

# More efficient sow management

Nedap saves time and feed  
in new group barn



## Bryden Hope Parkhill, Ontario

Simplicity and efficiency make a day's work easier. For Bryden Hope, his new Nedap Electronic Sow Feeders with Nedap Automatic Sow Separation and Automated Heat Detection provide just that.

The system helps Hope identify his sows' needs immediately and provides a relaxing environment for the people and the animals in the barn. These benefits, combined with feed savings and improved labor efficiency, are contributing to Hope's bottom line.



Bryden Hope

“Two of my biggest costs are feed and labor, and we are able to manage them more efficiently with Nedap Electronic Sow Feeding, Automatic Sow Separation and Automated Heat Detection,” says Hope.

Hope built his barn in the spring of 2017 near Parkhill, Ontario. The 1,300-head sow operation includes 17 Nedap Electronic Sow Feeders and dynamic groups of about 240 sows per pen. Hope also has 900 sows in a rented stalled barn nearby and can compare the operations to see how the Nedap system is helping him work more efficiently.

### “WE’RE SPENDING LESS TIME”

Hope admits he was wary to jump into loose sow housing, but after moving sows into the barn and using the system, he quickly saw how well it works.

“Overall, we’re saving two hours a day in the barn,” says Hope.

Automated heat detection saves time because Hope doesn’t have to walk a boar to check for open sows. Instead, the boar is in an enclosed pen near the feeder exit within the gestation pen. Nedap’s RFID technology tracks how often and how long sows stop to interact with the boar.

“We’re spending less time going up and down our breeding rows to look for return sows because the boar is finding those girls for us,” says Hope.

Nedap Automatic Sow Separation reduces labor because Hope doesn’t have to search for animals. The system sorts out sows that need Hope’s attention, including those the automated heat detection system identified as open or sows scheduled to move to farrowing.

“We’ll enter sows to be sorted out, and within 24 hours, they’re all in the holding pen – just standing there looking at us and waiting to walk to a farrowing room.”

### ZERO FEED WASTE

Hope likes the way the Nedap Electronic Sow Feeder’s forward exit allows his herd to move efficiently through the feed station every day.

“The Nedap system is definitely user-friendly...The sows are comfortable in the system, and it is very efficient.”

“Sows are not forced to back out of the feeder into sows that are waiting, and we’ve never had an issue with a sow lying down in a feeding station and not allowing another girl to go through,” says Hope. “The way the feeder is designed with a rear entrance and a separate forward exit allows more animals to get through in less time.”

Nedap Electronic Sow Feeding has eliminated feed wastage in Hope’s barn.

“In our stall barn, where we manually drop feed for all the sows, we have to scrape wasted feed every day,” says Hope. “We have literally zero feed wastage in these stations.”

Hope thinks the Nedap system also contributes to the uniformity of his herd’s body condition, and he’s seeing the benefit when his sows go to farrowing.

“We are feeding even more specifically than in a stall barn now,” says Hope. “We can definitely see that in our herd.”

#### “WE CAN HEAR A PIN DROP”

Nedap Electronic Sow Feeding has created the best environment for Hope’s sows.

“When we walk in first thing in the morning, we can literally hear a pin drop in the pen,” says Hope.

The Nedap pen is designed to keep sows quiet, calm and comfortable by separating fed and unfed sows. After eating, sows walk forward, away from the group waiting to enter the feeder.

“The pen layout forces the sow to walk the length of the pen if she wants to come back to the feed station. The delay reduces bullying and sows trying to get into feeding stations multiple times,” says Hope.

Hope saw the benefits after a few months of using the Nedap system. The simplicity, efficiency, diminished feed wastage and calm and comfortable environment all contribute to the overall success to his bottom line.

“The Nedap system is definitely user-friendly,” says Hope. “The sows are comfortable in the system, and it is very efficient.”



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