

# National Pig Herd Performance Report 2015

*Pig Development Department, Teagasc, Moorepark, Fermoy, Co. Cork.*



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## Introduction

This report is the detailed analysis of the performance of herds that participated in the Teagasc e-Profit Monitoring (ePM) recording system in 2015.

The data available and included in this analysis is from a total of 129 herds representing over 96,000 sows or 65% of the national commercial sow herd. The average size of the herds included is 753 sows and ranged from less than 100 sows to over 2500 sows.

The performance parameters in this report are the weighted (*by herd size*) average of the participating herds to take account of the large range in size of the participating herds.

Herds participating in the ePM recording system and engaging with the advisory support of the staff of the Teagasc Pig Development Department continue to demonstrate, year on year, improvements in technical performance.

The report also includes some analysis of production costs in a number of the participating herds. However, an increase in participation in this aspect of the system may well provide a more accurate picture of actual costs across the sector. There are indications that those herds that routinely record the full costs of production are the herds with the highest levels of technical efficiency. This would suggest that these herds have lower costs of production than herds which do not routinely check their costs of production.

The Teagasc Pig Development Department welcome more herds to participate in benchmarking using the ePM. Any herd that wishes to participate should contact any of the personnel listed under Knowledge Transfer on the inside front cover of this booklet.



## Technical Performance 2015

**Table 1: Sow Productivity 2015**

Number of Herds	129
Average Herd Size	753
Average Maiden Gilts %	12.9
Litters per Sow per Year	2.27
Average Weaning Age Days	29
Empty Days per Litter	15
Number Born Alive per Litter	12.86
Number Born dead per litter	0.85
Piglet Mortality %	10.6
Weaner Mortality %	2.68
Finisher Mortality %	2.36
Number of pigs produced per sow per year	24.8
Sow culling rate per annum %	48.5
Sow mortality per annum %	4.8
Feed per sow per year tonnes	1.31

### Commentary

The Number of Pigs Born Alive per Litter rose again this year. The drop to 2.27 Litters per Sow per Year resulted in a decrease in the number of Pigs Produced per Sow per Year from 25.3 to 24.8 compared to 2014. Despite this the output of pig meat per sow per year increased from 2052 to 2058kg because the slaughter weight increased.



**Table 2: Growing Pig Performance 2015**

Number of Herds	108
Average Weaning Weight (kg)	7.0
Average Live Weight at Sale (kg)	108.7
Average Dead Weight at Sale (kg)	83.0
Kill Out %	76.4
Daily Feed Intake (g)	1689
Average Daily Gain (g)	694
Feed Conversion	2.43

#### *Commentary*

The average dead weight in recorded herds increased by 1.9 kg per pig compared to 2014. This is in line with the trend over more than a decade whereby average slaughter weights have increased by, on average, almost 1 kg per year. There was an increase in growth rates from weaning to sale (670 to 694g/day), and there was an improvement of 0.06 in the Feed Conversion from weaning to sale compared to 2014.

The average output of pig meat per sow per year in recorded herds was 2058 kg. This amount of pig meat was produced using 7439kg feed or 3.61 kg feed per kg of pig meat. The Teagasc Pig Department have proposed a target for integrated herds to produce 2000kg of pig meat per sow per year from 7000 kg of feed. We have achieved the 2000 kg but we are above the 3.5 kg of feed per kg of pig meat target.



**Table 3: Weaner Performance**

Number of Herds	129
Average Weaning Weight (kg)	7.0
Average Transfer/Sale Weight (kg)	37.7
Creep Feed per Weaner (kg)	3.1
Link Feed per Weaner (kg)	6.6
Weaner Feed per Weaner (kg)	46.0
Total Feed per Weaner (kg)	55.7
Average Daily Feed Intake (g)	861
Average Daily Gain (g)	477
Feed Conversion	1.81

#### *Commentary*

On most farms the weight of weaners transferred to finishing accommodation is estimated. These figures would be much more accurate with increased weighing of weaners at transfer to the finisher section.

There has been a slight increase in the total feed fed to weaners compared to 2014. A slight reduction in creep feed fed per pig was seen while link feed usage remained the same as 2014.

The Feed Conversion changed from 1.84 in 2014 to 1.81 in 2015. This might be affected by an underestimation in transfer weights although weaner transfer weights were estimated to be 0.9 kg higher than in 2014.



**Table 4: Finisher Performance 2015**

Number of Herds	108
Average Weaner Transfer Weight (kg)	37.5
Average Live Weight at Sale (kg)	108.7
Average Dead Weight at Sale (kg)	83.0
Kill Out %	76.4
Average Daily Feed Intake (g)	2342
Average Daily Gain (g)	864
Feed Conversion	2.71

The same qualification applies to finisher performance data as weaner transfer weights are usually estimated on pig units. Finisher Growth Rates increased from 824 to 864g/day from 2014 to 2015. The Feed Conversion improved to 2.71 from 2.81 in 2014.

