TITLE
GASTRIC ULCERS IN SOWS IN DENMARK

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CONTENT
Background and Objectives
Since 2014, the pig industry in Denmark has focused on decreasing the occurrence of gastric ulcers in the Danish sows. The prevalence of severe gastric ulcers was in 2011 approximately 25%. Therefore, the aim has been to decrease the prevalence of especially the severe ulcers, focusing on preventive measures and research related to correct feeding and treatment of gastric ulcers. The objective of the current study was to monitor the prevalence of gastric ulcers in slaughtered sows by a mandatory national screening pro-gram running from 2017 to 2019.
Material & Methods
Stomachs were collected from 20 sows, randomly selected at slaughter in 5 different slaughterhouses. All the stomachs were evaluated pathologically at the Laboratory for Pig Diseases (SEGES Pig Research Center). Pathological scores for the severity was scored on a scale from 0-10, with 0 being no ulcer and 10 being the highest possible score. Score 8-10 were denoted severe ulcers.
Results
In total, the screening has so far included 14,460 stomachs from 723 different herds, distributed all over Denmark. The size of the herds, from where the stomach originated, had a median of 700 [min 200; max 3600] sows. Out of the 14,460 stomachs, 2,725 (19%) had no ulcers (score 0) and 1324stomachs (9%) had severe ulcers (score 8-10).
Discussion & Conclusion
The last 5-7 years, preventive measured for lowering the prevalence of gastric ulcers has focused especially on providing sows with large particle feed and roughage (e.g. hay and straw). As a result, the prevalence of sows with severe ulcers has decreased with almost 2/3 (from 25% to 9%). However, there is still a need for a continuing focus on reducing the risk for gastric ulcers in sows to ensure proper animal welfare and productivity.