

PIG REARING IN TROPICAL COUNTRIES

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Rearing of pigs in tropical countries is a difficult task due to more susceptibility of pigs to hot climate, absence of sweat glands in the body and excessive subcutaneous fat deposition which prevents heat dissipation from body in tropics. Many pig husbandry experts also reported that tropical environment adversely affects breeding performance of sows and boars, hormones production, growth and require higher percentage of protein than the temperate pigs (Babatunde, et. al.----1972). Therefore, it is true to say that tropical pig farmers continue to face the larger problems in rearing, feeding, breeding and management of tropical pigs than does his temperate counterpart. It is also important to note here that over half of the total pig population of the World is living in tropical countries (F.A.O.1973). Therefore it is the duty of Pig Husbandry Scientists to evolve some suitable and adoptable methods for these tropical Countries for rearing of these pigs upto their desired extent so that persons engaged in pig farming in these countries may get more incentive from their pigs otherwise it may be possible, that the population and important native breeds of pigs may disappear from these Tropical countries.

Considering all the aspects, various types of modifications in housing, feeding and management had been done to rear the Tropical pigs more comfortably so that better return may be obtained by pig owners. In India, Nigeria and Kenya etc, pigs are kept on "Kacha floor" i.e. on bare land surrounded by wooden planks wires, trees and partially covered by tin or asbestos sheet for shelter by majority of pig farmers. Limited water and feed are provided in troughs. Where as on well organised government and private farms pigs are kept in well constructed houses with cement concret floor to protect them from high temperature further proper facilities for water and feeds are also provided in rearing of these pigs.

Babatunde, et. al. (1972) conducted experiments on the optimum protein requirement for tropical climate pigs. They recommended a

higher percentage of protein for growing pigs than N.R.C. level due to the reason that poorer quality of protein concentrates are used in tropical countries for feeding the animals. I am also of the opinion that this might be one of the reason for slow growth of pigs in tropical countries.

Kumar (1981) personally observed the performance of pigs when kept in open pens without proper shelter and water in summer. He found a decrease in growth rate with high prevalence of disease and flies but when the same pigs are kept in suitable pens with proper shelter and continues sprinkling of water than growth rate became higher and prevalence of disease and flies reduced. Though both the times feeding schedule remained the same. It clearly indicates that if proper housing and watering etc. would be provided to pigs than his performance will not effect their normal performance.

Fuller (1980) has evolved a cheap and effective method for cooling the pigs in tropics by insulating the shed with intermittent water sprinkling for 2 minutes every 45 minutes. More elaborated systems are also observed by him for special circumstances. One most important factor other than climate for poor performance of pigs in tropical countries is native breed of pigs in these countries, whose performance is poor in all aspects however they are more disease resistant, superior mothering availability and early maturity than temperate pigs. Though native breeds are poor in performance but majority of pig farmers draw their income from these breeds. Therefore, we have to make the attempts for their improvement than only the optimum performance of these local breeds of pigs may be obtained.

Selected references: Babatunde, G.M., Olomu, M.J., and Oyenuga, V.A.; Anim. Prod. 1972, 14, 57; Fuller, M.F., Pig international 1980, 7, 6; F.A.O. 1973, Food and Agriculture Organization Production Yearbook. F.A.O. Rome; Kumar, A.; Personnel Observation 1981.