Reducing improper handling during farrowing improves performance in lactation period

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INTRODUCTION

Maternal glucocorticoids induced by prenatal stress can impair colostrum production which could increase pre-weaning mortality.

Inappropriate handling of the sow during this period can worsen this situation.

The aim of this study was to assess the productive impact of causing stress to sows in the peripartum days due to improper management.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A problem of aggression in sows was perceived towards their litters and the workers, associated with high percentage of pre-weaning mortality. Also was detected an improper handling: unnecessary antibiotic treatments and excessive intervention during the farrowing process. In consequence a plan of personal training was done, relative to the handling during the farrowing.

In total 344 farrowings were analyzed, 220 before training and 124 after training.

Data collected: TB, BA, SB, WP/L, PWM, Mamitis Prevalence and Farrowing Assistance.

Data were analysed by GLM models of SAS, including workers training as main factor.

RESULTS

**Figure 1.** Percentage of sows assisted and mamitis prevalence before and after of farm staff training.

* * P<0.01; ** P<0.05

Table 1. Prolificacy before and after of farm staff training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Born alive</th>
<th>Stillborn</th>
<th>Total born</th>
<th>Weaned piglets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before</td>
<td>12.97</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>14.10</td>
<td>9.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After</td>
<td>12.29</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>13.37</td>
<td>9.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SEM1 | 0.21 | 0.15 | 0.22 | 0.16

1Standard Error of Mean; 2Probability: NS, P>0.10; t, P<0.10; ***, P<0.001

**Figure 2.** Total % of pre-weaning mortality and of the main causes before and after of farm staff training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total mortality</th>
<th>Crushing</th>
<th>Runts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before training</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After training</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSION

Missunderstood and improper peripartum management impairing productive performance of the sows can be corrected with adequate farm staff training delivering statistically significant results in piglets mortality, crushing and runts.