



Large group auto-sort systems for grow-finish pigs have proven to be effective but challenging. Over the past decade thousands of units have been installed and conversely hundreds have been decommissioned. When you bring up the subject you get a 'love it' or 'hate it' response, very few sit on the fence with this technology.

Research continues in this area as we work with producers to improve our understanding of the people and the pigs that can make or break a system. In the attached article **Behaviour of Pigs in Large Group Auto-Sort** we discuss our most recent research on pig behaviour in auto-sort systems. The challenge is that these systems do not mesh well with the pig's normal eating behaviour – moving to fewer, longer meals rather than many shorter meals in a small pen situation. One practical management tool developed at Prairie Swine Centre was to introduce new pigs to the pen by loading them into the food court. Let these new pigs find their way out of the food court rather than introducing them into the large sleeping area and hoping they find their way into the food court.

Two other articles on this subject that assist in managing large group auto sort systems can be found at www.prairieswine.ca:

Handling Stress During Marketing of Pigs from Large Groups
PDF

Large-Group Housing: A Survey of Canadian Pork Producers
PDF

Click on the links to download the articles.

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