

THE REPRODUCTIVE PERFORMANCE AND BODY CONDITION OF SOWS AS RELATED TO PARITY

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The reproductive performance and body condition of 380 sows were measured in three commercial piggeries in Central Western New South Wales over an 18-month period, with recordings from 1200 litters. Days from weaning to effective service in the table are given only for sows conceiving within 25 days of weaning.

Table 1 Body condition and performance of sows over six parities

Parity	No. born alive	No. weaned	Weaning to conception (d)	Body condition†	Skin scaliness‡
1	8.70	6.67	10.10	2.97	1.64
2	9.41	7.53	8.81	2.79	1.94
3	9.35	7.41	8.35	2.74	2.03
4	9.66	7.48	7.78	2.90	2.14
5	9.43	7.67	7.58	2.95	2.36
6	9.30	7.52	7.60	3.01	2.37
SEM	0.211	0.203	0.340	0.044	0.060

† Assessed on a scale from 1 to 5.

‡ On a scale from 1 to 4.

The body condition of the sows varied with parity (Table 1) and stage of reproduction (mean scores 2.87 in early pregnancy, 3.08 in late pregnancy, 2.70 during lactation and 2.54 between weaning and remating).

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EFFECT OF SUPPLEMENTING SOWS WITH BIOTIN ON THE MAINTENANCE OF HOOF INTEGRITY AND ON SCALINESS OF THE BODY

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Biotin deficiency is one of the causes of lameness in sows. It has also been associated with skin condition. In the present trial, half the sows on three commercial piggeries received a supplement of 500 µg biotin/kg of diet. The claws and scaliness of the skin of the 380 sows were inspected three times over 12 months and the results are shown in Table 1. The biotin supplement reduced the claw lesions on two of the three farms, but had no effect on skin scaliness.

Table 1 Claw lesion and skin scaliness scores of sows fed diets supplemented with 0 or 500 µg biotin/kg diet

Farm	Biotin supplement	Claw†		Skin‡	
		-	+	-	+
A		1.81	1.62	2.56	2.47
B		1.85	1.72	2.06	2.04
C		1.54	1.58	1.89	2.05
Mean		1.73	1.64	2.17	2.18
SEM		0.035		0.039	

† Assessed on a scale from 1 to 3.

‡ On a scale from 1 to 4.

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