

**Title:** Effect of a softer floor surface in the farrowing crate on the expression of lameness and subsequent sow performance - **NPB#08-153**

**Investigator:** John Deen

**Institution:** University of Minnesota

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### Abstract

Lameness is both an economic and welfare concern in swine breeding herds. Producers are in a difficult situation to take a decision to treat, cull or euthanize a lame sow as there exists little information on the benefits and costs of these decisions. Nonetheless, lameness is identified as a major concern and flooring as a major factor. Further, when pain is suspected there are limited alternatives for analgesia for breeding swine. If we follow the dairy industry, one of the first steps in addressing sow lameness is through identifying factors affecting sow comfort. The use of alternative flooring, particularly in the farrowing room should be of benefit to the sow and also to the producer through a reduction of a painful condition, an increase in subsequent productivity and an increase in value if slaughtered. This study is expected to improve the competitiveness and sustainability of US pork industry both within the US and in export markets in the light of heightened welfare concerns, while addressing the need for logical and detailed management decisions.

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**For more information contact:**

**National Pork Board • PO Box 9114 • Des Moines, IA 50306 USA • 800-456-7675 • Fax: 515-223-2646 • [pork.org](http://pork.org)**

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