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New Fashion Pork selects Nedap ESF in new Gap 1 sow facility

New Wisconsin barn will house 1,400 sows in group gestation pens.

Pipestone, Minn. [Sept. XX, 2016] – New Fashion Pork has selected the Nedap Electronic Sow Feeding (ESF) system for its new facility near Thorp, Wis. The 1,400-sow operation has been certified Step 1 by Global Animal Partnership (GAP), an organization dedicated to supporting animal comfort in agriculture.



“U.S. pork producers of all sizes are seeing the potential benefits of housing sows in groups, including reduced stress and improved mobility,” says Brad Carson, sales manager for Nedap U.S. “Our feeding system allows producers to maximize their return on investment by feeding sows individually within the group. We are pleased the team at New Fashion Pork chose Nedap ESF to help meet their goal of tapping niche markets.”

New Fashion Pork has named its new facility “Old Fashion Pork.” The barn is designed to look like an “old fashioned” red wooden barn, a common sight in rural Wisconsin. The style fits the nearby landscape of Clark County, Wis., which is home to more dairy cows than any other Wisconsin county and ranks in the top 20 dairy counties in the nation, according to USDA data.

New Fashion has started moving gilts into the \$4.65 million facility. The barn is expected to be fully populated by the end of the year. At full capacity, sows at Old Fashion Pork will produce 600 or more pigs per week. During gestation, the sows will live in static groups of 250 in large pens. Each pen has five Nedap ESF feeders.

“Calm sows are productive sows. We have designed our feeders to prevent sows from re-entering immediately after eating, which is one method of managing sow aggression in groups,” Carson says. “Our design also includes adequate walkway space and specific wall height around resting areas to give sows room to move and avoid confrontation. These features help minimize aggression, encourage exercise and maintain calm.”

The adequate walkway space and common resting areas align with GAP certification, which requires housing gestating sows in groups rather than individual pens. Group pens allow sows to socialize and move about freely.

Other barn features and management practices designed to meet GAP requirements for Step 1 certification include:

- **32 square feet of space per sow.** The current industry standard for group gestation facilities in the U.S. is about 22 square feet per sow.
- **Free-access breeding stalls.** Sows and gilts are held in stalls for a few hours to be bred and then released and allowed to move around within a breeding group pen.
- **Turnaround-style farrowing stalls.** Stall sides can be widened to allow sows movement during farrowing but can be narrowed for periods as necessary to protect the piglets.
- **25 percent slatted floors.** Other newly constructed group gestation barns typically have slats in 75 percent of the floor to allow waste to fall into storage below the barn.
- **Weaning between 28 and 32 days.** The standard weaning age in today's market is between 18 and 21 days.

The GAP certification level is supported by some national food retailers such as Whole Foods. The certification opens premium markets to New Fashion Pork.

“Old Fashion Pork is designed to meet the current and projected market demand for pork using cutting-edge management tools and practices,” says Jeff Johnson, project manager for Old Fashion Pork. “Nedap is a leader in electronic sow feeding and other management tactics for sows in group gestation. We chose Nedap ESF so we can combine the benefits of strategic, individual feeding with the benefits of raising sows in groups.”

New Fashion chose to build near Thorp, Wis., because of the low pork production pressure in the area. The facility is a partnership between New Fashion Pork of Jackson, Minn., and the Hanor Family of Companies of Spring Green., Wis. Old Fashion Pork will have five full-time employees and will source 344,000 bushels of locally grown corn annually.

For more information about tools for feeding sows individually in group housing, contact Brad Carson, Nedap U.S. swine equipment sales manager, at (712) 435-7546 or brad.carson@Nedap.com or go to www.nedap.com/sowmanagement.

Nedap is a global leader in livestock equipment and management systems. With a goal of creating technology that matters, Nedap has developed, manufactured and sold intelligent technological solutions for swine management for more than 35 years. Nedap is focused on both herd productivity and performance worldwide, offering smart, sustainable solutions in all parts of the production cycle for a profitable, individual approach to managing swine in large groups.

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Suggested cutlines:

Feeders.jpg: *Sows at Old Fashion Pork will be housed in group gestation pens rather than individual gestation crates. Each pen will have five electronic feeders. When sows finish eating,*

they are not allowed immediate re-entry into the feeder. This practice minimizes aggression between sows and promotes exercise.

Old Fashion Pork.jpg: *New Fashion Pork of Jackson, Minn. has selected the Nedap Electronic Sow Feeding (ESF) system for its new facility, "Old Fashion Pork" near Thorp, Wis. The 1,400-sow operation has been certified Step 1 by Global Animal Partnership (GAP). The facility has been designed to look like an "old fashioned" red barn.*

Sows view.jpg: *A view from within a Nedap Electronic Sow Feeder. When the sow enters the feeder, the equipment reads the RFID tag in her ear and delivers the amount of feed the producer has set for her. While the sow is eating, she is enclosed within the feeder so she can eat without interruptions. Individual feeding helps minimize fighting between sows and improve feeding precision.*

Breeding stalls.jpg: *These breeding stalls are designed to hold sows and gilts for a few hours to be bred. Then the backs of the stalls are opened to allow the animals to move around within breeding group pen.*

Walkway.jpg: *The group gestation pen at Old Fashion Pork includes walled resting areas where about 10 sows can sleep at a time. Sows access the resting areas by traveling wide walkways. Within the walkways are waterers. The layout of the resting areas and walkways are designed to minimize confrontations and manage sow aggression.*