THE PIG ISSUE

Garth Pig Practice Ltd

November 2016

Pig and Poultry North 2016

Another year, another success! Garth Pig Practice and Minster Poultry Vets hosted the second Pig and Poultry North event at Sandburn Hall. After the great feedback received last year, we put in a lot effort to achieve another quality conference with a good attendance. The theme of this year's event was "Innovation and Technology in Monogastric Livestock Production". The event gave the opportunity to have producers, industry and veterinarians under the same roof discussing different topics regarding the two industries and to learn from each other how to enhance and improve the daily work carried out on farm and how intensive livestock may look in the future.

The programme started with three lectures that were addressed to both audiences, pig and poultry. Justin Emery from Draper Ventilation spoke about how important controlled environment housing and ventilation are to ensure optimal production and to avoid the different issues that a poorly designed building can cause. Several examples were given and the possible solutions were discussed.

The second talk was presented by Dr Kevin Stickney from Harbro Nutrition. The main topic of his talk was the possible options and alternatives that exist from the feed and nutrition field to help the industry in reducing the use of antibiotics for livestock. An interesting presentation that helped us understand better the effort put in by the feed industry in their research to find suitable alternatives. The third and last talk of the morning session was given by Dr Sadie Douglas from Farmex. She introduced us to the world of whole farming monitoring. She talked about how this technology consists of real-time monitoring on pigs farms, and she expects that this can be applied in the near future to poultry. This system captures data and provides information on a day-to-day basis, helping improve the performance of the herds by assessing the information and helping take objective decisions.

After the morning session, lunch was provided and the attendees had the opportunity to visit the trade stands of the various sponsors (Biolink, Boehringer, CEVA, Elanco, Harbro, HIPRA, Huvepharma, MSD, Vetsonic, Vetoquinol and Zoetis) whose kind generosity helped in staging of the event.

During the afternoon session the attendees were divided into two rooms depending on which species group they belonged to.

On the pig side, three high quality presentations were delivered. The first presentation was made by Dr Charlotte Evans and it was about the innovative projects and research that are being carried out by AHDB. The topic of waste management generated an interesting discussion.

Garth vet, Adrian Cox, was in charge of presenting the next topic. He talked about reducing antibiotics and how Garth, as a specialist pig practice, can help you to achieve your goal in this field. Several services that we offer were discussed such as colostrum intake assessments, haemoglobin measurement on farm, iron injections and the new vaccinations available. He also spoke about what the future holds for the industry including the use of meal worms as an alternative protein source, a topic in which he will become an expert in the near future (allegedly!).

And to close the day, John Matcham from Greengage Global discussed the importance of trying to find the best lighting to optimise production and reduce stress. He also mentioned the differences between using LED lighting and incandescent lamps and gave an entertaining demonstration of how water proof LED lighting can be.

If you have any queries or want to know more about these topics, please contact your vet for further discussion. We hope that you enjoyed the event with us and we look forward to welcoming you at the next meeting.

eMB Data Entry Support

Please be aware that **2015** data MUST be input prior to 2016 data – as you cannot go backwards!

For those of you who have already input 2016 data you can send **2015** on-farm antibiotic usage data, in any format, to AHDB Pork, who will input it onto the eMB. This will be for a limited time only.

Data should be sent to your KE manager or the pig hub email address, **Pig.Hub@ahdb.org.uk**.

On Wednesday 9th November the third annual National Pig Awards took place at the Lancaster Hotel close to London's Hyde Park.

A good number of Garth, Integra and Acorn clients were nominated for awards ranging from Pig Producer of the Year through to Trainee of the Year, most of them joining us as guests. A tense evening looked to be in store for the nervy nominees. However that tension soon disappeared as those nominations became outright successes with almost all of our customers taking home the prize they were entered for.

One after another they took to the stage to receive their awards from the category sponsor and the excellent TV sports presenter Hazel Irvine who hosted the awards with some great banter and anecdotes from her many years in broadcasting. It was great for those of us that attended to see the hard work of these dedicated pig professionals rewarded in the prestigious arena.

We would like to pass on a **MASSIVE CONGRATULATIONS** to the following clients who were successful on the evening plus all the other prize winners and nominees for all their efforts!!!

Indoor Producer of the Year – Bedfordia Farms, Bedfordshire.

Bedfordia Farms operates two 560-sow indoor breeding units to 40kg and one 6800-place finishing unit. Production on both breeding units is excellent with pigs weaned per sow per year averaging 30.18 and 28.76. Pre-weaning mortality is 8.4% and 8.0% and grower herd mortality is 2.46% and 2.69%. Finishing herd performance is excellent with DLWG at 963g, FCR 2.55 and mortality 2.22%.

Unit Manager of the Year – Gareth Virgo, J.E. Porter, Lincolnshire.

Since joining J.E. Porters 630 sow farrow-to-finish unit 3 years ago, Gareth has improved the numbers of pigs weaned per sow year from 23.12 to 29.39. Changes in gilt management, serving regime and feeding are some of the improvements made by Gareth and staff.

