



# CHECKLIST

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**STRATEGIES WE NEED  
TO ADOPT TO MANAGE  
*ESCHERICHIA COLI*  
ON PIG FARMS**

**swine trends**  
by APC

**“We are now experiencing E. coli on farms that previously had no issues.” Dr. Elise Toohill**



Diarrhea caused by Escherichia coli is a worldwide problem for pig farms. Many swine producers are concerned about the re-emerging post-weaning E. coli cases on their farms. Some are reporting E. coli issues even when biosecurity protocols are followed properly. So what can we do when faced with this major challenge that has no clear cause or solution?

## **We created a practical checklist for E. coli diarrhea control:**

- Consider appropriate vaccination protocols for gilts, sows or weaned pigs against E. coli as recommended by your veterinarian
- Clean the crate or pen just after farrowing
- Provide a heat source for newborn pigs (ideal temperature for a newborn ~90°F/32°C)
- Dry newborn pigs just after farrowing



- Manage colostrum intake for the first 8-12 hours after farrowing (e.g. split suckling)
- Do not cross-foster pigs during an E. coli outbreak
- Avoid using or moving equipment (tools, lamps, mats, creep/gruel feeders, etc) from crates or pens that have diarrhea to pens with healthy pigs
- Manage and handle healthy pigs first, then handle pigs with diarrhea and thoroughly wash hands using soap or sanitizers, after handling pigs with diarrhea
- Use disinfectant foot baths (be aware to keep it clean and with the correct dilution) between rooms and buildings and change boots and coveralls
- Spread a drying powder on the pen floor to help keep the environment clean and dry
- Maintain rodent traps and fly/insect traps for all rooms or buildings



Do not limit sow feed consumption after farrowing to maximize milk production



Feed ingredients to the sow and in creep feed for her piglets that support a healthy immune system (e.g. spray-dried plasma, ZnO, rolled oat, acidifier, prebiotic, probiotic)



Reduce weaning stress



Have a clean and dry nursery room to receive the weaned pigs



Ensure that feeders and drinkers are working properly



Maintain a proper temperature control in the nursery facilities (~86°F/30°C at weaning and gradually reduced to ~72°F/22°C by the end of the nursery)



Maintain an adequate stocking density (1.5 - 3.0 ft<sup>2</sup> per pig)



Provide electrolytes in drinking water for pigs/pens struggling with E. coli diarrhea



Provide a highly digestible weaned pig feed that promotes post-weaning feed intake and supports a healthy immune systems



Strickly follow the recommended nursery feed budget program



Medically treat pigs with E. coli diarrhea per veterinarian instruction because some strains of E. coli may be resistant to certain antibiotics.



What strategies do you use to manage post-weaning E. coli issues on your pig farm?

This checklist provides swine producers with a set of recommendations based on practical strategies. Despite this, there is no single solution to managing post-weaning E. coli cases, and each strategy must fit with the farm's reality and objectives.

We suggest that swine producers revisit this checklist from time to time to reevaluate their disease control program. The key to success is constant evaluation and revision.

**If you want to know more about the topic, check #03 Swine Trends Episode: Strategies to manage re-emerging post-weaning E. coli challenge, with Dr. Elise Toohil and Dr. Yanbin Shen**  
**Listen on [Apple Podcast](#) or watch on [Youtube](#)**



## REFERENCES



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Swine Trends Podcast - Episode 3: Strategies to manage re-emerging post-weaning E. coli challenge. Available at: <https://youtu.be/pnRroEv3rDc>

The Pig Site - Stocking Density. Available at: <https://www.thepigsite.com/pig-management/herd-management/stocking-densities>