

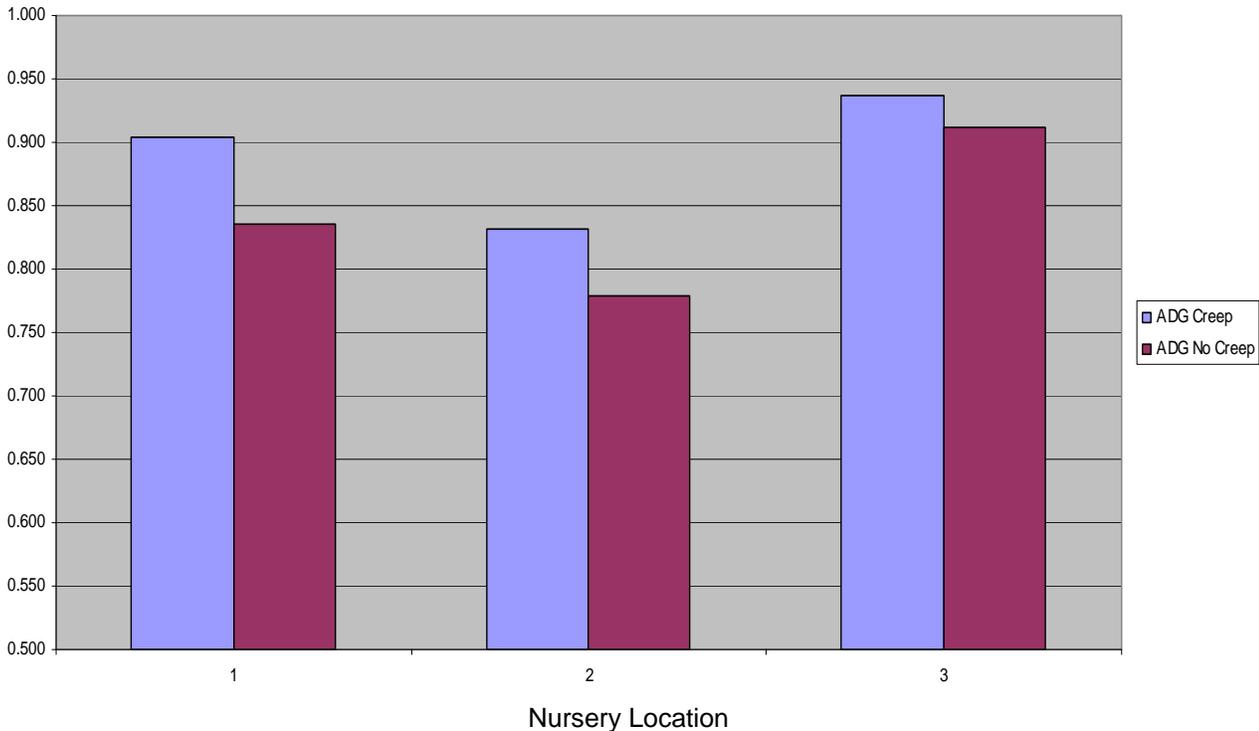


Enhanced Performance and Profitability Potential when feeding UltraCare[®] First Step[™] Creep Feed: Results from a 2010 Field Trial in Iowa

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To evaluate the effect of creep feeding on nursery performance, in the Fall of 2010 trials were conducted at Longview Farms as well as a 3,000 sow farm in South Dakota and their nurseries in Northwest Iowa. For three consecutive weeks, litters were split by creep and non-creep fed litters. UltraCare[®] First Step[™] creep feed was used on the creep fed litters for 4 days at ½ lb per litter per day. Pigs were then transported to three nurseries near Hull, IA. Pigs were weighed at one week prior to weaning, weaning, one week post-weaning and at nursery exit (d 35 post-wean). The graph below shows average daily gain (ADG) results at 35 days post-wean for creep and non-creep fed pigs for the three different nursery locations.

Nursery ADG (Lbs)
35 Days Post Wean



At all three locations, pigs fed First Step[™] creep feed outgained their non-creep fed counterparts. The ADG for the 3 locations was a difference of 0.05 lb. For the purposes of illustration only, on a 40-day nursery period, this would amount to a 2 lb heavier exit weight for the creep fed pigs. If you conservatively assume that for every 1 lb out of the nursery it generates a 2lb heavier market weight, this trial would produce a 4 lb heavier pig at

slaughter. At \$ 0.50 per lb, this could **generate \$2 per pig more income per head**. The cost of the creep feed (First Step™) in the trial was less than \$0.19 per pig. A Nice Return!¹

So why aren't more pigs creep fed in this country? I believe part of the reason is that our technological advances have created a system with barriers in place. Due to the higher cost of building finisher barns, these buildings have gotten bigger over the past 15 years subsequently, requiring larger sow farms to fill these buildings with pigs in an all-in, all-out fashion. These larger sow farms are extremely focused on production and are actually viewed as "cost centers" in most large farrow-to-finish systems. The chart below represents the benefits and challenges to creep feeding in these large systems:

Sow Farm	Wean-to-Finish System
Increased costs	Create Eaters™ (at weaning)
Labor	Improved average daily gain
Equipment	Improved average daily feed intake
Feed	Improved feed efficiency
Unchanged sow production	Pigs start eating and drinking faster
Potential for increased litter weights	Reduces fallouts after weaning
	Reduces weight variation out of nursery

As you can see, the majority of the benefits are in the wean-to-finish system. In a farrow-to-finish system, the economics and the decision making is straight forward. If I own both systems, I can convince the sow team that creep feeding is a necessary process that needs to take place every week like castrating boars and docking tails; these are jobs that they also conduct solely for the benefit of their wean-to-finish counterparts. The more difficult segment is the wean-to-finish producers who are buying weaned pigs from a sow farm on contract. One solution that may work well is if the buyers of the weaned pigs purchases the creep feed and then the sow farm feeds the creep feed to the buyer's pigs. I would also recommend when negotiating future weaned pig contracts that creep feeding be a discussion in the contract.

In summary, I believe that creep feeding with Ultracare® First Step™ creep feed is a big opportunity to optimise wean-to-finish performance potential and economics. In today's competitive marketplace, we must search for every advantage that allows our pork producing customers to increase profitability potential.

For information on our feeds, please see your local feed sales representative at a Land O'Lakes Feed Co-op or Purina Mills Dealer. Visit us on-line at www.UltraCareFeed.com or www.PurinaPigStarters.com

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¹ The information provided in this paragraph is for illustration only and is not a representation of actual results than can be expected. The trial referenced in this article was a controlled and closed trial and results will vary by farm operation due to management, weather and other such conditions outside the control of Land O'Lakes Purina Feed. Land O'Lakes Purina Feed makes no guarantees of performance.