

 **Underage Pig Problems**

* Piglets should NOT be removed from their mother for at least 8 weeks.
* Their mother’s milk provides them with her immunity. The colostrum is super important for them to get the first few days. This can ONLY be provided by the mothers’ milk.
* There is a HUGE risk when attempting to bottle-feed. The mortality rate is high even when being cared for by experienced people. Aspiration/aspiration pneumonia is easy for a pig to get when being bottle-fed.
* A bad situation can turn urgent in mere minutes. Piglets that are not being cared for by their natural mother tend to do poorly in unnatural situations.
* Newborn piglets need to be kept very warm at first. Ideally around 90 degrees 24/7. They cannot regulate their own body temperature or produce heat to keep them warm.
* You will need to feed an underaged piglet every 2-3 hours for the first few weeks.
* Diarrhea is common in the super young pigs and has claimed many lives. At birth the intestinal tract is micro-biologically sterile and it has little immunity to disease producing organisms. If identified too late, pigs will not survive and typically require vet care in order to survive.
* People make money by telling you a pig is older than it really is. Showing you a few day old pig and claiming the pig is months old is one way sellers can deceive the uneducated public. This results in too young pigs being sold and often death of the piglet.
* Bottle-feeding a piglet will NOT create a stronger bond.
* It’s been said that bottle fed pigs tend to have behavioral issues later in life.
* The sow and siblings teach piglets manners and respect.
* Young piglets can develop separation anxiety.
* If you get a younger piglet, do NOT bottle-fed, use a pan to lessen the chances of your pig suffering from aspiration pneumonia.
* It is actually rare that a sow rejects a piglet, less common than people will lead you to believe.
* Pigs cannot control their bladder for several months. Some pigs pick up potty training rather easily, while others struggle with it. A super young piglet will not be able to potty consistently where you want them to go.
* Piglets will whine and cry for their mother and siblings. It is actually very sad. Pigs will cry real tears.
* It is quite common for a pig that is new to not eat for a day or so, which can be a matter of life and death for an underaged piglet.
* When piglets are taken too soon, they fail to learn how herd dynamics work resulting in a pig who doesn’t accept someone else in the leadership position.
* You should never accept a piglet that isn’t eating solid food.
* Your underaged piglet will not be better behaved because you bottle feed, as a matter of fact, I see more complaints from people about their pigs overall behavior whose pig didn’t have the opportunity to stay with the mama and siblings. Aggression is often the outcome.
* You will need to monitor the potty habits to be sure your pig isn’t ill. You will also need to have a vet prepared to care for this piglet should it become sick. YOU are responsible 100% for this pig.