Pig slaughter weights continued to increase – up 1.9 kg compared to 2014.

Total feed per pig from weaning was 248.7 kg consisting of:

Creep	3.1
Link	6.6
Weaner	46.0
Finisher	193.0



## Production Costs 2015

Table 5: Feed and Non-Feed Costs	
	Cost per kg dead c
Feed	108
Non-feed Costs excluding Building and Financial Costs	
Healthcare	6.2
Heat, Power, Light	4.2
Transport	1.2
Artificial Insemination	1.8
Manure	1.5
Labour / Management	13.3
Repairs	2.2
Administration	1.0
Environment	0.4
Insurance	0.9
Housing Rental	1.3
Contract Finishing Costs	1.5
Water	0.4
Dead Pig Disposal	0.7
Stock Depreciation	1.8
Miscellaneous	1.2
Total Non-feed Costs excluding Building and Financial Costs	39.6

### Commentary

Most of the costs are very similar to 2014. The extra items of Housing Rental, Contract finishing costs, water and dead pig disposal were added in 2015.



**Table 6: Building and Financial Costs**

	Cost per kg dead c
Building Depreciation	4.4
Interest	1.4
Building and Financial	5.8

*Commentary*

Too few farms include data on Interest payments and Building Depreciation to obtain a very reliable indication of these costs. The cost of production per kg as calculated is limited in the absence of more data on these two costs. More importantly, too few herds are having their actual cost of production calculated.

A building depreciation cost should be included based on the value of buildings on each pig farm. Low building depreciation costs reflect a lack of capital investment in many units over the last decade or so.

**Table 7: Total Cost of Production 2015**

	Cost per kg dead c
Feed	108
Non-feed Costs excluding Building and Financial Costs	39.6
Building and Financial Costs	5.8
Total	153.4

*Commentary*

With a repayment (*capital + interest*) cost of 6.5c per kg pig producers needed 154.1 c per kg dead weight to cover all payments in 2015. These costs need to be unit specific rather than “average” which can only be useful as guideline.



## Top 25% of Herds

**Table 8: Selected on the basis of the Number of Pigs produced per sow per year**

	Top 25%	Average
Number of Herds	32	129
Average Herd Size	729	753
No. pigs produced per sow per year	26.7	24.8
Litters per sow per year	2.27	2.27
Average weaning age: days	29	29
Empty days per litter	11	15
No. born live per litter	13.33	12.86
No. born dead per litter	0.75	0.85
Pig Mortality %	8.7	10.6
Weaner Mortality %	1.88	2.68
Finisher Mortality %	1.71	2.38
Sow Culling Rate %	49.6	48.5
Sow Mortality	3.8	4.8
Feed per sow per year (tonnes)	1.34	1.31



### *Commentary*

The herds in the top quartile of herds selected on the basis of the number of pigs produced per sow per year produce 1.9 pigs per sow per year more than the average of all herds. Each extra pig produced would have increased the margin over feed per sow by €48 if pig sale weights were maintained.

All the herds in the top quartile produce at least 26.3 pigs per sow per year. These top performing herds perform better in the various factors that determine sow productivity

- Higher born alive per litter
- Mortality at all stages of production.

The herds in the top quartile of recorded herds showed a range between 26.3 to over 31 pigs produced per sow per year. This is due to the higher born alive per litter and also the lower mortality at all stages of production.

It is significant that the Feed per Sow per Year, adjusted to take account of Maiden Gilt numbers, is higher in the Top 25% herds compared with that in all recorded herds. Getting sows to eat more feed particularly in the farrowing house helps push the born alive in the next litter and increase the weaning weights of the suckling piglets.



**Table 9: Selected on Feed Conversion Weaning to Sale**

	Top 25%	Average
Number of Herds	27	108
Average Herd Size	624	706
Average weaning weight (kg)	7.0	7.0
Average live weight at sale (kg)	110.2	108.7
Average weight at sale (kg)	84.4	83.0
Kill out %	76.5	76.4
Average daily feed intake (g)	1638	1689
Average daily gain (g)	719	694
Feed conversion	2.28	2.43
Average feed price per tonne (€)	289	286
<b>Feed per pig weaning to sale (kg)</b>		
Creep	2.8	3.1
Link	7.5	6.6
Weaner	46.2	46.0
Finisher	177.5	193.0
Total	234.0	248.7



### Commentary

The top quartile of herds selected on the basis of Feed Conversion Weaning to Sale use 14.7 kg feed less per pig than the average of all recorded herds.

Based on an average price for finisher feed alone in 2015 of €280 per tonne, this difference of 14.7 kg feed represents €4.11 per pig or 5c per kg dead weight in feed cost. This does not account for the heavier pig that the top 25% sold which will further increase their profitability.

The top quartile herds have significantly higher growth rates from weaning (+25 g per day) and there is a 1.5 kg LW difference in slaughter weights.

The top quartile herds used less creep (0.3kg/pig) feed and more link (0.9kg/pig) and weaner feed per pig.

