Observing, Treating & Preventing Sick or Lame Sows

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Sick or Off-Feed sows

- Farrowing
- Gestation
- Lame
  - 50% or Greater due to lameness

Farrowing

A. Parturition or “Labor”
B. Post-Farrowing - 1-3 days
C. Lactation

Parturition - observing

- No Appetite
- Sow in “Labor”
  - comfortable?
- Environment
  - temperature
  - cooling
  - body condition

Post-Farrowing - observing

- 1-3 days immediately post-farrowing
- Monitor appetite
  - do not overfeed
- Check udder
  - swelling
  - skin temperature
- Constipation
  - water availability
- Discharge
  - odor

Lactation - observing

- Daily feeding amounts
- Udder function
- Environment
  - room temperature
- Lameness
- Body condition
  - shoulder sores
- Fostering
  - remove or add pigs
Treatment - farrowing

Evaluate sow & litter
a. Pigs nursing
b. Sow eating normally
c. Sow able to stand
d. Mastitis, Metritis or Musculoskeletal

Medications:

a. Antibiotics
   - Excenel, Penicillin, Polyflex
b. Steroids – anti-inflammatory
   - Predext, Dexamethasone
c. Vitamins
   - B-Complex, B-12
d. NSAID (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug)
   - Banamine-S
e. Hormones
   - Oxytocin

Other considerations:

- Feed Laxatives
- Infuse reproductive tract
- Remove sow & cull

Farrowing - preventing sick sows

- Early detection!
- Observe appetite
- Lactational function
- Willingness to stand
- Awareness & attention to surroundings

- Proper pre-farrowing feeding after entry
- Water availability
- Environmental conditions
- Body condition

Gestation - observing

- Daily walk through at feeding time
- All sows should stand
- Listen for abnormal sounds
  - coughing, squeals, panting, etc...
- Observe for discharges & abnormal stool
  - pus, pigs, bloody diarrhea, etc...
- Record & follow-up on suspect sows
Observe sow from both sides

Gestation – conditions to observe
- Coughing
  - Flu, PRRS virus, Mycoplasmal, Bacterial pneumonia
- Diarrhea
- Discharges
- Downers
- Lameness
- Systemic
  - H. Parasuis, Strep. suis, Abscess
- Trauma

Gestation – treatment; w/ clinical signs
- Discharge; reproductive – systemic antibiotics
  - Excenel, Penicillin, Polyflex
- Bloody diarrhea – ileitis
  - Lincomycin, Tylan 200
- Lameness – systemic antibiotics & pain reliever
  - Excenel, Penicillin, Polyflex, Lincomycin
  - Banamine-Sr, Predef, etc.
  - Topical antiseptics

Gestation – treatment; NO clinical signs
- Take rectal temperature; Treat sow if > 103°F
- Treat sow for general illness – systemically
  - Antibiotics
  - Steroidal anti-inflammatory
  - NSAID; Banamine-Sr
  - Vitamins

Necropsies
- Helpful diagnostic tool
- Learning for prevention & knowledge of other cases
- Need good knife & sharpening steel
- Tissues can be collected; either sent to lab or reviewed by veterinarian later

Lameness
- > 50% of sow deaths or euthanasia's
- Preventable
- Treatable
- Reduce sow herd mortality
Lameness - causes
- Diseases — Erysipelas, H. parasuis, Strep. Suis
- Injury — abrasions, cuts, shoulder sores & sprains
- Nutrition — cal-phos. ratios, biotin, copper & zinc
- Environmental — slats, new concrete or design issues
- Genetic — conformation or structure

Lameness - observing
- Sows must stand at feeding unless nursing
  - Difficulty standing or rising
- Shifting weight or tapping foot
- Swelling, cuts or bleeding
- Slow walking or movement
- Avoids the group

Lameness - treating
- Systemic antibiotics & pain relievers
- Correct nutritional concerns
- Provide rubber mats for movements
- Foot baths — copper sulfate
  - 4 lbs CuSO₄ to 10 gal. water
- Hoof trimming
- Cull sows - if necessary

Prevention of Lameness
- Identify & treat early
- Proper dosage of medications
- Treatment period of 3 days
- Move sows to recovery pens
- Environment — clean & dry
- Concrete — slat width, rough edges
- Diseases — incoming health status, vaccinate, monitor

Prevention of Lameness
- Sow movements
  - Sow foot baths “to & from” farrowing
  - Cover slats with rubber matting
  - Gentle, slow & avoid overcrowding
- Nutrition
  - Proper diet formulations & monitoring
  - Increase biotin, copper & zinc for hoof strength
- Genetics
  - Good selection of sound, well structured gilts
  - Good conformation
  - Adequate weight & age at entry
Use of treatment cards
- Individual sow treatment cards
- Follows sow thru current parity and into next farrowing period
- Easily visible by staff & supervisors

Treat for recommended periods
- Multiple days
- Proper dose & medications

TREATMENT CARD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Lame</th>
<th>Off feed</th>
<th>Pneumonia</th>
<th>Diarrhea</th>
<th>Drowning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Withdrew</td>
<td>Overdose</td>
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<tr>
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Track farrowing vs. gestation
Track deads vs. euthanized

Sow mortality
- Dead
- Euthanize
- Total
- % Mortality

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<th>Farrowing</th>
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<tr>
<td>Isolation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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Total sow inventory: 0000

Questions?