
"HOGG SENSE".....

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Vol. 1, No. 6*

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The Trouble with Iron: Some dairy herds are plagued with silent heats, foot soreness, metritis and rough hair coats. Investigation of feed and water in several dairy cow herds revealed high iron concentration in either the feed or water or in both. Dicalcium phosphate from some sources can contain 1% (10,000 ppm) iron. Iron is a potent oxidant or prooxidant that can adversely affect cell function.

Prooxidants, such as iron, vegetable oils, mycotoxins, chemical pollutants and heat damaged forages, oxidize body tissues. The tissues most seriously affected by high levels of prooxidants are in the reproductive, immune and vascular systems. Prevention: keep prooxidant levels low and use normal levels of antioxidants. Typical antioxidants and cofactors for dairy cows are vitamin E, beta-carotene, copper, zinc, selenium and manganese. (Daniel Pitzen, PhD, Feed Management, Vol. 44, No. 6, June 1993, pp. 9-10.) (Editors Note: Can excess iron problems in dairy cows be extrapolated to some of the vitamin E/selenium problems commonly encountered in swine herds? Dr. Pitzen's article is recommended reading for swine practitioners. You can probably obtain a copy of Dr. Pitzen's article, referenced above, from your local elevator which is likely to be on Feed Managements subscription list or contact the Webb Publishing Co, 122 South Wesley Ave., Mt. Morris, Illinois, 61054-1497).

Using Gilts as Foster Sows: The Danes have demonstrated that using every gilt as a foster sow is a new development and is probably the most interesting idea to be seen in 1993. The procedure works like this: all gilts are allowed to rear their own litters to three weeks or so. The larger piglets are then weaned and the smaller ones left on the gilt. The vacant places are filled by taking small, underprivileged piglets from sows who farrowed around the same time as the gilts, or ahead of them. All gilts now suckle this new put together litter (part gilt litter, part sow litter) for an additional 14 days (making the gilts lactation period 35 days (21 + 14). Sows suckle their remaining pigs for an additional 7 days. Many producers are weaning 27 pigs/sow/year with this system. (John Gadd, PIGS-Misset, May/June 1993, pp. 21-22) Further details are given in the original article.

Prostaglandin as an Abortifacient: Practitioners often ask what to use to abort a mismated show gilt or sow or pot-bellied female. Administration of 15 mg of Lutalyse (extra-label) IM plus 10 mg IM 12 hours later 20 days after mismating. Reduce the dose by one-half for pot-bellied pigs. A fertile estrus will occur in 3 to 7 days. (Bruce Lawhorn, DVM, Extension Veterinarian, Texas A & M Univ., College Station, Texas).