accelerating the growth of “lightweights” by feeding a higher lysine/protein feed, and an area to maintain the performance of “heavyweight” animals. Ad-libitum dry feeders, like Osborne Big Wheel® Feeders, are arranged for maximum access in each of these areas. At least two bulk bins supply the feeders, one for each side of the two feeding areas, so that each side can receive a feed that matches the need of the group. Also, because lightweights and heavyweights are split, larger animals cannot prevent light or timid animals from access to feed.

At market time, removable gates can be closed off to create a third pen in the feeding area: the market pen. Those animals meeting the determined weight criteria are automatically sorted into a pen for easy passage to the truck. The central goal of the system is to feed animals to reach market quicker and at the exact weight the packer demands.

1	Osborne Survey Scale™
2	By-Pass Gate
3	One-Way Gate
4	RF2 Big Wheel Feeder
5	Finishing Water Cup

Example Weight Watcher System Layout



ARE THERE ANY REQUIREMENTS FOR FEEDERS IN THE “FEEDING ZONES?”

Although any dry, ad-lib feeders can be used, Osborne recommends the round Big Wheel® Feeders for use in each of the “feeding zones”. Big Wheel Feeders provide 360°, unobstructed access to feed without crowding animals into close contact with one another. To grow pigs quickly, it is important to provide maximum feed trough access, which is easily accomplished with the round design of Big Wheel Feeders. Request the Big Wheel Feeder Specification Sheet from Osborne for more information on feeding hogs with a Big Wheel.