

ZOOTECNICAL PERFORMANCE OF PIGLETS SUBMITTED OR NOT TO DENTAL MANAGEMENT

DESEMPENHO ZOOTÉCNICO DE LEITÕES SUBMETIDOS OU NÃO AO MANEJO DENTÁRIO NA FASE DE MATERNIDADE

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Currently the pig industry has undergone several adaptations, since the consumer is becoming more selective, especially with regard to food safety and animal welfare. Europe, the major consumer market of Brazilian pork, prohibits the practice of removing or wearing down of the teeth of piglets during the maternity, justifying this practice discourages the welfare of animals. On the other hand, in Brazil, this practice is still being performed routinely in most pig farms, which impairs the exportation of swine products to demanding markets. There is insufficient information about the harms and benefits of that management, so this study aimed to evaluate the influence of dental activity management on the performance of piglets during nursery. Twenty-six litters randomly distributed according to the order of birth of mother were investigated, being 13 litters subjected to dental management (control group), and 13 litters not subjected to the same management (treatment group). Each litter was evaluated for 21 days, undergoing piglets weighing on the day they were born and at 21 days occurred when weaning, thus to obtain the variables average daily weight gain (ADG) and weaning weight (WEIGHT). Regarding the ADG of piglets, the control group showed an average gain of 0.193 kg/day while the treatment group showed 0.200 kg/day, with no significant difference ($P>0.05$) between the experimental groups (Table 1). For WEIGHT, the control group showed average of 5.685 kg, while the treatment group had 5.670 kg, also showing no statistically significant difference ($P>0.05$) (Table 2). There were no incidence of skin lesions and ceilings of the arrays and the skin of piglets evaluated that could be attributed to the implementation or not of dental management. Thus, by the results found in this study it may be recommended that the implementation of dental management happen only in cases where there is evidence of injury in piglets and/or on the ceilings of the arrays, thus avoiding unnecessary handlings on the farm.

Table 1. Average daily weight gain (ADG) of piglets treated or not with dental management

Group	Number of litters	ADG (kg)
Control	13	0.193
Treatment	13	0.200

CV = 19.59%

Table 2. Average weaning weight (WEIGHT) piglets treated or not with dental management

Group	Number of litters	WEIGHT (kg)
Control	13	5.685
Treatment	13	5.670

CV = 14.76%

Keywords: animal welfare, *Sus domesticus*, teeth removing.

Acknowledgments: Fundação de Amparo a Pesquisa do Estado de Minas Gerais (FAPEMIG).