

Identify Pigs by Ear Notching

Cooperative Extension Service
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Guide B-602

L. Neil Burcham, Extension Swine Specialist

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An accurate set of records on swine performance is one of the best management tools that a producer can have. Before a producer can keep such records, he must be able to identify pigs from birth.

The successful manager clips the needle teeth and navel cords as soon after birth as possible. This offers an opportune time for identification.

The simplest method and the one recommended by most breed associations is ear notching. The most common notching system is the 1-3-9 system illustrated below.

Litter Mark: The right ear is used for litter mark, and all pigs in the same litter must have the same ear notches in this ear. The right ear is on the pig's own right.

Individual Pig Marks: The left ear is used for notches to show an individual pig's number in the litter. Each pig will have different notches in the left ear.

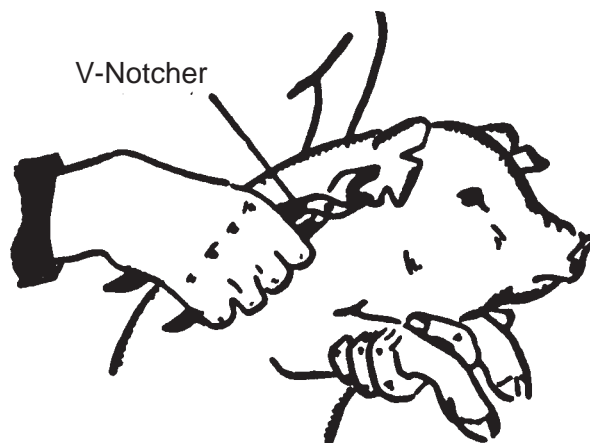
To develop a number, the producer makes notches in different parts of the ear in such a way that the total of their numerical values will be the desired number.



Litter Number

The Key

Pig Number



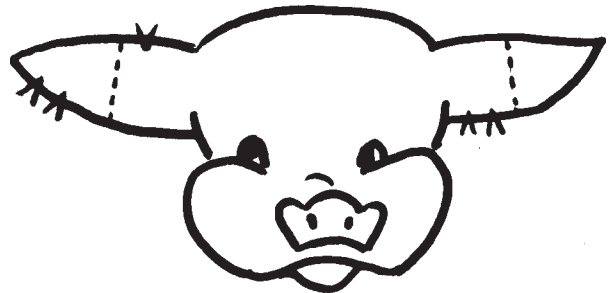
Notching small pigs for identification

Examples of litter and individual pig ear notch numbers.

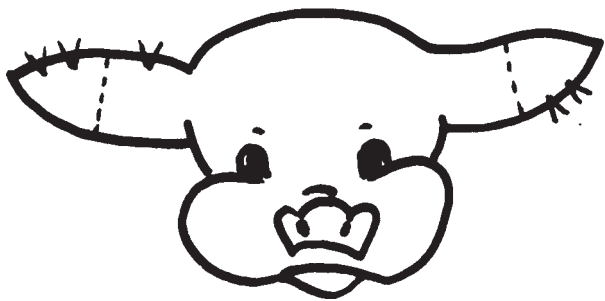
80-10



33-2



45 - 6



81 - 1

