



# R&D Snapshot

## Management of Sow Body Condition during Gestation and Lactation.

**Investigator:** Tracy Muller, SunPork Solutions

**Purpose:**

- To identify whether creatinine is an effective measure to detect the onset of muscle loss in sows during lactation.

**Take home messages:**

Muscle loss can result from reduced feed intake or high demand from suckling piglets and increased creatinine (Crea) levels may be an indicator of this. Muscle loss can negatively impact on subsequent reproductive performance and introduce variations in sow body condition that is difficult to manage in group housing systems.

- Blood Crea levels increased linearly with average piglet gain which may be a response to increased milk production.
- Observed increases in Crea in restrictedly fed lactating sows could reflect a disturbance in the fluid balance of lactating sows.
- Crea levels in pigs varied greatly due to feed intake, feed delivery systems used, water intake, ambient temperature and time of day.
- Sampling protocols need to be established for Crea levels to be a useful measure - this is now being investigated.

**Additional information:**

- For a copy of the full report contact Lechelle van Breda on 02 6270 8823 or at [lechelle.vanbreda@australianpork.com.au](mailto:lechelle.vanbreda@australianpork.com.au).

**APL Project 2013/2412** – Management of sow body condition during gestation and lactation using creatinine as a measure of muscle catabolism.

