

Dr. Kees Scheepens teaches us about Pig Signals

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UPDATE: You can hear The Pig Whisperer in person Thursday, March 25 at 11:30 am in Room 220-224 University Centre at the University of Manitoba!

In October, 2009 CETFA, Eyes on Animals, Canadian Coalition for Farm Animals (CCFA) and other animal advocacy organizations from around the world were invited to visit world-renowned "Pig Whisperer", author and pig veterinarian Dr. Kees Scheepens' in The Netherlands.

Dr. Scheepens' farm was beautiful and bursting with activity. Scattered here and there were scientific studies testing more humane housing systems for chickens and pigs, all of whom contentedly went about their business expressing natural behaviours - rooting and foraging.

Dr. Scheepens is a sought-after speaker and author: www.farmulaone.nl/en/pig-signals.html. He teaches producer groups how to read the signals pigs send through their body language and physiology to better understand when pigs are sick or suffering. For example, Dr. Scheepens believes that by cutting off the tails of piglets producers lose a valuable signal-sender as, like dogs, pigs communicate how they are feeling through their tails. Similarly, housing pigs over slatted concrete floors does not allow producers to see the pigs' feces to know if any are sick. Because of this, all pigs are fed sub-therapeutic levels of antibiotics.

Many of our modern-day agricultural problems could be remedied by learning the signals pigs send.



Dr. Kees Scheepens' beautiful farm in The Netherlands