

**Nose ringing is performed to prevent pigs from rooting pasture. While a routine procedure, there are considerations and limitations to its use.**

### Rooting & Ringing

Rooting is a deeply ingrained behaviour for pigs, taking up around 20% of their time. Rooting is performed even when fed a perfect diet. Ringing prevents rooting as a natural outlet, which can result in long term behavioural changes.

Nose ringing is a painful procedure. Over time the pain should reside to discomfort when using the nose, however this can take some time. A course of pain relief will be required immediately after piercing, and the wound monitored closely to ensure adequate healing.

Noses can be pierced in a number of places. A ring placed through the septum carries a higher risk of infection and prolonged healing and is less reliable in dissuading the behaviour. Multiple rings placed through the disc are more effective but are pulled out more easily. Regardless of placement, you should expect that a ring may



## A GUIDE TO Pig Nose Ringing

need to be replaced when it pulls out. Additionally, pigs ringed young may grow out of their ring.

Motivation to root varies between breeds and individuals. While a reduction in behaviour is expected, ringing the nose is not always effective at eliminating the behaviour.

Kunekunes graze behaviourally more than other breeds, which is still possible with a ringed nose. Other breeds may have a stronger drive to root.

Nose ringing does NOT prevent the pig from picking up gut parasites.

### Alternatives to ringing

Set aside a pig-only paddock, where rooting is permitted. Top up the area with hay, peat and branches.

Encourage rooting in one area of the paddock by scattering or digging their pellets or kitchen scraps into the ground.

Encourage rooting in one area by spreading rooting material. Pigs will often choose to root in peat and branches, over hay.

If time and space allow, plant root vegetables such as swedes to encourage rooting in a certain area.

Use your pigs to deliberately clear the land and turn over soil for resowing.

**If you have any questions about the procedure or expectations, please discuss with us prior to ringing.**

