

HHM-PP-19

TITLE

EFFECT OF DIFFERENT DOSES OF FLORFENICOL FOR PREGNANT SOWS

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CONTENT

Background and objectives: Florfenicol is a common bacteriostatic drug used in animal production, known by causing early embryonic death in hens treated with its recommended dose (10 mg/kg), but information about its effects on swine reproductive system is scarce. The objective of this study was to evaluate the effect of different doses of florfenicol on the reproductive performance of pregnant sows in the first third of gestation. Material and methods: In a Brazilian pig farming, 54 sows with different birth orders (from zero to six) were grouped in three randomized blocks (n=18), and received different treatments in feed during 14 days after insemination. The first was the control, the second received the recommended dose of 2 mg/kg, and the third received a high dose of and 4.6 mg/kg. All sows were subjected to the same conditions of humidity and temperature. Rates of return to estrus (RE) were evaluated until the 42nd day of gestation. Data were submitted to the Tukey test and to an analysis of variance at 5% level of significance using PROC GLM of the SAS program. Results: Room temperature reached $26.08 \pm 2.68^{\circ}\text{C}$, and humidity $73.95 \pm 8.61\%$. There was significant influence of the different concentrations of florfenicol on the return to estrus (RE) ($p < 0.05$). Sows that received a diet containing 4.6 mg/kg of florfenicol presented a statistically significant increase in RE (14.81%), differently of sows that received 0 and 2 mg/kg of the drug (0% and 1.85%, respectively). Discussion and conclusion: Return to estrus occurred near the thirtieth day of gestation, ranging from 25 to 36 days. This work allows us to infer that the administration of 4.6 mg/kg of florfenicol in the first third of gestation is a predisposing factor for increasing rates of return to estrus of sows in different stages of reproductive life.