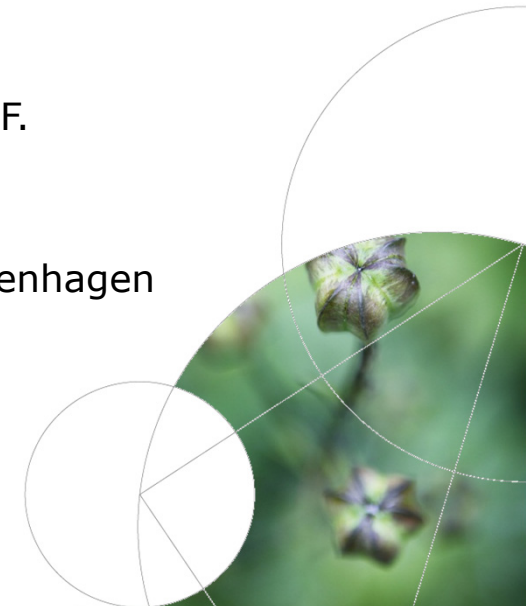




## Saliva cortisol levels of nurse sows and ordinary sows through lactation

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Collaboration between Pig Research Centre and University of Copenhagen



## Background (1)

Due to large litter sizes in hyperprolific sows – the sow can not rear all of her own piglets

Need for alternative management methods include: Cross – fostering, split suckling, early weaning, split weaning, and use of nurse sows



## Background (2)

- The term nurse sows – is commonly used and practiced in DK
- However this means that the sow spends up to 7 – 8 weeks in farrowing crates

It is, however, not known if nurse sows experience prolonged stress by having to stay in farrowing crates beyond the normal weaning time

