
“HOGG SENSE . . .”

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***Clostridium perfringens*, types A and C:** The etiology of swine diseases caused by *C. perfringens* can be attributed to two potent enterotoxins, alpha and beta, that are produced by the bacterium. Beta toxin plays a major role in the pathogenesis of necrotic enteritis in pigs. Alpha toxin plays a role in the cause of diarrhea in baby pigs and postweaning pigs. *C. perfringens*, type A, produces only alpha toxin while *C. perfringens*, type C, produces both alpha and beta toxins. Serotyping *C. perfringens* by Western Blot or ELISA is time consuming and less sensitive than PCR. Recently, MVP Laboratories adopted a PCR assay genotyping *C. perfringens*, types A and C, which can be accomplished in one day. The use of PCR makes it possible to identify strains of *C. perfringens* that possess the genes for alpha and/or beta toxin production. (Lin, B., DVM, PhD; MVP Laboratories, Inc., Ralston, NE.). Editor's Note: This new service by MVP will be quite useful for swine practitioners who need to diagnose toxin producing strains of *C. perfringens* in a timely manner.

PRRS Outbreaks: Massive outbreaks of PRRS in well-vaccinated herds are more likely to be due to failure of cross protection between different strains of virus. Strain differences are likely to be more important than elevated exposure as a cause of PRRS abortions storms. (Yaeger, M. et al; Project 1970, Tech Talk, NPPC, Vol. 4).

Mating Before Culling: Advantages of mating sows that are due to be culled: pregnant sows are better feed converters than empty sows. Allows enough time for shoulder sores to heal and stiffness to resolve itself. Allows pregnancy testing at 28-30 days before culling. Waiting for pregnancy testing to be completed means that pregnant animals will be available to fill in any gaps in the batch's pregnancy targets. (Dr. John Carr; Pig International, Vol. 29, No. 8, August, 1999, p. 5).

Mycoplasma Displaces PRRS: Mycoplasma increases the severity of PRRS-induced pneumonia regardless of which organism infects the pigs first. PRRS-induced pneumonia was evident in pigs three days after infection. Mycoplasma-induced pneumonia was evident 10 days after infection. The bottom line: mycoplasma acts as a co-factor in potentiating or augmenting PRRS-induced pneumonia. (Thacker, E., DVM, PhD; National Hog Farmer, November 15, 1998).

Weaner Feeders: Newly weaned pigs eat more feed if their self-feeders are white in color instead of black. Piglet may feel vulnerable to attack while still sorting out their social hierarchy after weaning and reluctant to put their head in a dark feeding space. (Pig International, August 1999, Volume 29, Number 8, p. 38).