

Successful On-Farm Trial Checklist



2010

Objective

- Is there a clear question to be answered (objective)?
- Is the experiment designed to answer the question?
- With different outcomes what is the plan-of-action?
- Is the technology being tested applicable to the farm?

Timing

- Is the season appropriate for the outcome to be applicable?
- Do you have a calendar listing the dates that important tasks will be performed?
- Do you avoid major holidays, maternity leave, family births, or other planned events that may disrupt the normal management of the farm or leave labour too short to properly conduct the experiment?



Labour

- Is there sufficient farm labour available to perform extra duties during the planned time of the experiment?
- Have you clearly outlined the extra duties and have talked through the requirements with each person involved?
- Pigs and pens will be checked daily for feed and water availability and for signs of illness. Feed and water outages, treatments will be put in the notes of the experiment.

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Treatment Preparation

- Go to where the treatments will be prepared and be sure that they understand what is to be done and when, and have the proper paperwork (ex. Diet formulation) and ingredients to prepare the treatments.
- Confirm that treatments have been correctly made and delivered to the correct bins on the correct farm.
- Be sure that there is sufficient storage on farm for treatments either in bags or in bulk and that bins are emptied before feed delivery.

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Animals

- Are enough pigs of similar age, weight, and background (ex. parity distribution, creep or no creep, etc) available to be on each treatment at the beginning of the trial?
- Will the supply of pigs be representative of normal production (ex. weaned at normal age, from normal parity distribution, not during PRRS season, etc)?

Equipment

- Are scales available and checked for accuracy and of the correct precision? Are check weights available?
- Are feeders set similarly?
- Are treatments and pens clearly marked to minimize mistakes?
- Is the correct feed ordered (and delivered)?
- Prepare data collection sheets with spaces for all important information (ex. pen, treatment, date, weight, feed weight in, feeder weight, etc).
- Are scales of the correct precision available and checked for accuracy?
- Is each treatment represented in each area of the barn (i.e. not all of one treatment in a draughty corner while all pens on another treatment are near the heater)?



During the Trial

- Talk to the people conducting the trial to ensure that the protocol is being followed and that no unexpected things (ex. water outages, disease outbreak) have happened that will affect the outcome of the trial.

After the Trial

- Check the data for accuracy.
- Talk to the people that conducted the trial again to be sure that the protocol was followed and to see if unexpected things might have influenced the outcome of the trial.

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