Christian-Albrechts-University Kiel
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Is tail biting in growing pigs reduced by a prolonged suckling period?

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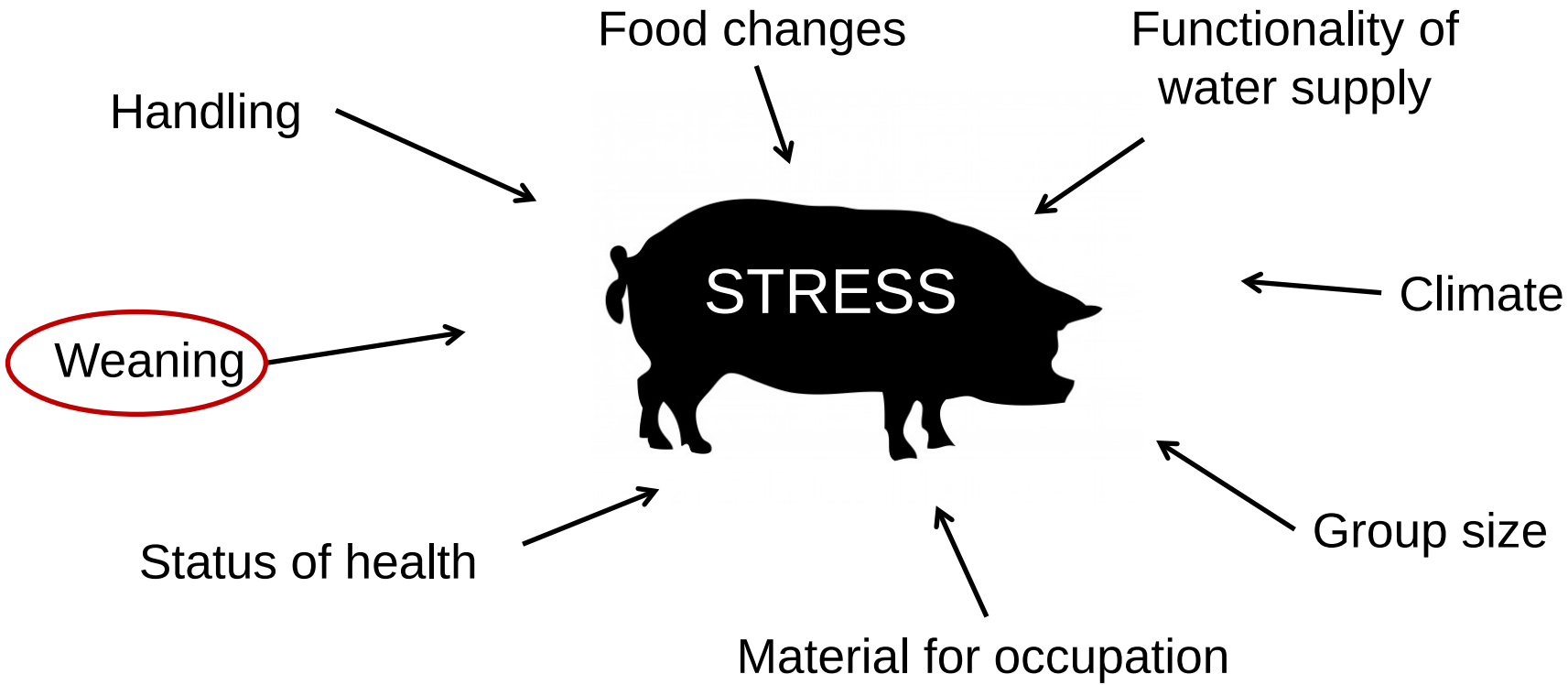
Introduction



Introduction

- **Stress of weaning**
  - Early
  - Loss of the mother
  - Food change
  - New pen mates
  - New environment
  - New infectious agents

Aim: Influence of stress reduction during on tail biting during weaning

- 5 weeks suckling period vs. 4 weeks suckling period
- Group-housing vs. conventional farrowing crates

Materials & Methods

- **Immunization**
  - Mycoplasma
  - PIA
  - Circo Virus

- **Genetics**
  - PIC X PIC 408
  - Porkuss X German Pietrain

Materials & Methods

- **SH-4:** 4 weeks suckling period n

Materials & Methods

Materials & Methods

Materials & Methods

Tail posture

Inconspicuous

Curled


[6]

Lifted, not curled


[1]

Risk

Wagging


[7]

Hanging


[3]

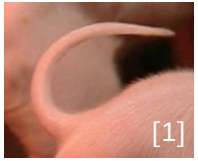
Jammed between legs


[8]

Materials & Methods

Tail lesions

- No injuries



- Scratches,
  Unsevere bite marks

- Small injuries

- Large injuries

Tail losses

- Original length

- Tip loss (< ¼ of the tail)

- Partial loss (> ¾ of the tail)

- Complete loss

Materials & Methods

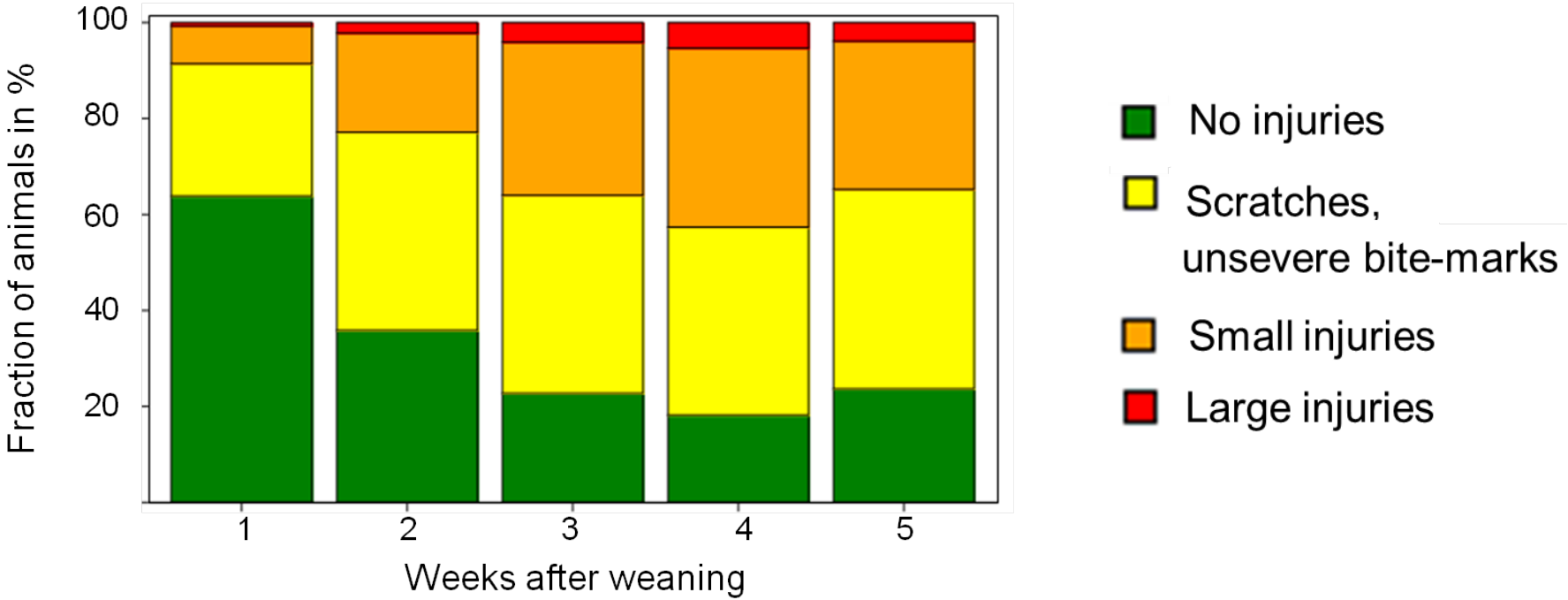
Statistical analysis

- **Program:** SAS 9.4 (Procedure: Glimmix)
- **Tail lesions:**
  - Fix effects: batch, group, rearing_week, batch*group, tail_posture, tail_posture_previous_week
  - Random effects: piglet number
- **Tail losses:**
  - Fix effects: batch, group, batch*group, tail_posture_previous_week
  - Random effects: piglet number

