Adopting Best Practices

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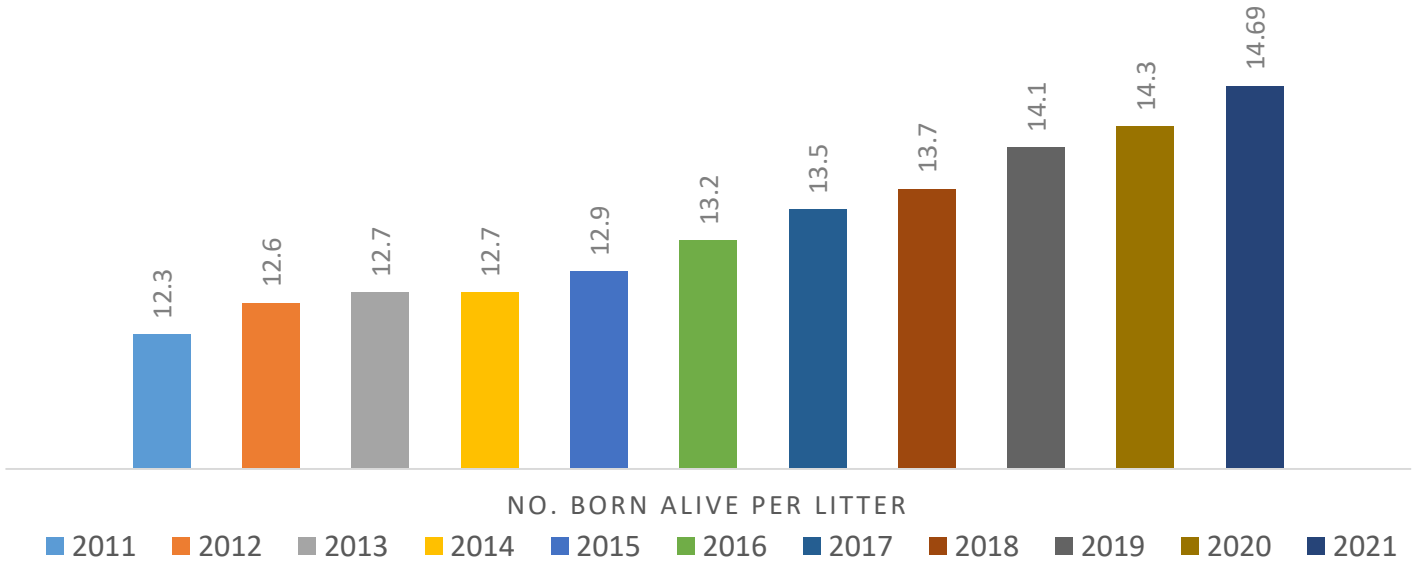
Sustaining Progress

- Significant progress since we last met!
  - ↑ 1 pig per litter born alive
  - ↑ 1.2 pigs/sow/year
  - ↓ 0.04 FCR Weaning to Sale
- What changes will you make to maintain & support this progress?
- Focus on low cost, high impact best practices

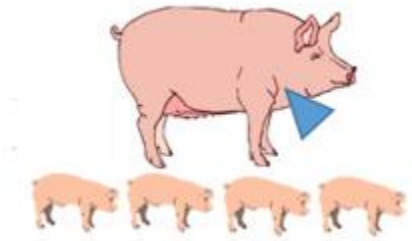
Challenge 1: Colostrum Production



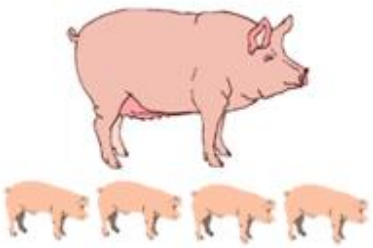
- Essential for the lifetime performance of the pig
- Colostrum yield does not increase in line with litter size
- Limited pool yet 200g+ intake per pig remains critical
- How do we ensure all pigs receive sufficient colostrum?

