



R&D Snapshot

Genetics affects victims of tail biting

Investigator: Dr Susanne Hermesch, AGBU, University of New England

Purpose:

- To identify genetic and non-genetic factors affecting victims of tail biting

Take home messages:

- A simple medication score (0 (not treated) or 1 (treated)), used to identify victims of tail biting, was heritable. This offers new selection avenues to reduce the incidence of tail biting
- Current selection strategies for higher lean meat growth were not associated with being a victim of tail biting
- Incidence of tail biting was higher in autumn and winter. Producers should monitor indoor climate (cold temperatures and chill factors) in order to reduce the incidence of seasonal tail biting
- More tail-biting victims were observed in pens that were in the vicinity of fans which caused higher wind speeds in these particular pens
- Pen micro-environments should be evaluated in order to reduce the incidence of tail biting in specific pens.

Additional information:

- For further information or a copy of the final report please contact Dr Rebecca Athorn at rebecca.athorn@australianpork.com.au or on 02 6270 8827.

APL Project 2016/094 – Identification of genetic factors affecting tail biting in pigs

