

Future housing lactating sows

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SEGES
INNOVATION

Svineafgiftsfonden

The future is not 'only' welfare

- it is a more sustainable production



Environmental / climatic influence



Social responsibility
Including pig welfare

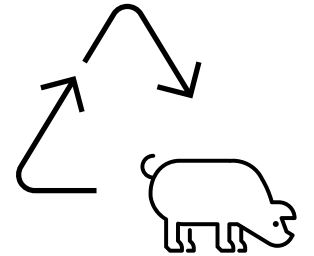
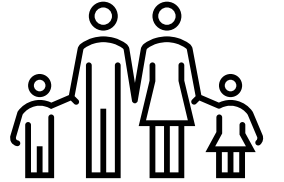
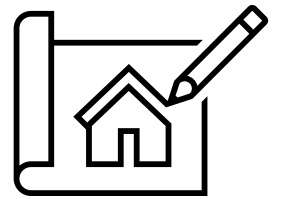


Economic potential

Long term investment and
daily management

Future proof-housing

- There is an increasing global population and demand for food
 - → There is a need and future for pig production
- Animal sourced food should be produced in a sustainable way
 - → Focus on environment, welfare and economics
 - → We need to understand interactions, connections, dependence, influence..., compromises
 - → Europe can do this



EXPERTS IN IMPROVING PIG WELFARE

Our dedication stands in respecting pigs

Our unwavering commitment to sustainability and ethical practices in animal production drives our mission. Explore how we prioritize the well-being of our pigs and work towards a fairer food future.

What is WelFarmers Project?

The WelFarmers Project is a collaborative initiative aimed at improving the welfare of pigs within the European Union. Funded by the Horizon Europe Program, WelFarmers will set up eight national innovation networks from eight different countries and will put together pig farmers, advisors, veterinarians, and researchers to address the challenges of the upcoming change in the European pig welfare legislation.



A unique collaboration



Ban
of cages



Avoiding
taildocking



Castration
avoidance



Space
allowance

- 8 countries
- 56 % of EU pig production
- Different realities
- Each country represented by pig producers and university/R&D-organisation

