

The logo for PIC (Pig Improvement Company) consists of the letters "PIC" in white, serif font, set against a red square background.The logo for "Never Stop Improving" features a red chevron pointing right, followed by the text "Never Stop Improving.™" in a sans-serif font.

Never Stop Improving.™

A banner image showing a person in a dark blue uniform holding a piglet. The piglet is wearing a colorful party hat. The text "The Squeal" is overlaid in white on the left side of the image.

The Squeal

The Squeal by PIC.com

PIC's Podcast Celebrates One Year!

We are pleased to celebrate the first anniversary of PIC's swine management podcast, "The Squeal by pic.com," and we couldn't have done it without your support. In the first 10 episodes, we covered a variety of topics, from ventilation to nutrition, pork quality to gilt selection, and much more. In this episode of the Pig Improver, you will find an overview of the different podcasts we've covered during this first year. We encourage you to listen to any episode you may have missed and invite you to share your favorite episodes with friends and family.

In the future, if you don't want to miss any episodes of The Squeal, please subscribe below using the links to access the podcast on your mobile devices:

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Pig Improver

The Squeal – Episode 001

Driving Improvement in Pork Quality

Our podcast series started with an episode called, “Driving Improvement in Pork Quality.” We gathered independent consultant Collette Kaster of Kaster Solutions, PIC meat scientists, Dr. Neal Matthews and Brandon Fields, to discuss pork quality, genetic improvement and management.

Pork quality relates to all the characteristics that influence the end user's appreciation for the product, Fields says. It includes appearance, fat content, color, and eating experience, among other attributes. For processors, the technical processing capabilities of the product are important as well, he adds.

The Squeal – Episode 002

The Importance of Gilt Selection

In the second episode of The Squeal, Dr. Ken Stalder from Iowa State University joins PIC gilt selection experts, Malcolm Turley and Marlon Tafs, to discuss the importance of gilt selection.

For Turley, that means thinking about the physical qualities that allow females to be prolific over many parities and maximize pigs per sow per year.

The speakers note that good feet and leg structure is critical in gilt selection, so it's important to monitor and measure soundness along with other traits.

The Squeal – Episode 003

Ventilation Critical for Swine Health

Ventilation is very important for overall swine health and performance, but it's often a topic that isn't discussed. In the third episode of The Squeal, we asked Lance Barton, Belstra Milling's Director of Wean to Finish and Genetic Services, to discuss the topic with PIC's Wean to Finish Specialists, Fernando Gomez and Nat Stas.

Barton feels ventilation is one of the most important components of good management on a farm. It can affect growth rate and days to market, which in turn impacts how quickly producers can empty the barn. Ventilation can also impact herd health, he says. If the humidity is too high, respiratory challenges can surface and cause serious problems.



Pig Improver

The Squeal – Episode 004

Creating a Biosecurity Culture

As African Swine Fever (ASF) spreads across Asia and Europe, biosecurity should be top-of-mind in the pork industry. PIC's Drs. Andrea Pitkin and Jess Waddell, along with Pipestone's Dr. Joel Nerem, discuss hands-on techniques and implementation of biosecurity protocols in the fourth episode of The Squeal.

Pitkin says she would much rather prevent disease than deal with it. The industry has good protocols and processes in place that can be applied to numerous situations, and she feels many disease challenges can be prevented if producers and staff members will carefully follow strict dos and don'ts. "I think getting that message out to producers and farm owners is very important," she says.

The Squeal – Episode 005

Current Thoughts on Finishing Pig Nutrition

Nutrition is a key element in maximizing genetic potential. To help your management team take full advantage, The Squeal assembled a highly regarded panel of thought leaders for a nutrition round table for episode five. Dr. Noel Williams of Iowa Select Farms joins PIC's Márcio Gonçalves and Wayne Cast.

"Pigs have changed dramatically from a biologic capacity in terms of growth rate, lean efficiency and feed intake," Williams says. Because genetic lines have changed dramatically, their nutrition needs also have changed. "We define efficiency based upon economic efficiency. We really don't look at a targeted goal for traditional feed conversion —it's based on feed cost per pig, relative to other constraints such as space management, space availability, and maximizing throughputs through the system," he adds. Before anything else, an operation's nutritionist must understand the system. Secondly, the nutritionist must know how to feed the pig from a cost-efficiency standpoint within that system's goals and constraints, Williams says.

The Squeal – Episode 006

Early Pig Care

Early pig care is a critical component for successful swine operations. In this episode, Matt Grimm, Cactus Family Farms; Fernando Gomez, PIC Wean to Finish Technical Services Specialist; and Joe Koenig, a PIC Account Manager, discuss how to successfully transition pigs from the sow into nurseries or wean-to-finish barns.

"The weaning process is probably the largest stress factor that pigs are ever going to experience in their life," Koenig says. Their environment is changing dramatically, including their location, ventilation, pen-mates and diet. This episode will help listeners learn the right steps to take so piglets will thrive at weaning and beyond.



Pig Improver

[The Squeal – Episode 007](#)

Decision Making in Diet Formulation

Most nutritionists know the biologic response to diet formulation; however, knowledge of the economic response is sometimes lacking per Dr. Uislei Orlando, PIC's Global Director of Nutrition. Energy is the most expensive component of pig diets, followed by amino acids and phosphorus. "If you combine those three... in terms of biological response and cost, you have at least a 95 percent chance to be right," Orlando says. Other guests in this episode of The Squeal include Dr. Aaron Gaines with Ani-Tek Group and Wayne Cast, PIC Nutrition Specialist.

[The Squeal – Episode 008](#)

Disease Elimination in Swine Farms

The industry is working to reduce antibiotic use, and hence, disease elimination has never been more important. In the eighth episode of our podcast, a world-class group of swine health professionals discusses disease elimination. Speakers include Dr. Bill Hollis with Carthage Veterinary Service, and PIC Health Assurance Veterinarians Drs. Jer Geiger and Jean Paul Cano.

The expectation of customers, especially in North America, is that they want boars, semen and gilts that are free of PRRS virus and, of course, the coronaviruses, PED, delta coronavirus and TGE, Cano says. They must be negative for *Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae* as well as *Brachyspira hyodysenteriae*, *Actinobacillus pleuropneumoniae*, and now, influenza. "If we get an infection, we try to eliminate it as soon as possible," Cano says. If you want to learn about disease elimination, this is the episode you should listen to and learn from.

[The Squeal – Episode 009](#)

Feeding the PIC Sow, Part I: Gilts

Drs. Steve Dritz (Kansas State University), Uislei Orlando (PIC Global Director of Nutrition) and Marcio Gonçalves (former PIC Nutritionist and Founder of Swine.It), discuss considerations in feeding the PIC sow during gilt development. "You have to realize that gilts are your future sows," points out Orlando. By contrast, market gilts are fed to maximize growth and feed efficiency. Replacement gilts, however, should be fed for the long run. "We need to understand that replacement gilts are a special category and we need to prepare a diet to have this gilt for at least five parities..." he says.

[The Squeal – Episode 010 – NEW EPISODE](#)

Feeding the PIC Sow, Part II: Gestation Diets

In this episode, we continue our series on feeding the PIC sow for optimum performance and focus on gestation rations and feeding programs. Today's guests for part two of this series are Drs. Steve Dritz from Kansas State University, PIC's Uislei Orlando, and Marcio Goncalves, former PIC nutritionist and founder of Swine.It. Our experts discuss the influence of nutrition on birth weight and how to prepare the sow for lactation. They also cover overfeeding of sows.