

EFFECT OF SEASON ON GROWTH AND FEED INTAKE IN PIGLETS FROM BIRTH TO WEANING

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INTRODUCTION

The growth ability of piglets can be considered an essential condition for meat production. The growth and the development of piglets is influenced by internal and external factors. The external factors influencing the prosperity of piglets are among other things the effect of season and nutrition. The aim of this study was to evaluate the growth ability of piglets from the birth to the weaning depending on the season.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The evaluation of the effect of season on growth and feed intake in piglets from birth to weaning was performed on a commercial pig farm. Always 10 sows were evaluated under identical environmental conditions of the farrowing house. The animal house was not air-conditioned so that the temperature and humidity were not constant. The weight of piglets was estimated with the accuracy to 100g at the moment of birth and in age of 10; 20 and 28 days (i.e. at weaning). Average weight gains and feed consumption (in grams) were calculated also with the accuracy to 100g for each of the aforementioned time intervals. These data were statistically processed and analysed using the package STATISTICA, version 9.0.

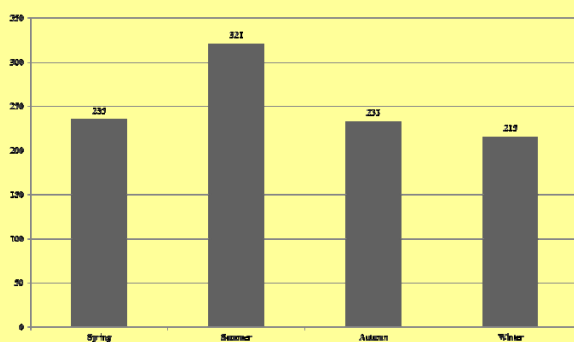
RESULTS

Differences between winter and summer periods (215 vs. 321g, respectively) were significant ($P \leq 0,05$). Other differences were found between autumn and winter periods were significant ($P \leq 0,01$). In spring period feed consumption was recorder 6,17 g/head/day, in summer period 4,41 g/head/day, in autumn period 4,30 g/head/day and in winter period 3,67 g/head/day. Basic statistical characteristics are shown in Table.

Tab.: Basic statistical characteristic average daily weight gains in piglets

Season	Count	Average g/day	S.deviat.	Min.	Max.
Spring	89	235	68	111	351
Summer	105	321	59	106	369
Autumn	100	233	69	121	408
Winter	98	215	81	90	361

Fig.: Average daily weight gains in piglets



CONCLUSIONS

In this experiment the effect of all seasons (i.e. spring, summer, autumn and winter) on growth and feed intake in piglets within the period from birth to weaning was studied. Significant differences were found between winter and summer periods and the other were found between autumn and winter.

This study was supported by project No. QI 111A166 which is financed by the Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic.