

Better growth leads to heavier out-weights

By TOM STEIN*

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

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

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

Keep in mind that nursery groups that closed in the fourth quarter started on feed in August, September or October; finishing groups started on feed in June, July or August, and wean-to-finish groups started on feed in May, June, July or August.

Nursery closeouts in the fourth quarter of 2014 had better average daily gain (ADG), better feed conversion and lower mortality (Table). In fact, nursery mortality of 2.7% showed a 9% improvement compared with a year ago (2.9%). Pigs came out of nurseries weighing about the same as a year ago but taking one fewer day and 2.5 lb. less feed.

The big story in finishing closeouts was the same thing seen over the past three quarters: heavier out-weights. Pigs coming out of finishing barns were almost 8 lb. heavier than a year ago. This continues the string of much

heavier market weights in response to porcine epidemic diarrhea virus losses earlier in the year. Compared to a year prior, improvements were noted in ADG — 1.89 lb. per day versus 1.85 lb. per day — and average daily feed intake (ADFI) — 5.36 lb. versus 5.19 lb. per day.

Finishing pigs were on feed for only 1.5 more days, on average, so the heavier out-weights were mainly due to better growth performance. Mortality in finishing groups was up slightly.

In contrast, mortality in wean-to-finish groups was up substantially compared to a year ago: 5.9% versus 5.4%. However, at the same time, similar to finishing groups, the average out-weight was much higher year over year: 285 lb. versus 275 lb. The heavier out-weights were due to a combination of better growth performance and more days on feed.

MetaFarms Production Index, Q4 2014

	2013	2014	% change
Nursery			
Avg. start weight, lb.	12.8	12.9	0.4
Mortality, %	2.92	2.66	-9.0
Avg. weight out, lb.	56.0	55.6	-0.8
Feed per head, lb.	70.1	67.6	-3.5
ADG, lb./day	0.87	0.88	0.8
Feed conv. ratio	1.64	1.60	-2.4
ADFI, lb./day	1.43	1.40	-1.7
Avg. days on feed	49.1	48.1	-1.9
Finishing			
Avg. start weight, lb.	53.5	53.4	-0.1
Mortality, %	3.98	4.09	2.8
Avg. weight out, lb.	275.0	282.9	2.9
Feed per head, lb.	614.9	643.6	4.7
ADG, lb./day	1.85	1.89	2.2
Feed conv. ratio	2.81	2.83	1.1
ADFI, lb./day	5.19	5.36	3.3
Avg. days on feed	118.4	119.9	1.3
Days to first market sale	104.4	104.1	-0.3
Wean to finish			
Avg. start weight, lb.	13.2	12.9	-2.4
Mortality, %	5.36	5.89	10.0
Avg. weight out, lb.	274.5	284.8	3.7
Feed per head, lb.	670.7	699.8	4.3
ADG, lb./day	1.59	1.62	1.5
Feed conv. ratio	2.57	2.58	0.3
ADFI, lb./day	4.11	4.18	1.8
Avg. days on feed	163.3	167.2	2.4
Days to first market sale	149.8	154.3	3.0