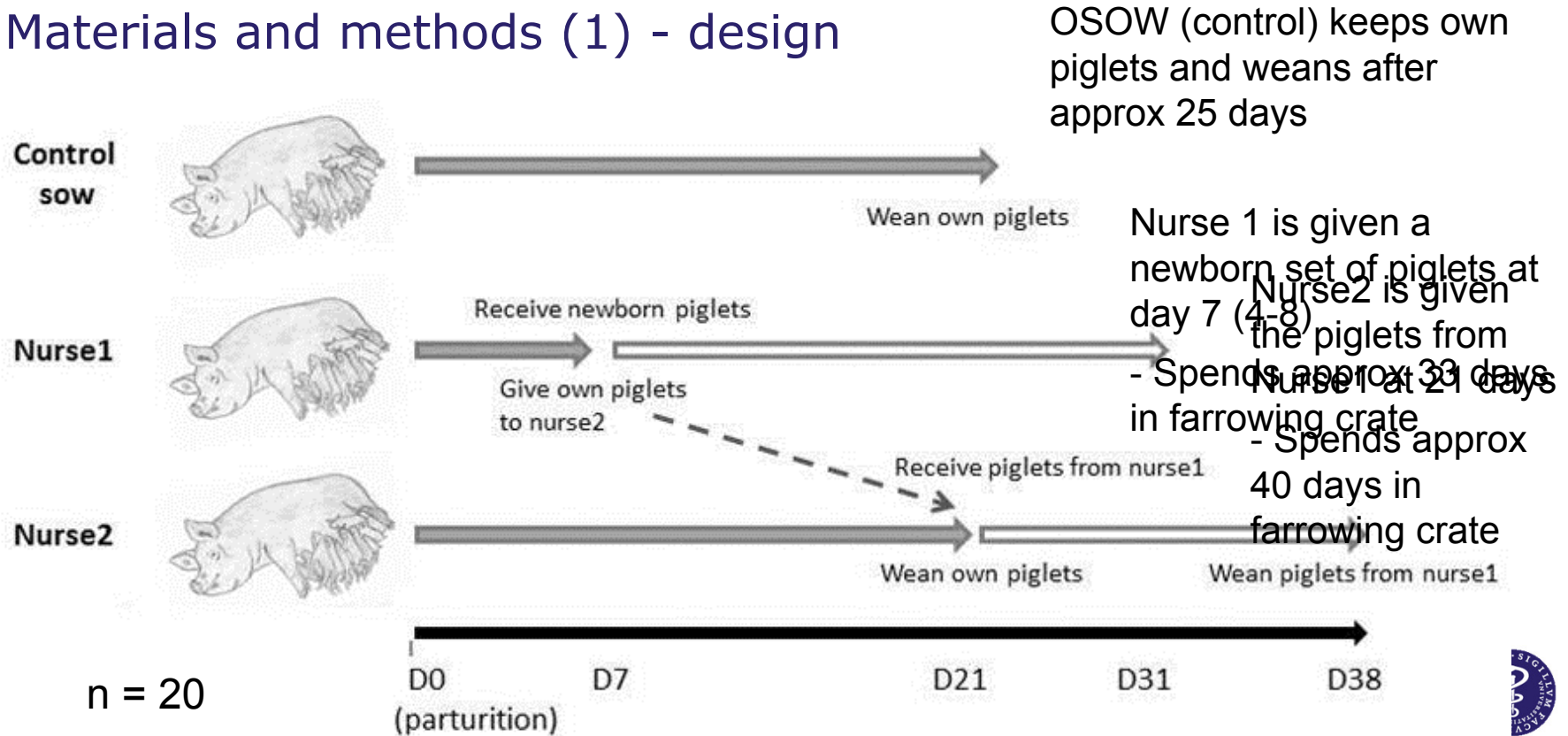


## Aim

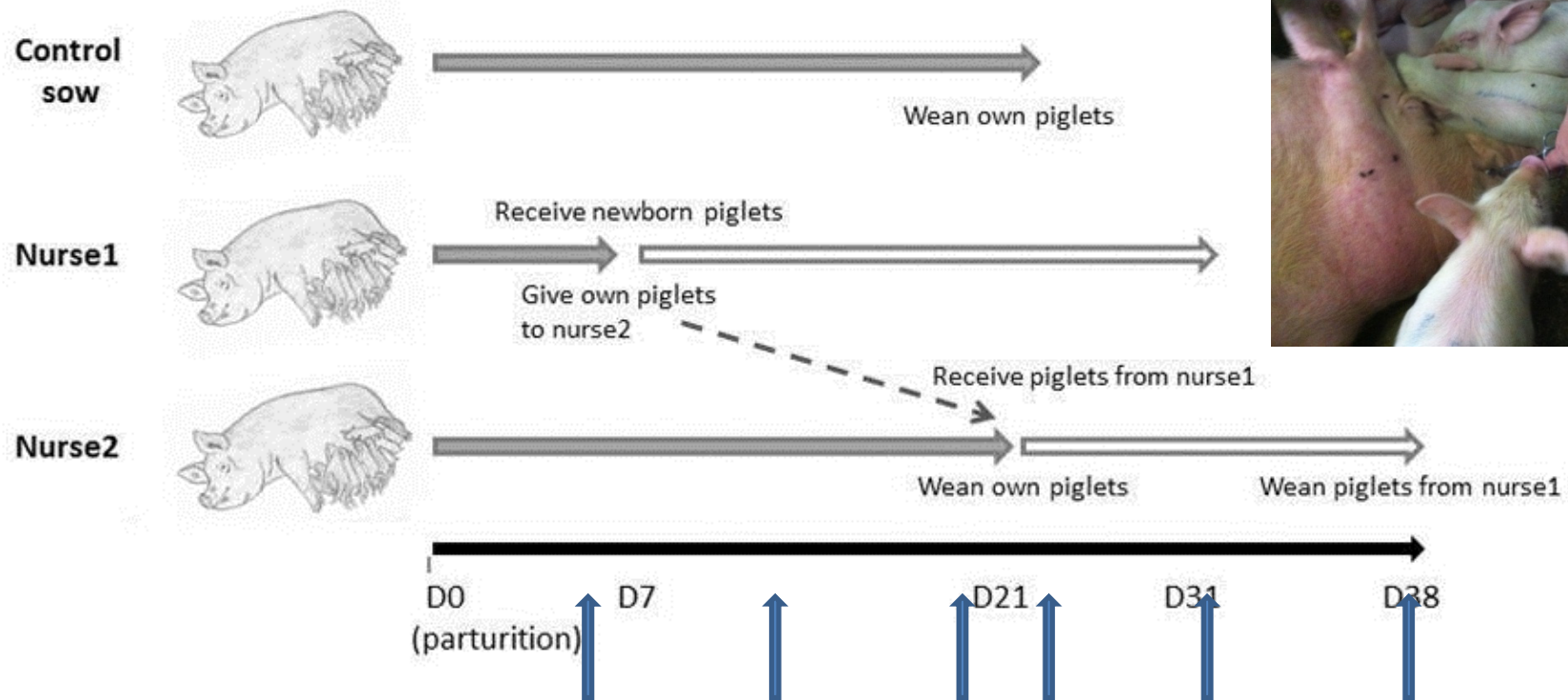
The aim of this study was to quantify the long-term saliva cortisol response as a measurement of the nurse sows stress level compared to ordinary sows (OSOW) weaning their piglets at d 25.



