



R&D Snapshot

Key differences underlying top and bottom re-productive performers: analysis of management programme data

APL Project 2013/022

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Purpose:

- To identify opportunities to maintain a favourable herd parity distribution, with a target of 70% retention of mated gilts to parity three.

Take home messages:

- A major contributor of reproductive wastage is the premature culling of sows.
- An in-depth analysis of farm performance records from 20 producers across South Australia, Victoria and Queensland was conducted.
- The average retention rate (% of gilts farrowing 3 litters) was 60%, indicating that sow retention was not as large an issue as anticipated across the farms analysed. However, replacement rates averaged 56% (ranging from 41 to 71%), indicating culling of young sows.
- Few farms achieved a farrowing rate of greater than 85%, signifying sub-optimal reproductive performance of the farms involved.
- The range in gilt age at first mating was 199-274 days, compared with the optimal age range of 210-240 days of age.
- Premature culling of young sows may be explained by poor gilt management, heat detection and/or mating strategies.

Additional information:

- For further information or a copy of the full report, please contact Dr Robyn Terry on 02 6270 8820 or at robyn.terry@australianpork.com.au.

