

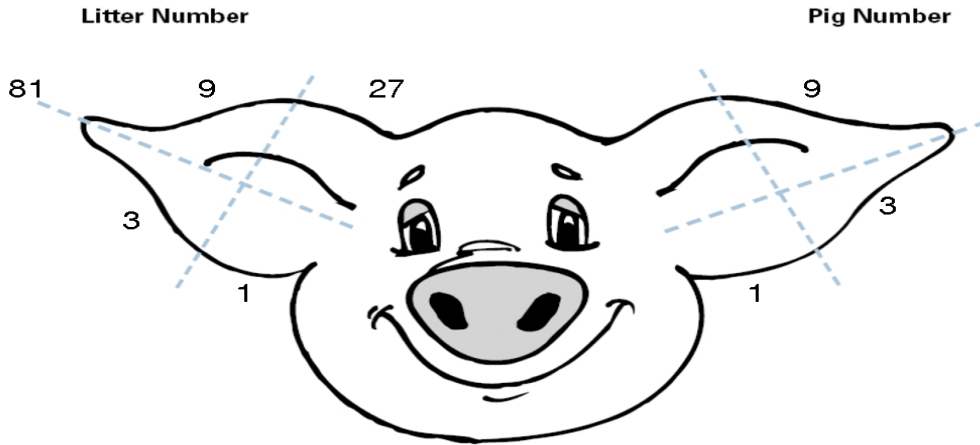
Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

Pig Ear Notching Worksheet

An accurate set of records on swine performance is one of the best management tools that a producer can have. Before a producer can keep such records, he must be able to identify pigs from birth. The successful manager clips the needle teeth and navel cords as soon after birth as possible. This offers an opportune time for identification. The simplest method and the one recommended by most breed associations is ear notching.

Litter Mark: The right ear is used for litter mark, and all pigs in the same litter must have the same ear notches in this ear. The right ear is on the pig's own right.

Individual Pig Marks: The left ear is used for notches to show an individual pig's number in the litter. Each pig will have different notches in the left ear. To develop a number, the producer makes notches in different parts of the ear in such a way that the total of their numerical values will be the desired number.



The ear can basically be drawn in half from the tip of the ear down the middle to the base. Imagine another line going from the top of the ear to the bottom of the ear halfway from the tip, and you have the ear divided into quarters. With the exception of the number one, the notch numbers are multiples of three (3, 9, 27, 81). With the exception of the number 81 at the very tip of the ear, up to two notches may be placed in each quadrant. By adding the notches together, producers can identify up to 161 litters with this system. Some producers have made modifications to include the number 100 so that more litters can be identified. The lower quarter of the ear closest to the head identifies the number one. The lower quarter of the ear farthest from the head is the number three. The top quarter of the ear farthest away from the head is the number 9. The top quarter of the ear closest to the head is the number 27. Taking a notch out of the tip of the ear denotes the number 81. Obviously, only one notch is permitted here. The pig's left ear identifies the pig number and follows the same basic structure, except that the numbers 27 and 81 are not used because litter sizes tend to be smaller.