

Heat Stress in Pigs

The summer months are now upon us and once again we are experiencing very warm temperatures. Both Sows and Growing pigs are at risk of heat stress, indoors and outdoors, so it is important to know how you can help. Identifying acute cases as well as how to prevent heat stress are both important factors to consider. I would hope most are aware that pigs cannot sweat, the mechanism that we use to cool. We therefore have a responsibility to provide pigs with the resources they require to cool themselves. We can help in two ways: Directly assisting with cooling; Dissipating the heat from surroundings. See below for ideas.

- Direct assistance with cooling
 - Outdoor pigs – Wallows / running water source.
 - Indoor pigs – Bucketing water directly onto sows in farrowing house / Dampening Straw / Misting pigs /cleaning scrape ways regularly to allow passageways to be flooded for wallowing.
- Dissipating the Heat
 - Outdoor Pigs – Painting Huts with White Paint / Creating shaded areas to reduce direct sunlight exposure.
 - Indoor Pigs – Clearing out deep bedded systems regularly / Reduce direct sunlight exposure.



Heat stress could present in many ways, but some of the main clinical signs are as follows: Lethargy, Panting/Open Mouth Breathing, Recumbency (plus or minus neurological signs), Milk drop, Fertility issues and in the severe cases mortality.

Don't forget it's not just the pigs in the heat, other things to check are semen and medicines storage!

The AHDB resource has plenty of tips and can be found on this link: <https://ahdb.org.uk/knowledge-library/avoiding-heat-stress-in-pigs>

Team Update

We are excited to announce that we have a new team member starting in September. Hannah, who some will have already met, has graduated from Surrey University this summer and will be joining our team full-time. Hannah has spent many weeks of her university placement with us, and we feel that she has already embedded herself into the team. She has also already shown her commitment to the pig veterinary sector by attending multiple Pig Veterinary Society conferences as a student. We are all really looking forward to working with her and we hope that you can be as welcoming as possible.

Medicines Course

We have a small number of people awaiting a medicines training course as required by the Red Tractor Standards. If you have an employee that also requires the Red Tractor approved medicines training course, please do get in contact as we are looking for further numbers to allow us to organize another session.

GVG Pig Fair – Tuesday 24th October 2023

Another reminder we will be holding the GVG Pig Fair on Tuesday 24th October at Taunton Rugby club. More details to follow – but for now – save the date! (if you haven't already)

GVG Pig Health Scheme

The GVG Pig Health Scheme is now in full swing and for those enrolled, results should start landing in your inbox soon, if not already. We've already scored over 25 different units from both Westerleigh and FA Gills. In the coming months we will be able to analyse this data and publish the trends we see. To receive results, you will need to enroll on the scheme as mentioned in previous talk shops. Please check our website for assessment dates and contact the office for an enrolment form.

Tom Hill BVSc MRCVS

