



Lameness costs up to 100 Euro per sow

Lameness among sows is an underrated disease, which may induce severe financial losses in the pig production. Vit-Omic strengthens hoofs as well as economy.

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If you compare cattle- and pig production there is a significant difference regarding the possibilities of procuring a replacement animal. A dairy cow produces app. 0.5 heifer calf per year and must consequently survive at least 2 lactation periods to be replaced. A sow on the other hand produces 10-15 sow piglets per year; the sow producer thus is in a position to disregard sow longevity. He will always have sufficient replacement animals.

Increases longevity and improved economy

This difference between cattle- and pig production has entailed that whereas the cattle producers have targeted their focus on longevity and hoof health the pig producers have replaced 40-50% of their herd every year.

Replacement of sows contributes to improve the breeding progress. However, if the pig producer had the opportunity to determine replacement causes – maybe including a reduced number of animals – he would have more means at his disposal to buy first-class genes and taking especially good care of the valuable animals.

- Percentage first parity sows, which are replaced before second parity
- Number of litters per sow life
- Dead sows

If a first parity sow is culled before second parity the loss exceeds more than 200 Euro compared to an ordinary replacement at sixth parity. In some herds 20% are culled after first parity – and in a herd with 1000 sows this means a yearly loss of 92,000 Euro.

The economical optimal number of litters per sow life is app. six. The productivity of the sow is at its maximum from third to fifth parity; after sixth parity the risk of too many stillborn and small piglets is highly increased. In Denmark the average number of litters per sow is 3.5, but the best sows produce 2 additional litters. Moreover, university tests have stated that the productivity of a lame sow is reduced with 174 Euro.

Further, a dead sow costs 400 Euro, due to the expenses involved for purchasing new porkers, vaccines and the fact the slaughter value is zero.

Table 1. Economy at improved longevity with 1000 sows

	Value per unit	Improvement	Number of sows	Total Euro
Reduced number of dead sows	400	- 5%	50	20,000
More first parity sows produce second parity	200	- 10%	230	46,000
Increased productivity among lame sows	170	- 10%	100	17,000
More litters per sow per life	25	+ 1 litter	1000	25,000
Costs for Vit-Omic	8		1000	- 8,000
Total value added				100,000

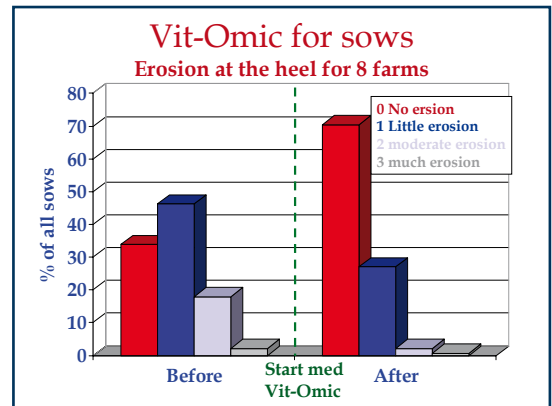


In order to improve hoof health among sows Vitfoss launched tests with Vit-Omic as early as in the year 2004. Vit-Omic consists of organic micro minerals (copper, zinc and manganese) of a special grade, which provides better availability. Copper and zinc are highly involved in producing a strong hoof, while manganese is essential to leg formation and to tendons.

10,000 sows were estimated

We have estimated hoofs in 8 herds; a total of 5000 sows were estimated before and after application with Vit-Omic. The conclusion from all herds is significantly improved hoof health, when looking particularly at erosion of the bale (the soft area underneath the hoof).

Professor Pete Ossent from the university in Zurich is of the opinion that overgrowings in particular on the heel/bale constitute the major problem in relation to hoof health. Extreme growth/ erosion implies that the tread surface of the sow is significantly reduced. Instead of leaning on both hoofs the sow will lean on just one, i.e. the weight of the sow is supported by a very small area. The problem deteriorates as the sows live on slatted floor with beams that are only 1 cm wide. – It is like wearing high heels all day long. And who would want that?



Feedback concerning sow mortality has been positive as well. Many herds experience a reduced number of dead sows after having started applying Vit-Omic. There are herds, in which sow mortality has been halved after having started using Vit-Omic. It is worth while.

Vit-Omic makes a difference – that is documented

Another dilemma arises regarding copper and zinc. A EU-legislation was in 2001 imposed on the agricultural sector due to environmental causes. This legislation reduced the quantities applied to feedstuff with 40%. At the same time the pig producers have increased productivity, and the stable environment for loose sows requires stronger hoofs. It is therefore common sense to use a grade of organic minerals, which provides an increased availability. As Vit-Omic does.

