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TITLE

ECONOMIC BENEFIT OF AN INCREASE IN PIGLETS WEANED AFTER ACHIEVING PRRS STABILITY IN A LARGE INTEGRATED PIG PRODUCTION SYSTEM IN EUROPE

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CONTENT

Background and objectives

PRRS instability in breeding herds can affect productivity reducing the number of piglets weaned due to the reduction in piglets born alive and the increase in pre-weaning mortality. The aim of this study was to evaluate the economic benefits of achieving PRRS stability in PRRS positive unstable breeding herds due to the improvement of the number of piglets weaned.

Materials & Methods

In a one-year PRRS monitoring program established in a large integrated pig production system in Europe including 35 breeding herds (78,680 sows), weekly PRRS status and productive data were recorded. Difference between PRRS stable weeks and PRRS unstable in the number of weekly piglets weaned per 1000 sows (WPTHs) was calculated using a generalized linear mixed model. Based on this difference, and using a partial-budgeting model, we estimated the economic benefit of one-year PRRS stability in the large production system in Europe regarding the PRRS stability rate of each farm.

Results

An increase of 26.2 WPTHs per week was observed under PRRS stable conditions, compared to PRRS unstable. Taking into account the number of PRRS stable weeks in each sow farm during the study period, in this production system there was a total increase of 70,048 piglets weaned per year. According a 6% wean-to-finish average mortality rate observed in the group, and the current pig market profitability in Spain, during the study period, we estimated a total increase of 65,845 pigs to market and of 2.18 M€ economic benefit.

Discussion & Conclusion

Estimating the economic benefit of PRRS stability is a key point to consider in the design of control strategies and the evaluation of the return to investment of the actions implemented to stabilize breeding herds. Increase of piglets weaned through PRRS stabilization can play a significant role in the economic benefits improvement.