Ireland



Denmark



Finland



France



Spain



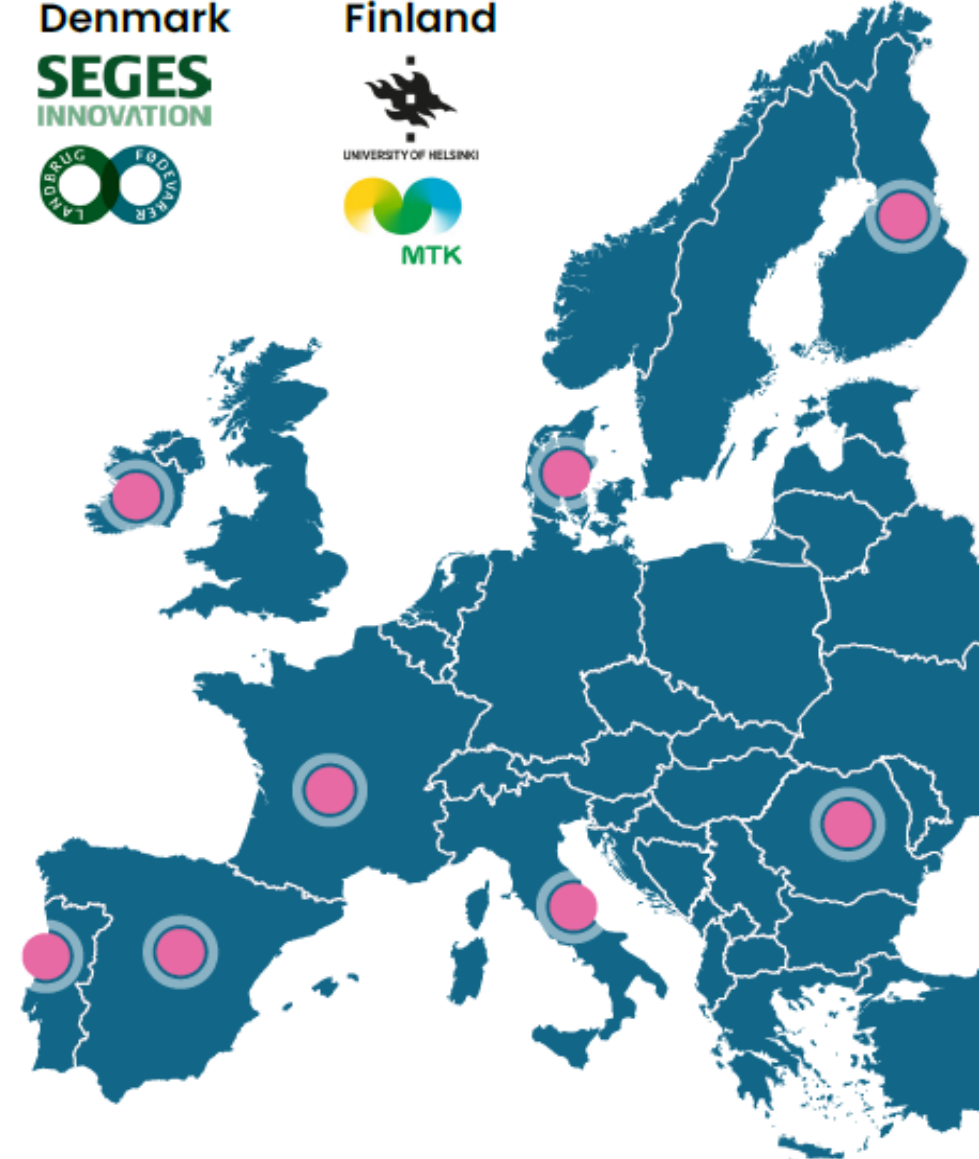
Portugal



Italy



Romania





End the cage age

The [‘End the Cage Age’](#) initiative was submitted to the Commission on 2 October 2020, having gathered 1,397,113 statements of support. See [press release](#).

In its response to the ECI, the Commission commits to table, **by the end of 2023, a legislative proposal to phase out, and finally prohibit, the use of cage systems for all animals mentioned in the Initiative.**

In particular, the Commission’s proposal will concern:

- Animals already covered by legislation: laying hens, sows and
- Other animals mentioned in the ECI: rabbits, pullets, layer breeders, ducks and geese. For these animals, the Commission has already asked the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to complement the existing scientific evidence on the conditions needed for the prohibition of cages.



Space allowance – traditional farrowing crate

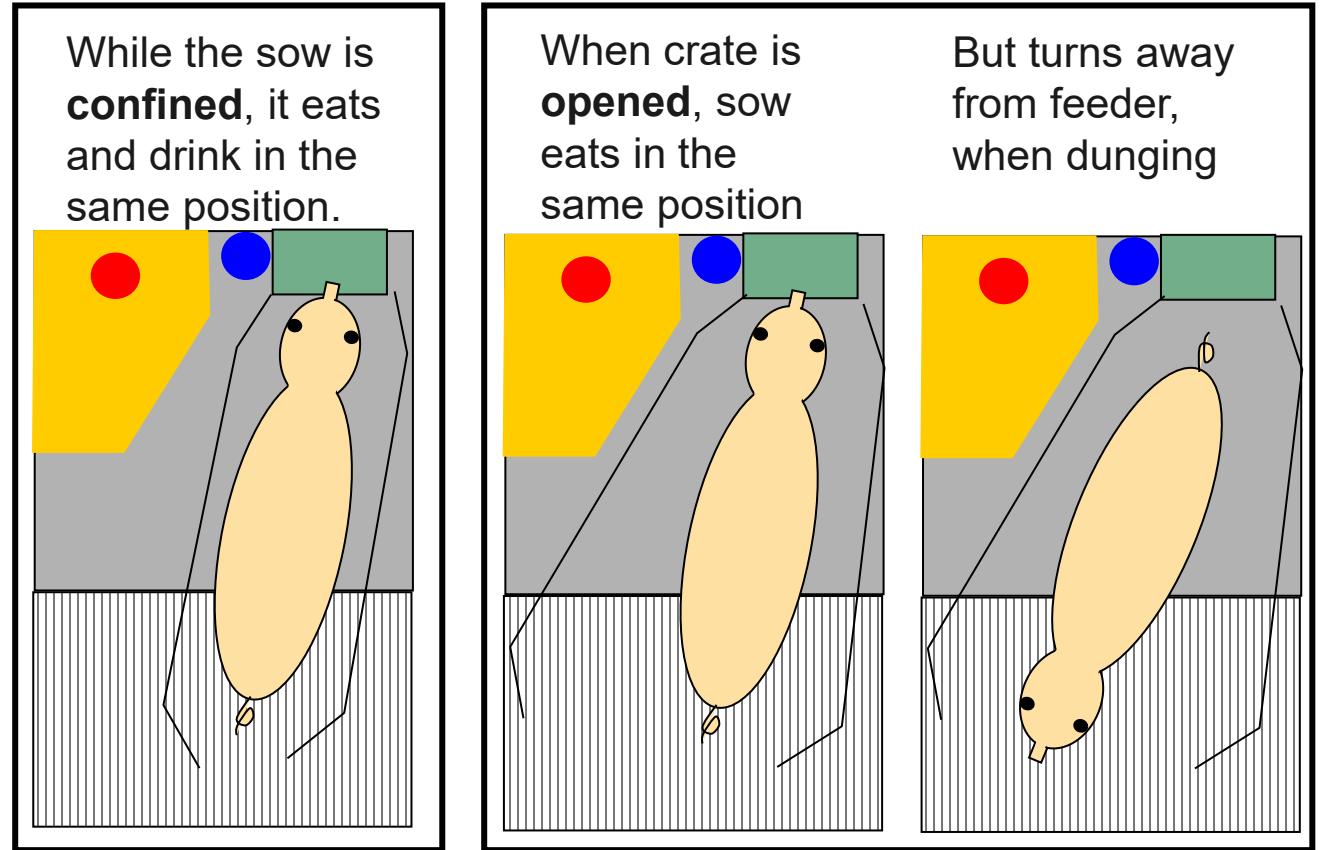
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- 1,6 x 2.6 m \approx 4.2 m²
- As the sow is restricted from turning – a high hygiene is obtained even if limited slatted area



