

Hog finishing weights climb

By TOM STEIN*

THE MetaFarms Production Index for the third quarter of 2014 is based on closeout performance for nursery, finishing and wean-to-finish groups and how it compares with the same period last year.

The data come from pork producers using the MetaFarms software system and represent more than 500 pork production companies located in both the U.S. and Canada. Data include more than 1,000 nursery closeouts, more than 1,800 finishing closeouts and more than 300 wean-to-finish closeouts. These data have been scrubbed and made anonymous to protect the confidentiality of MetaFarms software users.

Keep in mind that nursery groups closed in the third quarter started on feed in May, June or July; finishing groups started on feed in March, April or May, and wean-to-finish groups started on feed in January, February, March or April.

Nursery closeouts in the third quarter showed a slight improvement compared with a year ago. Average daily gain (ADG) was better, and pigs came out of nurseries weighing 1 lb. heavier than last year (Table). Mortality was up a bit, but not enough to raise eyebrows.

The big story in finishing closeouts was

the 11 lb. heavier out-weights compared with last year — 280 lb. versus 269 lb. Of course, this continues the 2014 trend of much heavier market weights in response to porcine epidemic diarrhea virus losses earlier in the year.

Improvements were seen in both ADG — 1.81 lb. versus 1.77 lb. per day — and average daily feed intake (ADFI) — 5.18 versus 5.02 lb. per day — in the 2014 quarter compared to 2013. Finishing pigs were on feed for two more days, on average, so the heavier out-weights were a combination of both more days on feed and better growth performance. Similar to nursery groups, mortality was up slightly, but it was nothing to write home about.

In contrast, mortality in wean-to-finish groups was up substantially compared to a year ago — 7.3% versus 6.7% — but at the same time, similar to finishing groups, the average out-weight was much higher year over year — 281.7 lb. versus 268.8 lb.

In contrast to finishing groups, though, the heavier out-weights were mainly due to pigs in wean-to-finish barns being on feed for almost a week longer (6.3 days). In fact, there was only a small improvement in ADG.

There was no obvious explanation for the jump in mortality in wean-to-finish barns compared to last year. On the other hand, the 7.31% wean-to-finish mortality was about the same as the total mortality in nursery and finishing groups combined (2.85% + 4.43% = 7.28%). ■

MetaFarms Production Index, third-quarter 2014

Nursery	2013	2014	% change
Avg. start weight, lb.	12.8	12.9	—
Mortality, %	2.74	2.85	3.9
Avg. weight out, lb.	55.5	56.5	1.7
Feed per head, lb.	68.0	69.5	2.3
ADG, lb. per day	0.86	0.88	2.9
Feed conv. ratio	1.60	1.61	—
ADFI, lb. per day	1.38	1.42	3.0
Avg. days on feed	49.4	49.0	—
Finishing			
Avg. start weight, lb.	53.0	54.8	—
Mortality, %	4.29	4.43	3.3
Avg. weight out, lb.	269.1	280.4	4.2
Feed per head, lb.	605.7	637.7	5.3
ADG, lb. per day	1.77	1.81	2.2
Feed conv. ratio	2.84	2.86	—
ADFI, lb. per day	5.02	5.18	3.1
Avg. days on feed	120.6	122.9	1.9
Days to 1st mkt. sale	104.8	105.7	—
Wean to finish			
Avg. start weight, lb.	13.3	12.7	—
Mortality, %	6.70	7.31	9.0
Avg. weight out, lb.	268.8	281.7	4.8
Feed per head, lb.	661.4	703.5	6.4
ADG, lb. per day	1.53	1.55	—
Feed conv. ratio	2.60	2.63	—
ADFI, lb. per day	3.99	4.08	2.4
Avg. days on feed	165.6	171.9	3.8
Days to 1st mkt. sale	152.2	155.3	2.0

*Dr. Tom Stein is executive chairman of MetaFarms Inc.