



# Swine Fact Sheet

## Animal and Dairy Sciences

### Auburn University



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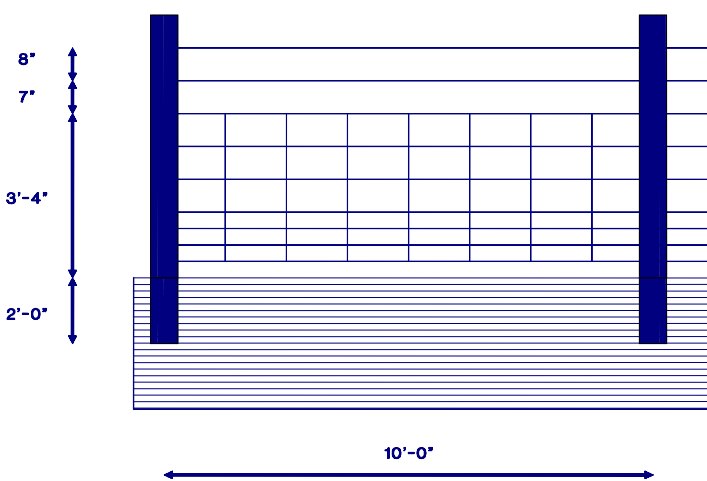
## FENCING PASTURES AND DRYLOTS FOR HOGS

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Of the common farm livestock species, the hog is most difficult to properly fence. Hogs are experts at turning a small hole into an escape hatch. Since hogs are the most intelligent of our domestic animals, take care to protect the hog from entering the dangerous domain of mom's garden or the public highway. Here we will consider the special applications important in confining swine.

### Perimeter fences

In most cases a "hog wire" or woven wire fence is best for the outside perimeter of the swine operation (figure 1). The fence height should be at least 40". The wire spacing at the bottom should be close enough to prevent baby pigs from escaping or getting their heads caught (1 1/2 - 2). A single strand of barbed wire is advisable at the top and bottom of the fence. An alternative is to place an electric fence wire near the bottom of the fence to prevent hogs from digging under the perimeter.

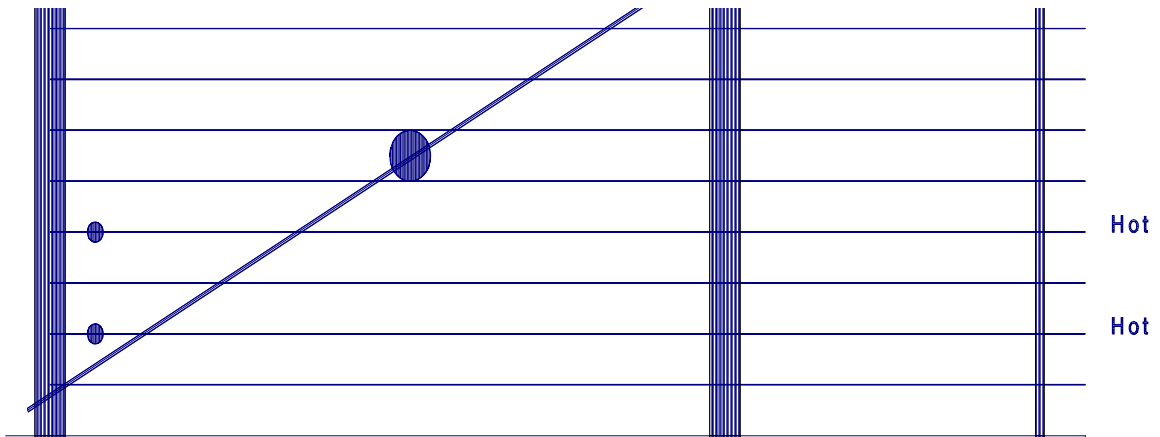


Gates in perimeter fences should be wide enough to allow easy access for tractors, plows and any other equipment requiring entry.

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High tensile wire fences are suitable for perimeter fences if they are well-maintained (figure 2). An 8 to 10 strand fence, with the second and fourth wires electrified, makes a good perimeter and should cost less than a woven wire fence.

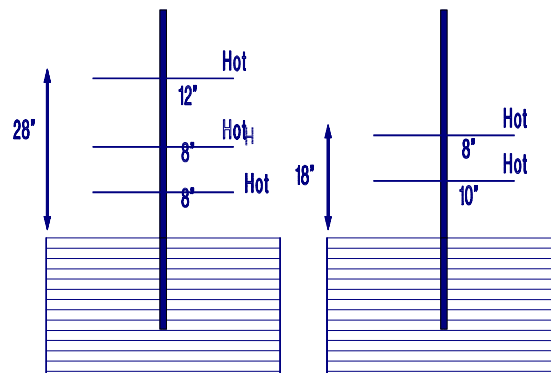


### Interior fences

Woven wire fences make good dividers or pen fencing with the possible exception of boar pens. This type of fencing is expensive to build and maintain.

Electric fencing is very effectively for pasture and drylot divider fencing and is often the cheapest fence available. High tensile wire, fiberglass or other insulated line posts and low impedance, high voltage chargers are key ingredients in an effective fence for swine (figure 3). In general, a two-strand electric fence should be

adequate to contain any size of hog. The exact height above the ground of these two wires depends on the size of hog to be contained. For sows and growing-finishing hogs, wires at 10" and 18" above the ground should work well. If nursing pigs are to be



contained the bottom wire should be lowered to 6". Both wires should be hot (electrified).

Some prefer a three-strand fence with wires at 8", 16" and 28". All three wires can be hot or use the middle wire as a ground wire. Three hot wires work best in wet areas, while a middle wire ground works best in dry areas.

Hogs have great respect for a good electric fence and are easily trained to them. They are also quick to discover an electric fence that is not functioning. Check all electric fences frequently.

Gates made of electric wire make it nearly impossible to drive pigs through an opened wire gate. Use welded wire panels, metal or wooden gates so hogs can easily see the opening you wish to drive them through. Solid panel gates and driving lanes make driving hogs easier. It is a good idea to have electric fence penning with a central driving lane made of woven wire or other non-electrified materials. This make moving hogs much easier.

## **Boar Pens**

Even in low investment swine operations, you must have adequate for herd boars. Safe, effective, durable penning is important because of the danger a boar represents as well as the investment in a good herd boar. Containing boars requires metal or sturdy wooden pens that are at least 40 inches high. Strong, foolproof latches on gates may prevent injury to the boar or to some unfortunate child or adult.

## **Summary**

Good fences are an important part of any outdoor swine facility. Selecting the type of fencing that best fits your system will make this type of production must more manageable.