

NOVEMBER 2018

POST WEANING DIARRHOEA

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From summer with the heat wave until now with slightly frosty temperatures challenging our pig husbandry. We have received a number of calls to investigate increased post-weaning diarrhoea in the last 6 months. Why are pigs after weaning so susceptible to scour. Weaning and the following days after are the most stressful times in the life of a pig. It has little immunity, after having been taken away from the sow and litter mates, batched according to size and sex in a different environment. Piglets need to find food and water as well as to adjust to the new environment where they need to establish a 'pecking order' which has the effect of reducing crucial feed and water intake too. At weaning the piglet has to adjust to a solid diet and can't rely anymore on the milk provided by the sow.

The piglet's digestive system is used to a milk-based diet as its first source of feed. As the piglet matures the enzyme system develops being more capable of handling non-milk carbohydrates and protein but sometimes the transitioning period is not as smooth as desired and may allow certain types of bacteria to rapidly multiply and pass on through the stomach to the intestines. The majority of post weaning scour can be associated with E. coli, Salmonella and Clostridia bacteria as well as viruses like Rota and Coronavirus. Many farms have seen E. Coli weaning scour in the unusual summer this year so I would like to tell you more about E.Coli –scour:

E.Coli bacteria –apathogenic, moderate and more pathogenic strains – belong to the physiological gut flora of the pig but sometimes pathogenic strains like (ETEC – enterotoxigenic E.Coli) are able to colonize and overgrow in the small intestine, especially when conditions while transitioning from mums' milk to solid feed are supplying protein they can feed on. Then the E.Coli are able to dominate over the physiological lactobacilli flora in the gut and this might result in an infantgut flora becoming functional. The pathogenic E.Colis are able to attach to the mucosal gut tissue with filaments called fimbriae which works like a lock and key system, and allow the E.coli to damage the mucosal cells, what resulting in watery diarrhoea. The most effective fimbriae that cause damage are F4 and F18. Fortunately there are vaccines on the market working effectively to prevent weaning scour if certain pathogenic factors like F4 and F18 have been proved as causative agent. Other measurements around weaning described by my colleagues Richard Pearson and Alice Brough in their previous talk shops, like lowering protein content of weaner rations, water



acidification and improved hygiene in the nursery are also working well as preventative actions.

VETERINARY HEALTH PLANS

T Red Tractor announced in September this year the intention to introduce a new
A 'modular system' from 2019, incorporating animal welfare and environmental
L standards with the introduction of a risk based approach to farm inspections. They
K also announced the introduction of a tougher inspection regime, including more
unannounced checks for farms that fail to comply with the standards what was set to
come into force from November on. Hence just a friendly reminder for you to store a
copy of your updated Veterinay Health Plan so that you are hopefully compliant
when it comes to more frequent or spot audit inspections. Records of staff training
are certainly coming under increasing scrutiny, please could you make
sure you check any VHPs as soon as they are sentto you ratherthan on the
day of an audit. VHPs ares uposed to be agreed by both producer and vet
and this should help us sort any problems.



LAST POSTING DATES FOR CHRISTMAS

Can we please remind everyone that the last posting dates for Christmas are:

Thursday 20th December for Delivery Friday 21st. There may be an option to post
drugs out on Friday 21st for delivery Christmas Eve but we would prefer to do this
only in an emergency and no vaccines would be posted out in this period due to
having the weekend in between.

Delivery dates after Christmas are **Thursday 27th December for delivery 28th** and
then **Tuesday 2nd January for delivery Wednesday 3rd.**

We would appreciate your help in getting all your orders in early for over the
christmas period and wish you all a very happy and healthy Christmas and New Year.

Dr. med.vet. Anne C. Warzecha, MRCVS