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TITLE

PIG FARMERS' PERCEPTION OF THE SUCCESS OF ERADICATION OF SWINE DYSENTERY

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CONTENT

Introduction: *Brachyspira hyodysenteriae* infection can cause swine dysentery (SD), increased use of antimicrobials and economic losses. Eradication of SD on farm level is a powerful intervention strategy, but few field studies in a larger number of herds on the success of intervention, including motivation and satisfaction of the farmers have been performed.

Material & Methods: Swiss pig farmers whose herds had undergone an SD eradication were interviewed, and answers were assessed employing a digital questionnaire. The data were analysed descriptively. Selected parameters were examined in-depth with various statistical methods.

Results: In the 68 herds with complete datasets, mainly total depopulations (73.5%) had been performed. Reasons for the eradication were both intrinsic (57.4%; e.g. financial aspects) and extrinsic motivation (42.6%; e.g. official infection status). Several parameters (e.g. duration or costs) differed significantly between total and partial eradication. The majority of the pig farmers had been motivated to sanitize (85.3%) and were satisfied both of having performed the eradication (97.1%) and with the result (89.7%). Both economic performance and general health of the herd were subjectively rated as improved after the eradication (54.4% and 63.2%, respectively). The drug usage was assessed being lower (47.1%). Efforts and costs of eradication were rated between 'justifiable' and 'too high', depending on farm type.

Discussion & Conclusion: In summary, the eradication of SD was positively evaluated in at least one out of nine aspects of satisfaction by 67/ 68 of the pig farmers concerned (median: 4). However, efforts and costs are substantial, and should be addressed in order to ensure the pig farmers' compliance.