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INVESTIGATION OF PORCINE RESPIRATORY DISEASE COMPLEX (PRDC) OUTBREAKS AT POST-WEANING IN FARMS FROM WESTERN FRANCE USING A NEW BRONCHOALVEOLAR LAVAGE TECHNIQUE

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Recently, a French swine practitioner developed a bronchoalveolar lavage (BAL) sampling method that uses two catheters and can be performed on live, unsedated pigs without causing undue stress.

The trachea is accessed via the mouth. In its diagnostic support services to practitioners, Zoetis' technical service in France implemented this sampling method in the field when requested by practitioners. The experience from 31 farms with respiratory disease post- weaning in 2015-2016 is summarized.

The main findings are: i. successful implementation of the 2-catheter BAL sampling technique (6 pigs per farm); ii. a higher detection frequency for *Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae* and/or SIV genomes in BAL samples on farms where respiratory clinical signs were present at sampling than on farms where no obvious clinical signs were detected on that day; iii. PRRSV detection was only requested in 6 instances (with a positive result obtained in only two farms) indicating that most practitioners correctly identified the status of the farm (stable or free of PRRS); iv. the frequency of presence of *M. hyorhinis* on farms with respiratory clinical signs was surprisingly high, and absent on farms with no respiratory signs, which deserves further investigation.

Overall, the double-catheter BAL sampling method proved relatively easy to perform under field conditions and systematically provided samples that were suitable for further diagnostic testing (no contamination by the oral flora) in a wide variety of farm situations.

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