Development

- Opening farrowing crates
 - They will not be opened – because of bad hygiene
 - Sows eat, drink, dung + uniate
 - But **NOT** in the same position
 - Sows need more space
 - Caretakers access to creep area



Very difficult ('impossible') to use same footprint and flooring for permant crate and for loose

Development

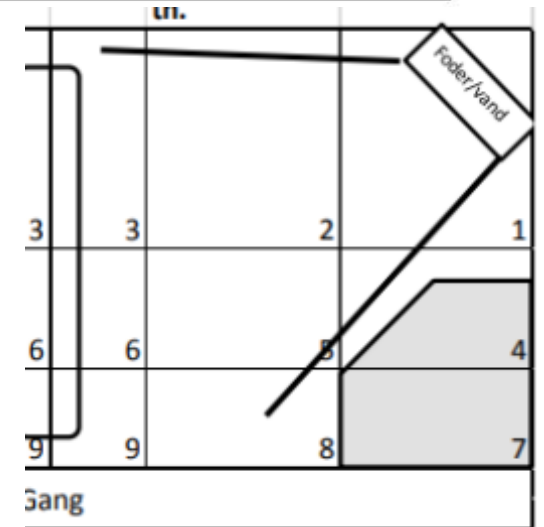
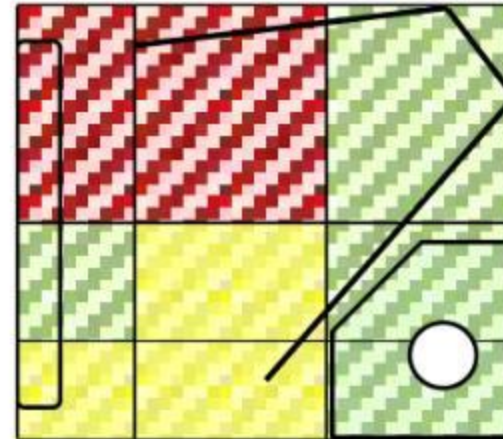
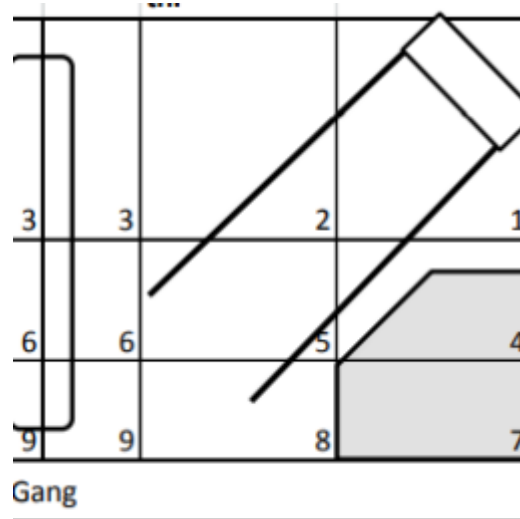
- Equalsided pens
 - 240*240
 - 2009-littersize
- Sows dunging behaviour – fully slatted



Figur 6. So opbokset kortvarigt omkring faring.



Figur 7. Løsgående so.



Erfaring 1721

SEGES
INNOVATION

Space allowance

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- Pen - size
 - Recommendations from EFSA
 - $7.8 \text{ m}^2 \approx$ piglet survivability loose farrowing at same level as permanent crating
 - $4.5\text{-}9.8 \text{ m}^2$ (+ 1.2 m^2 for piglets)
 - German requirement
 - 6.5 m^2
 - Loose sows \rightarrow turn around \rightarrow larger or fully slatted to ensure high level of hygiene
 - Turning space
 - At least 160 cm



Recommendations – SPACE

Pen footprint (m²)

- Minimum pen size should be **6.5m²**
- Minimum length of **250cm** in at least one dimension
- **Unobstructed turning width** of at least **160 cm**

Pens must include a portion of solid **flooring**:

- Comfortable and safe piglet creep area
- To retain enrichment/nesting substrate
- Thereafter base design decisions on:
 - pen size and shape
 - slurry management
 - choice of substrate



Future housing of lactating sows

- SowSpace

To improve sow welfare - sows are to be loose housed in all of Europe

- Pens need to be significantly larger
- Slatted area need to be significant larger
- Emissions are higher

More information can be found in eg:



Baxter et al (2025)
End the Cage Age...

Journal Pre-proofs

Animal board invited review: The need to consider emissions, economics and pig welfare in the transition from farrowing crates to pens with loose lactating sows

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Review of Temporary Crating of Farrowing and Lactating Sows

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Transitioning from crates to free farrowing: A roadmap to navigate key decisions

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Moustsen et al (2025)
Sows turn unhindered...

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