Herd Productivity Award – Indoor – Bill Bramhill, JSR Farms, Southburn, East Yorkshire.

Bill and staff have increased their numbers of pigs weaned per sow per year by 2.49 in the past two years – recent figures are now averaging 30.08 pigs per sow per year. Improvements are attributable to switching to 5-week batch farrowing and changes to pre-service feeding and service routines.

Trainee of the Year Award – Jess Graves, Shedden Farms, York.

Jess joined Shedden Farms 2 years ago straight from Bishop Burton College. Since then she has completed the AHDB Stockman Plus course and the ILM Supervisor Development Course. Her enthusiasm and ideas have increased creep intake pre-weaning by 50g/pig which has had great improvements post weaning.

Topical Talk – what we are seeing….Meningitis

As winter approaches, large day and night temperature fluctuations can trigger meningitis, particularly in weaners. There are several other factors, aside from weather conditions, which can predispose pigs to meningitis. Concurrent disease, mixing age groups, lack of all-in-all-out pig flow, poor hygiene and cleaning and disinfection protocols and management practices such as mixing, can also contribute to outbreaks of meningitis. The reasons for outbreaks and options available for control should be discussed with your vet.

Mycoplasma hyosynoviae Arthritis

Mycoplasma hyosynoviae causes arthritis in pigs 35-115kg. It is commonly found in the tonsils of healthy carrier sows and is likely transmitted to piglets at 4-8 weeks of age. Suckling pigs are often free from the organism but pigs become infected by pen mates or the organism in the environment as maternally derived immunity gradually disappears. Older sows develop strong immunity and pass antibodies to their piglets through the colostrum which provide protection for up to 10-12 weeks. The organism is excreted in breath, saliva and faeces so can be transmitted pig to pig, by indirect contact or even through the air. The organism can be found circulating in the blood 4-9 days after infection but clinical arthritis is not usually evident until 3-16 week after infection. Acute signs are seen for 3-10 days after which lameness decreases in severity, but the duration of lameness will depend on the severity of the inflammatory response.

The organism can survive outside the pig in dry conditions for up to 4 weeks and longer than that if wet.

The rate of spread of infection within a group is influenced by herd immunity, environmental factors and stocking rate, whilst presence of clinical disease is related to high infection challenge and increased stress, such as trauma, moving, mixing, low temperatures and temperature changes, draughts, high stocking rates, large groups, Osteochondrosis dessicans (OCD) and bursae lesions, nutritional imbalances and body conformation (highly muscled genetics are more prone to showing clinical signs because the higher muscle mass allows for a more severe inflammatory reaction).

Clinical signs

The onset of lameness is abrupt and with no fever. Lameness tends to be more obvious in the back legs but infection can occur in any joints in any limbs. Joints may appear puffy but there is usually no obvious inflammation, often related to the fact that it is the more muscled joints which are affected meaning inflammation is not easy to see. Pigs can be seen “dog sitting” and there is often a reddening around the back end of the pig as a result of sitting for long periods of time. Pigs tend to walk off the lameness if forced to move but will often be reluctant at first to take more than a few steps.

In younger growing pigs, lameness will be of sudden onset and within a group can range from partial lameness on a single limb to being completely off the back legs and unable to stand due to pain in swollen joints.

Research on the impact on average Daily Liveweight Gain has produced contradicting results, often finding growth unaffected by *M. hyosynoviae* infection though but some negative effect is expected from reduced feed and water intake during clinical signs.

Treatment

Water and in-feed medication can help if given to prevent the spread of the organism within a group but due to the low penetration of the joint achieved by oral antibiotics, treatment of affected cases tends to be unsuccessful. Relapses after antibiotic treatments often occur because the organism survives in the environment and in the tonsils, allowing recolonization once treatment has finalised.

Pain management with non-steroid anti-inflammatory drugs like Metacam or Loxicom can help the pigs to overcome the acute stage of disease without losing body condition. This treatment does not require tagging if part of the Karro “antibiotic free” contract. Increased exercise will help to keep the joints mobile and strengthen the muscles around the joint to provide extra bone support. Stiffness, pain and swelling caused by arthritis can reduce the range of motion in the joints so assuring the pigs remain mobile will help to maintain normal joint movement.

Antibiotic treatment with Lincoject or Lincocin (1ml/10kg – 3 day withdrawal) for 3 consecutive days should be given to pigs unable or unwilling to stand or those clearly losing body condition. If the batch is part of the “Antibiotic Free” programme pigs should be tagged after treatment. Alternatively a single injection of Alamycin LA (1ml/10kg – 18 day withdrawal) can be used.

Control should be based around minimising stressors and predisposing factors discussed overleaf. Maintaining good hygiene between batches and even during the same batch to reduce pressure of infection is essential. All elements of the pen should be included in the washing routine, as should the walls ledges and outside areas where possible. Steam cleaning rooms may also help to reduce infection challenge. Keeping floors in a good state of repair allows for more thorough cleaning and disinfection and prevents bugs surviving in cracks and crevices between batches.

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