

# Focus on light for the sows



Half a year after the luminaries in front of the sows was set up, the E control struck through with four more live born per sow. Photo: Private.

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## More light can have a positive effect on the bottom line

In the dark period, we turn on extra light to feel cozy. However, it is not just to feel cozy that we add extra light in the pig stable...

At Ottestrup farm near Sæby the number of piglets is increased with three to four more alive born piglets per sow. The investment of extra light in front of the sows is earned back in less than a year.

- The only thing we have changed is the light, and now we have three to four more live born piglets per sow, says Karsten Holst, who has been operation manager at Ottestrup farm. In one of the pig houses with 640 sows from year 2006, Karsten Holst couldn't understand that there was an issue with heat, skips and live born piglets. Along with both veterinarians and consultants, he looked at feed, control of breeders, health and more. However, it was the light which made the trick. – We have been struggling with the sows in the pig house and we have tried everything, but then I sat down and began to read about the lighting and then I got the idea, says Karsten Holst.

The lux in the service/gestation section, above the sows' head was measured to 75 lux. – The luminaires were placed in the middle above the sows' and wasn't enough light.

## More live born with more light

After an investment of approximately 30.000 DKK, where the RNS LED SOW-Light was mounted in front of the sows', the results began to show.

After two months with light above the sows', the first E control from the pig house at Ottestrup farm, showed an increase of ½ a piglet per sow and far less empty sows'. Half a year after the luminaires was set up, the E control struck through with almost four more live born piglets per sow. – It was a big investment, but it is already earned back, says a happy operation manager.

Ottestrup farm is now working to set up LED light in the gestation house, to reduce the returns and the number of "skips" even more.



*No doubt that the light is working, it just has go down in snout height. Photo: Press.*

### **Light in snout height**

There is more and more, who opens their eyes to extra light in the service/gestation sections. Pig advisor, Søren Sloth from "Landbo Nord", is seeing a lot of pig houses with good light in snout height. – The recommendation is minimum 100 lux. I recommend 200 lux in the service/gestation section, and with the focus, that the light must go down in snout height, says Søren Sloth. There is lots of trials, which shows the effect of overexposure, however in the pig house the light is seen.

- When I took care of pigs myself, we had a very dark pig house and had issues with empty sows'. After we added the LED light in the house it got much easier to notice the heat. No doubt that the light is working, ensures the advisor. He explains that it is important, that you measure the brightness in snout height and is aware of shades from pipes and inventory, and furthermore that dust and dirt can reduce the impact.

LED is spreading a very concentrated light out in one direction, so the placement of the luminaires is important. – Also, in the gestation section a better light can give better results. The advisor recommends getting a light calculation in the section before making the investment in new lighting, to ensure that the light is evenly distributed and that the corners are illuminated.

A negative thing about concentrated light is that the corridors seems dark, compared to the strong light in front of the sows'. – This affects the work environment.

### **See the light at NutriFair**

Rune Nielsen from RN Solutions has in more than five years worked to improve the lighting in animal houses.

Five years ago, there wasn't many who thought about overexposing the sows'. Today there is almost 800.000 sow's worldwide, which is being illuminated by SOW-Light in the service/gestation section. The system with LED and Plug'N Play™, gives a relatively big saving on the mounting.

- "Most pig producers, who has our SOW-Light is experiencing improvements in the reproduction area" says Rune Nielsen, who explains that it is a simple investment which is earned back quickly. Some experiences more live born piglets, while others experience less empty sows'.

RN Solutions exhibits on NutriFair and thinks it is the best Danish fair. They are showing quite a few news on the fair, which is going to happen January 16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>. Rune Nielsen is highlighting, among others, a cheaper version of the SOW-Light with a plastic fixture instead of aluminum. The company is launching something totally new, - a new type of Eggshell, which withstands big amounts of dust and water.