The better Feed Conversion efficiency gave significant savings in terms of the feed cost. It took the Top 25% 144 days after weaning to reach slaughter weight while it took the “average” herds 3 more days to reach a 1.5kg lighter sale weight .



## Top 10% of Herds

**Table 10: Selected on the basis of the Number of Pigs produced per sow per year**

	Top 10%	Average
Number of Herds	14	129
Average Herd Size	622	753
No. pigs produced per sow per year	27.2	24.8
Litters per sow per year	2.27	2.27
Average weaning age (days)	29	29
Empty days per litter	10	15
No. born live per litter	13.63	12.86
No. born dead per litter	0.84	0.85
Piglet Mortality (%)	8.1	10.6
Weaner Mortality (%)	1.90	2.68
Finisher Mortality (%)	1.75	2.38
Sow Culling Rate (%)	49.5	48.5
Sow Mortality	3.5	4.8
Feed per sow per year (tonnes)	1.37	1.31



### *Commentary*

The top 10% of recorded herds selected on the basis of the Number of Pigs Produced per Sow per Year produced 2.6 pigs more than the average for all recorded herds.

These top performing herds had:

- The same number of litters per sow per year- surprisingly
- Higher number of pigs born alive per litter: 0.77
- Lower mortality among piglets, weaners, finisher: 3.9%

These top 10% of herds reported higher annual usage of sow feed per sow suggesting a strong link between overall sow nutrition / feeding levels and sow productivity.



**Table 11: Top 10% of herds selected on the basis of Feed Conversion Weaning to Sale**

	Top 10%	Average
Number of Herds	11	108
Average Herd Size	504	706
Average weaning weight (kg)	7.0	7.0
Average live weight at sale (kg)	114.7	108.7
Average dead weight at sale (kg)	87.8	83.0
Kill out (%)	76.5	76.4
Average daily feed intake (g)	1656	1689
Average daily gain (g)	747	694
Feed Conversion	2.22	2.43
<b>Feed per pig weaning to sale (kg)</b>		
Creep	3.9	3.1
Link	8.2	6.6
Weaner	44.1	46.0
Finisher	183.1	193.0
Total	239.3	248.7



### Commentary

The Top 10% of recorded herds selected on the basis of Feed Conversion Weaning to Sale had slaughter weights that were 6 kg heavier than the average of all recorded herds. Despite this the Feed Conversion Weaning to Sale (2.22) is considerably better than the average for all recorded herds (2.43). They used 9.4 kg of feed per pig less to bring the pigs to a 6 kg heavier liveweight.

Based on an average finisher feed price of €280 per tonne for 2015 this amounts to €2.63 per pig or 3c per kg dead weight. The pigs in the herds in the Top 10% had a Growth Rate Weaning to Sale 53g per day higher than the average of all herds.

They used more creep, link, and less weaner and finisher feed per pig.

**Table 12: Pig Meat Produced per Sow per Year**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
No. pigs produced per sow per year	24.1	24.5	25.2	25.3	24.8
Average Slaughter weight (kg)	78.4	79.3	80.6	81.1	83.0
Pig Meat Produced per Sow per Year (kg)	1889	1943	2031	2052	2058

### Commentary

The quantity of pig meat produced per sow per year has increased by 8.9% since 2011 due to a combination of increased number of pigs produced per sow per year (+2.9%) and increased average pig carcass weights (+5.9%). A target of 2000kg of pig meat produced per sow per year for every integrated unit has been proposed by the Teagasc Pig Department. This is based on producing 25 pigs per sow per year with an average carcass weight of 80kg.



**Table 13: Growing Pig Performance**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Average Daily Gain (g)	638	690	664	670	694
Feed Conversion	2.53	2.46	2.46	2.49	2.43
Sale Weight Live (kg)	103.6	104.5	105.5	106.2	108.7

*Commentary*

Since 2011 growth rates from weaning to sale have increased by 6%. Feed conversion from weaning to sale has fluctuated in the past five years. .

**Table 14: Production Costs per kg Dead Weight c**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Feed	110	120	130	117	108
Total Non-feed Costs excluding Building and Financial Costs	33.9	29.8	34.6	36.9	39.6
Building and Financial Costs	8.5	9.3	7.0	6.0	5.8
Total	152.4	159.1	171.6	159.9	153.4

*Commentary*

Feed normally represents about 70% of production costs as reported in PigSys and now ePM recorded herds. Feed costs per kg fluctuate in line with the cost of feed ingredients which determines the price of pig feed. The feed costs each year have been close to the costs as collected in the Teagasc Monthly Feed and Pig price Monitor.

It is critical that each farm monitors its own production costs. These costs are critical to the overall management of the pig unit. Every farm can and should benchmark their performance and production costs on the ePM now. This will allow each farm compare their performance figures with the Average, Top 25% and Top 10% of farms keeping records on the ePM.

Talk to your Advisor today on accessing the ePM to view and benchmark your own records.



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