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TITLE

WEANED PIGLET MORTALITY AND ANTIBIOTIC TREATMENT REDUCTION IN A BELGIAN PIG FARM BY VACCINATION WITH VEPURED

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CONTENT

Background and objectives

Edema Disease (ED) is an enterotoxaemia caused by certain *Escherichia coli*'s colonizing the small intestine and producing verotoxin (VT2e). This enterotoxaemia might result in acute mortality, nervous symptoms, respiratory distress and growth retardation. In this study, the effect of piglet vaccination on mortality and antibiotic treatment was monitored in a Belgian multi-site farrow to finishing farm.

Material and methods

The study was performed in a 5-week batch system farm with 300 sows. Historically mortality in this farm was high (5% or more), especially the first week after weaning at 21 days of age. The mortality and antibiotic treatment was compared for 2 non-vaccinated groups with 2 vaccinated groups and 1 group in between where 50% of the animals were vaccinated and 50% served as controls. Vaccination of 1ml Vepured occurred between 3-5 days of age.

Results

In the group of 2254 non-vaccinated piglets, spread over 3 consecutive groups, the average mortality was 8,76%. In the group of 2120 vaccinated piglets, equally spread over 3 consecutive groups, the average mortality dropped to 0,66% in the nursery period. Both groups received Tylan at 15 mg/during 14 days after weaning. The non-vaccinated piglets however also were treated with amoxicilline 20mg/kg for 14 days, paramomycine sulfate 25 mg/kg for 8 days and Zinkoxide.

Discussion and conclusion

The mortality on this farm was statistically significant reduced by vaccination of the piglets with Vepured. Apart from reducing mortality, the vaccination could also be a useful tool to reduce high antibiotic consumption in farms with clinical oedema disease outbreaks.