

EGERTON UNIVERSITY



Transforming Lives through Quality Education

DIVISION OF RESEARCH & EXTENSION

How to Improve Survival of Young Pigs

Poor Care of Young Pigs Causes Losses

Piglets produce a variety of high value products. They produce white meat, fat, leather and hair used in making brushes. Farmers loose these products when more piglets die early in life.



Mother and her young one

Common Causes of Death in Young Pigs

The common causes of death in piglets are due to crushing by the mother, low iron in the body at birth and low iron from milk, and exposure to too much cold. Mothers often crush their piglets when lying down if there is no escape area allowed in pig housing. An escape area is an area where a piglet can run to escape from crushing by the mother when lying down. Piglets are both with low iron in their body and their mother also produce milk with low iron content. Boosting the iron level of piglets improves their survival. At birth, piglets have little hair cover on their skin. This exposes them to danger of dying from excess cold unless adequate source of warmth is provided.

How to Reduce Death in Young Pigs

1. Make an escape area in the pig house. The area should measure a half a foot high and one foot wide along the wall of the house. Use timber or metallic frames.
2. Give extra iron in form of iron paste through mouth or in form of iron solution injection dose as indicated on the bottle.
3. Provide warmth during the first month of birth. Use charcoal burners, saw dust burners or electric bulb in a heat box. Place the burners or bulbs about a metre high from the ground



Escape area and a heat box

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Extension)
dvcre@egerton.ac.ke : www.egerton.ac.ke