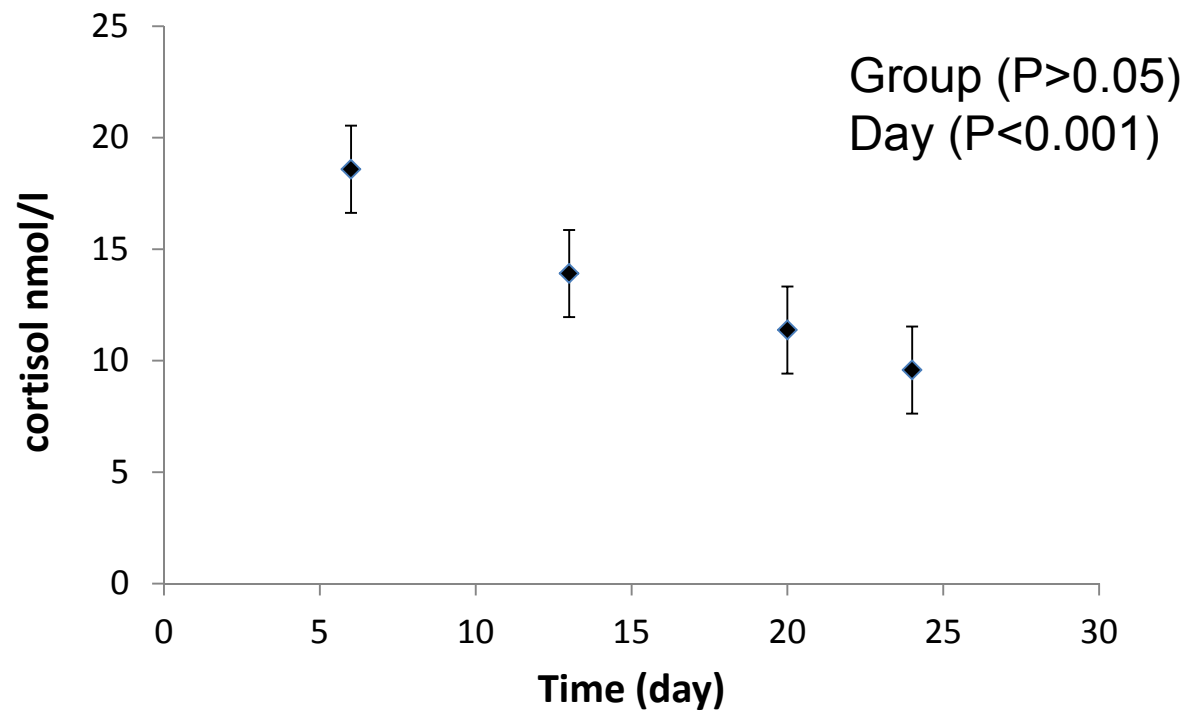
# Materials and methods (1) - design



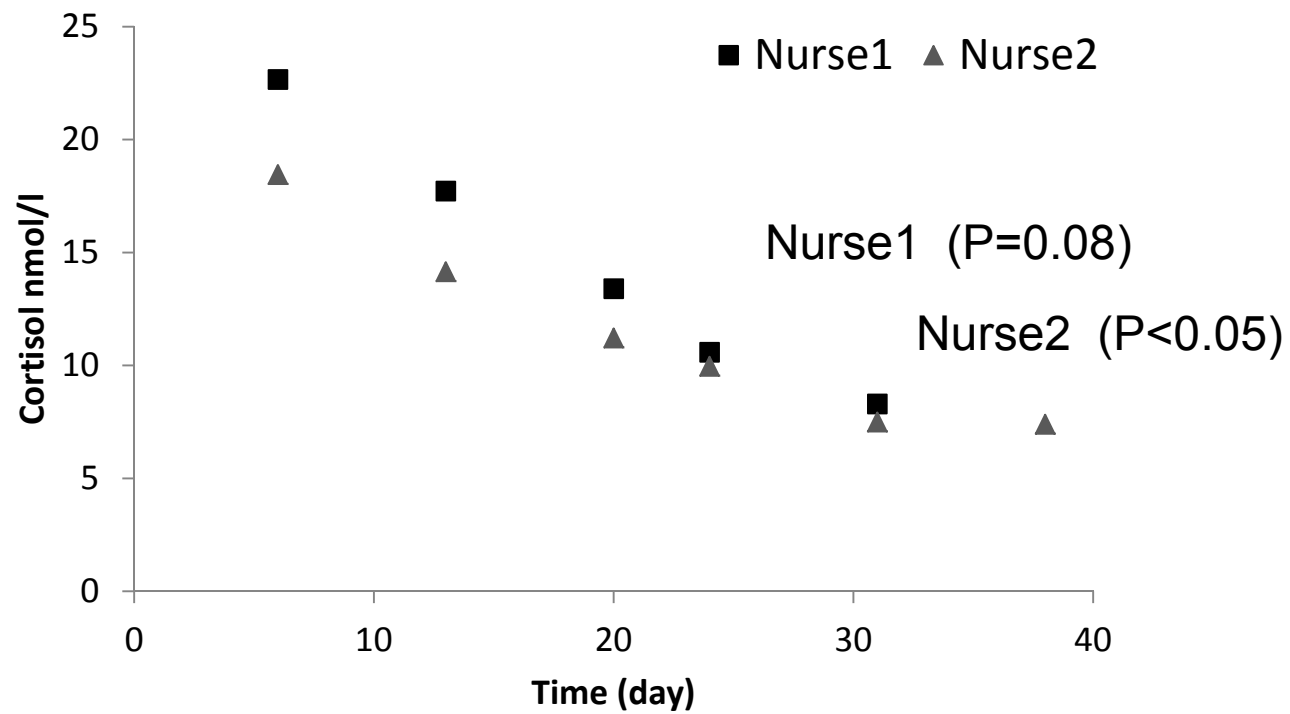
## Materials and methods (2) – saliva collection



## Results:



## Results:





## Conclusion

Results indicate that saliva cortisol levels decline throughout lactation and that there is no difference in saliva cortisol levels between OSOWS and nurse sows.

