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EFFECTS OF FEEDING FREQUENCY DURING EARLY GESTATION ON REPRODUCTIVE PERFORMANCE IN GESTATING SOWS

M. Choi, J. Hong, J. Lee, Y. Han, I. Kwon, Y. Kim.

Seoul National University, Seoul, Republic of South Korea.

Introduction

Our research group has been used daily once feeding to gestating sows from 35 day for saving labor and its cost. The period of once daily feeding in previous study was the day after pregnancy checking (35 day) due to concerns about conception and pregnancy in early gestation. To improve once daily feeding scheme, this study was conducted to evaluate the effects of feeding frequency during early gestation on reproductive performance in gestating sows.

Material and Methods

A total of 40 multiparous sows (Yorkshire x Landrace, average parity 4.1) were used in this experiment. Sows with an initial body weight of 208.2±26.5 kg were allotted to one of two treatments at breeding based on body weight, backfat thickness, and parity in a completely randomized design. The treatments were: 1) 0day OF: daily once feeding after breeding (gestation 0-115 day); 2)35 day OF: daily twice feeding after breeding (gestation 0-35 day) and daily once feeding after pregnancy check (gestation 35-115 day). Sows were fed commercial gestation diet 2.2 kg/d (2 parity) or 2.4 kg/d (over 3 parity).

Results

There was no significant difference in body weight of gestating sows among treatments. However, body weight gain (35-110 day) showed significantly higher in once feeding from breeding ($P<0.01$). In backfat thickness, sows fed once daily feeding from breeding showed higher backfat thickness at day 35 and 110 rather than sows fed once daily feeding from 35 day ($P=0.08$; $P=0.06$). There were no significant differences in total born, stillbirth, born alive, total litter weight, alive litter weight, and piglet weight. However, once daily feeding after breeding had a tendency of increase number of mummy ($P=0.05$). Starting time of once daily feeding had no influence on conception rate and farrowing rate.

Conclusion

Consequently, once daily feeding could apply to gestating sows after breeding without reproductive problems.