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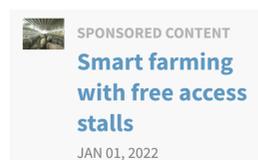
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WPX '15 New Product Tour: Echberg LED system aims to bring light to the sow

By Willie Vogt, correspondent | Jul 15, 2015

Animals respond to light in many ways. For sows, having the right amount of light can impact gestation and reproductive issues. Echberg Distribution nominated its LED Light System with a unique plug-and-play design that offers producers a “focused” way to bring light to animals.



Henrik Nielsen explains that the system comes from a Danish design that “brings light to the sow.”

One of the first things he notes is that the system is durable and resistant to humidity and ammonia. The demonstration unit in the World Pork Expo exhibit showed key features of the light as well, though the image shown is just over a foot long. The actual product comes in three sizes — 47¼ inches at 18 watts; 59 inches at 25 watts and 94½ inches at 40 watts.

Power consumption of the LED design is far below that of more conventional lighting systems.



The plug-and-play design involves the connectors. Lights can be mounted in brackets near the sow's head along a row. Up to eight units can be daisy chained at a time. The connectors are simple and offer a sealed approach. The first light in the chain would be plugged into an outlet. Once the building is wired for outlets, these lights require no electrician for maintenance.

“We know that light to sows means something to the reproduction of the animal and that 200 lux to the animal for 16 hours per day can have an impact,” Nielsen says. “When you actually measure the light at the sow in many operations it's just 50 to 60 lux, very low light.”

Essentially this is a kind of task lighting that's installed directly at the front of the crate, and the design allows for a simple installation for the producer.

The cost per sow to install — close to \$30 per crate when you include the brackets and connecting cable — was seen as economical by the panel. The savings comes from the fact that farm labor can install the system, including the “wiring.” They can be used in sow, wean or finish housing, as a basic system. Since it's LED, it has lower power consumption, Nielsen says.

Compact design

Another important feature is if one light in the string burns out, it doesn't take out the rest of the string. Moreover, the LED design means that if a single LED fails, the rest of the bar stays lit. The system has a two-year, 50,000-hour warranty included.

Joe Zulovich explains that the lighting research going on now is about determining the lux, or lumens, needed to have an impact on the animal. The next question will be the quality of light — or color — that works, too. “For some other species researchers are looking at spectrum, not just lux,” he notes. The research in pigs is limited at this time.

The panel saw the value of having “task”-type lighting to achieve a minimum amount of light for animals in a building, and they liked the ability to locate the lights closer to the pens. The simpler design of the connections in this system was popular as well.

Learn more about this innovative lighting solution by visiting echberg.ca.