



HERD HEALTH MANAGEMENT & ECONOMY

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GASTRIC ULCERS AND DIARRHOEA ARE ASSOCIATED WITH REDUCED PRODUCTIVITY IN FINISHER PIGS

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Introduction

It has previously been established that pigs with severe gastric ulcers have a reduced daily weight gain (DWG). But the association between gastric ulcers and feed conversion rate (FCR) is unknown. A common cause of diarrhoea is *L. intracellularis*, and high excreting pigs have a reduced daily weight gain. Furthermore, it has been reported that pigs with unspecific diarrhoea have a poorer FCR. The purpose of this study was to investigate the association between gastric ulcers, diarrhoea, DWG, and FCR in finisher pigs.

Material & Methods

A total of 526 pigs (Danish LYxD, females/castrates) were followed from 30 kg live weight until slaughter. The feed consumption and weight were recorded for each pig by an electronic feed station. The diarrhoea status (<18% dry matter = diarrhoea) for each pig was determined four times during the study period. At slaughter, stomachs were collected and scored on a 11-level gastric ulcer scale.

Results

A strong association between DWG and gastric ulcer score ($p=0.001$) as well as diarrhoea ($p=0.001$) was identified. Castrates with severe gastric ulcers (Score 8-10) had a reduced DWG compared to castrates with no or mild gastric ulcers (estimated reduction: 177 gram/day). This was not the case with females. Pigs with high prevalence of diarrhoea had a reduced DWG compared to pigs with no diarrhoea (estimated reduction: 51 gram/day). An association between diarrhoea and FCR was identified ($p=0.021$). Pigs with high prevalence of diarrhoea (>1 positive sample out of four total samples) had a higher FCR compared to pigs with no diarrhoea (estimated increase: 0.07 kg feed/kg weight gain).

In this trial, there was no significant association between gastric ulcers and FCR.

Discussion & Conclusion

This trial showed that gastric ulcers and diarrhoea have an influence on the productivity with castrates being more sensitive to gastric ulcers than females.