Results

Tail lesions over weeks after weaning

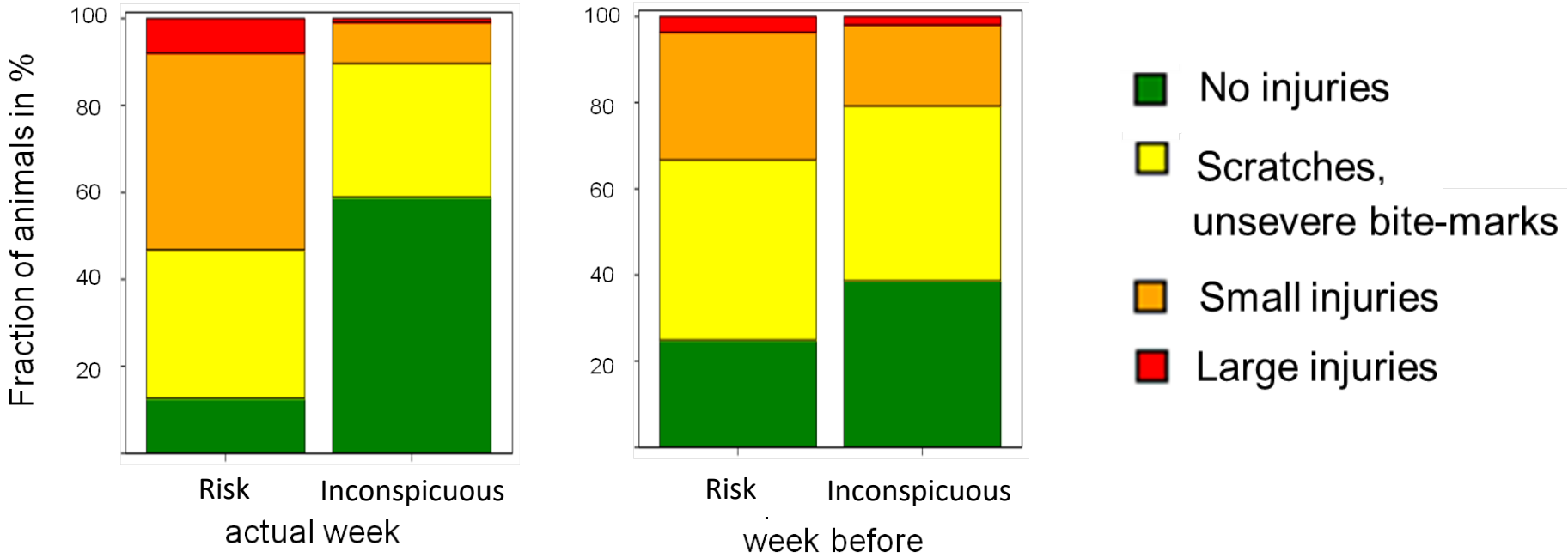
$p < 0.05$



Results

Tail lesions and influence on tail posture

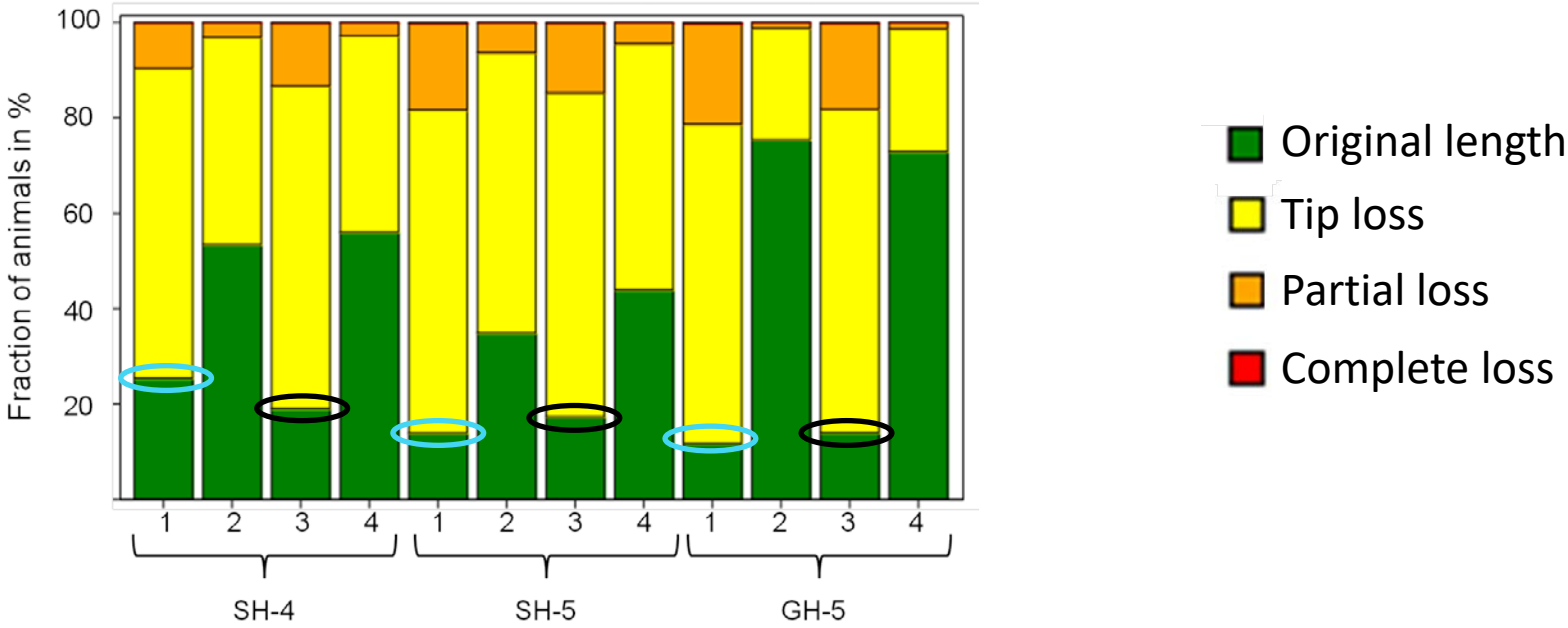
$p < 0.05$



Results

Influence of interaction between batch and group on tail losses

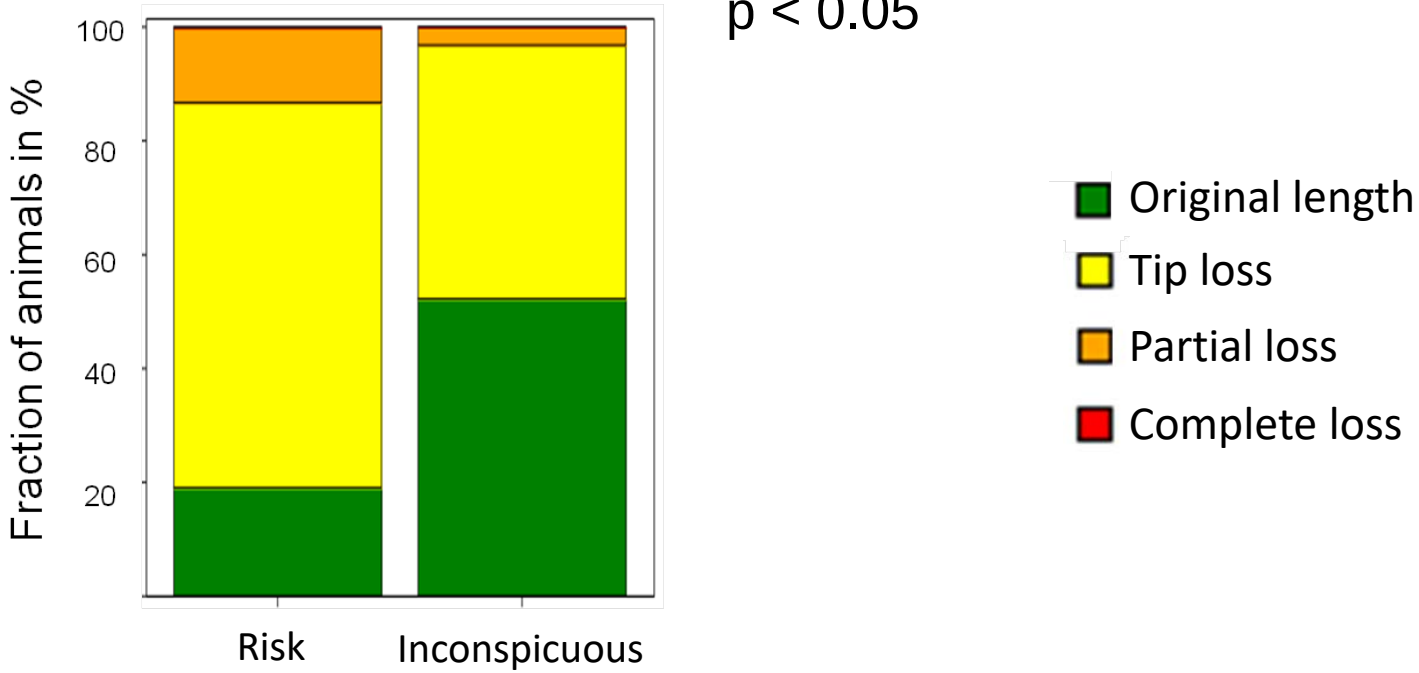
$p < 0.05$



Results

Relation between tail losses and tail posture of week before

$p < 0.05$



Discussion

- **Problem: terms of practice**
  - Infection with streptococcus-species
  - Ventilation in 2. batch not ideal
  - Not enough peat-basins

- **No influence of suckling period?**
  - Not long enough

- **No influence of group housing?**
  - Relatively less space and sturcture in growing pen
  - Less social partners in growing pen then in the group housing pen

- **The 2-weeks-mystery**

Summary

- **No positive effect of a prolonged suckling period**
- **No positive effect of group housing during suckling period**
- **Tail posture is helpful to predict tail biting**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

SH

Schleswig-Holstein
Ministerium für Energiewende,
Landwirtschaft, Umwelt und
ländliche Räume des Landes
Schleswig-Holstein

rentenbank

Sources

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[2] Abriel, M., Jais, C., 2013. Einfluss der Haltungsbedingungen auf das Auftreten von Kannibalismus bei Aufzuchtferkeln. Landtechnik 68(6), 295-300.

[3] http://www.agron-ems.de/index.php?rex_resize=640w__&rex_resize=640c__282h__schweine_3.jpg

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