Pain Relief for Postpartum Sows

- **PigNutriStrat** project investigated the use of analgesia in sows to facilitate greater suckling & ensure piglets receive sufficient colostrum



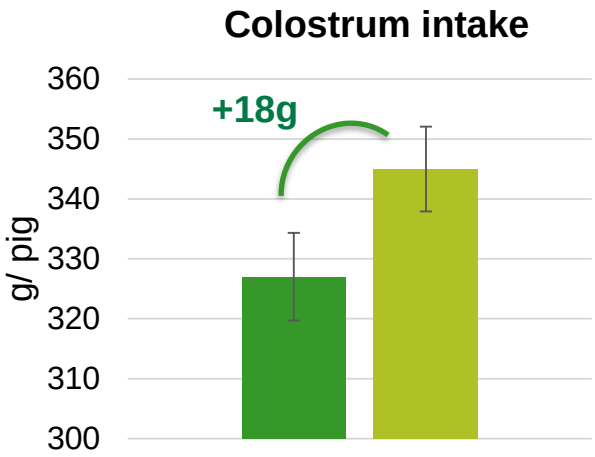
Analgesia post partum

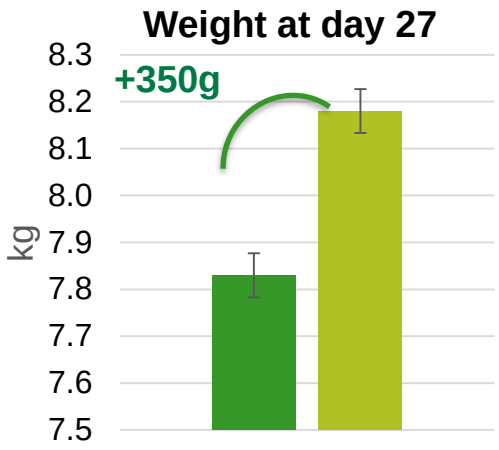


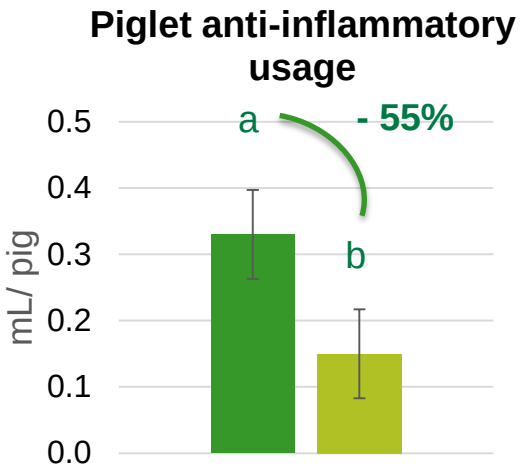
No analgesia post partum

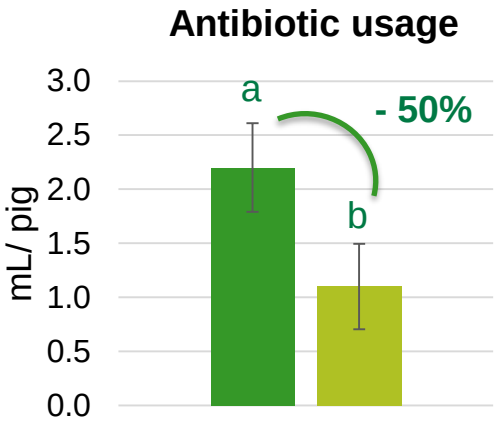
- Sows injected IM with Meloxicam (Loxicom® Injection, Norbrook) @ ~0.4mg/kg within 2 hours post farrowing