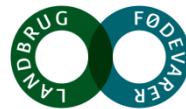
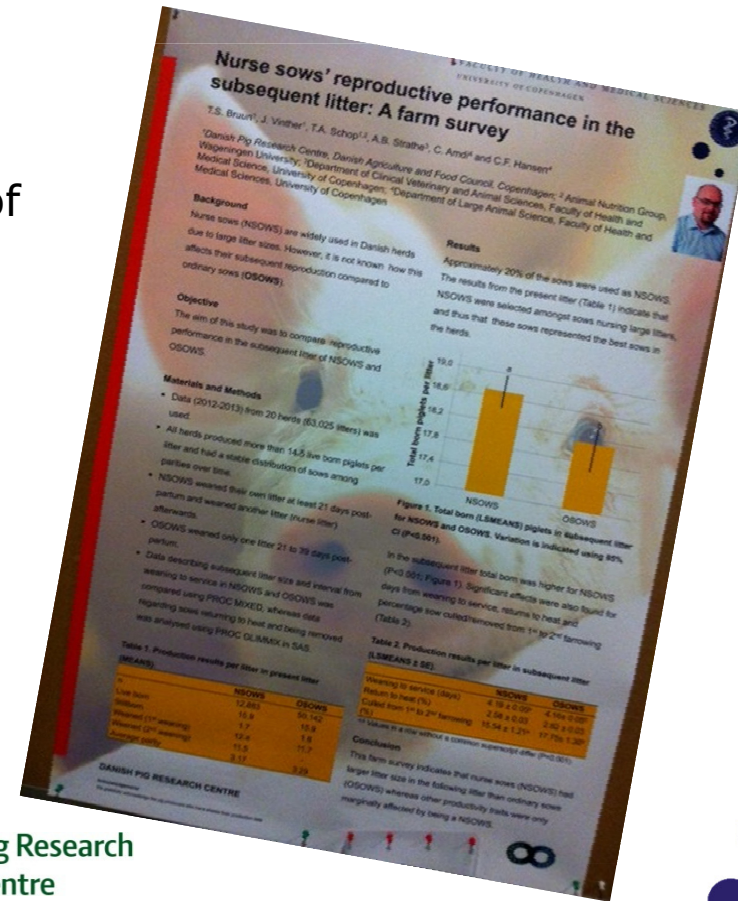
This is an ongoing study

- short term cortisol
- behaviour
- heart rate



Thank you for your attention!

For more information on the productivity of nurse sows - please take a look at Thomas' poster – no 5 (session 53)



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