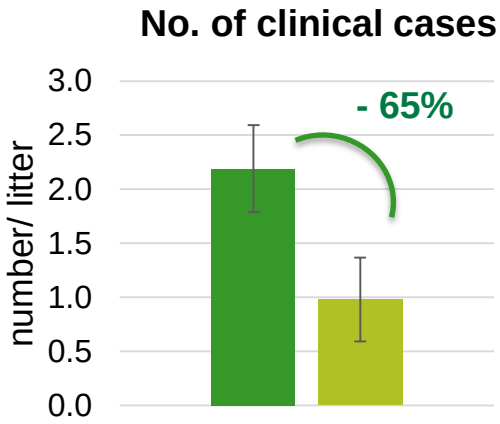
Results

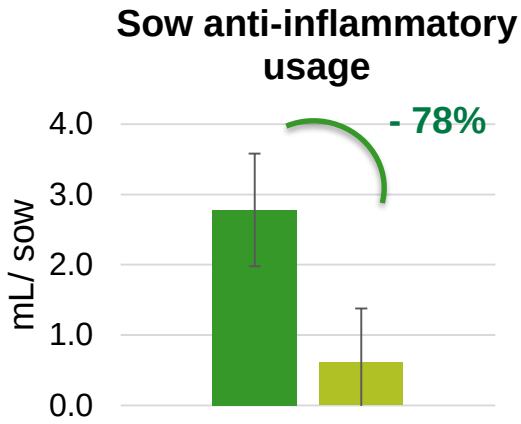












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Challenge 2: Sow Longevity

- Average replacement rate is increasing on Irish farms

2019	2020	2021
48.3	50.2	51

- Gilts breakeven at 3rd parity
  - 13% of gilts are culled before 1st litter
  - 32% are culled by 3rd litter
- Direct rearing costs **plus** hidden costs
- Improving sow longevity must be targeted at replacement animals

Gilt Rearing Conditions

- Lameness is a substantial contributor to the premature culling of sows- young sows more susceptible
- **GiltLife** Project investigated rearing gilts in single sex pens from weaning:
  - ↓ Stress
  - ↓ Body lesion score
  - ↓ Numbers born dead
  - ↑ Growth rates
  - ↓ Hoof damage
  - ↑ Welfare
- The earlier gilts are managed separate to males, the larger the reduction in lameness

Gilt Nutrition

- Nutritional demands for protein growth, bone development, fat deposition and reproductive tract development
- **Limb Health in Pigs** trialled developer ration versus standard finisher
  - Less lameness and claw damage
  - No negative impact on target age at service
- Recommended gilt feeding programme
  - Feed developer from 60kg
  - 13.5 MJ DE per kg, 0.8% lysine, 1% calcium, 0.8% phosphorus, 300ppm biotin
  - Feed Level: 2kg per day at 60kg rising to 3kg per day at 100kg
  - Target weight gain of 5kg per week

Gilt Age At Service

- Recent Danish research has advised a target age at service of 34 to 38 weeks of age (238 to 266 days)

<34 Weeks

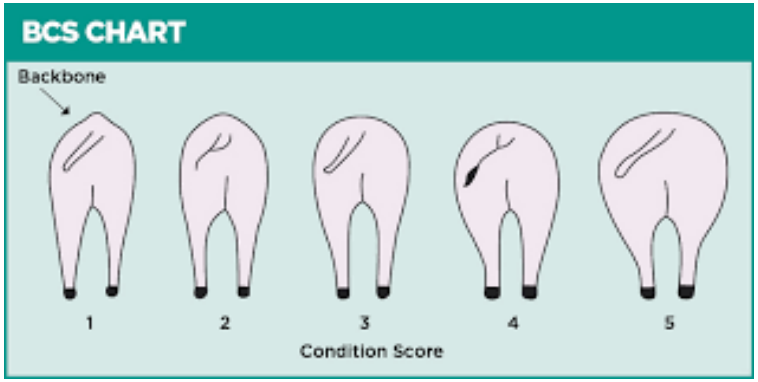
- Frame of animal too small
- Struggle to eat post farrowing
- Loss of condition
- ↓ No. & quality of pigs weaned
- ↓ Lifetime performance

>38 Weeks

- Frame of animal too large
- ↑ Risk of leg problems
- ↑ Risk of gilt becoming fat
- 23% culled before 2nd litter
- ↓ Sow longevity

Body Condition at Farrowing

- Body Condition Score (1 – 5) gilts prior to farrowing



- Weekly average score across all gilts
- Target score 3.0 – 3.2
- Review practices if outside of this range

Challenge 3: Staff Management

- Your staff are your best asset!
- Staff who are valued and feel they are contributing positively to a unit are more satisfied
- One key strategy to improve this is to **share** information with staff
  - ePM PigSys Herd Performance Reports
  - Infographics
  - Newsletters
  - Skills videos

Available on the Teagasc website

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Sharing Information

TEAGASC TARGET BOARD

	TARGET	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 5	Wk 6	Wk 7	Wk 8	Wk 9	Wk 10	Wk 11	Wk 12	Wk 13
Gilt Services / Wk																		
Total Services / Wk																		
Conception Rate																		
Farrowing / Wk																		
Born Alive – Avg																		
Pre-Weaning Mortality %																		
Weaning / Avg																		
1st Stage Mortality %																		
2nd Stage Mortality %																		
Finishers Mortality %																		
Condemn																		
Finishers Sales																		
Live Weight Avg																		

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Any questions?