La croissance du verrasson et son impact sur la durée de carrière des verrats de centres d'insémination artificielle

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Effect of growth rate on longevity of boars in artificial insemination studs

Excessive growth rate has been identified as detrimental and a potential cause of premature culling of boars used in artificial insemination studs (AIC). And yet, there are few references available on the growth rate of young boars and its impact on their longevity is not clearly understood. This study investigated the relationship between growth rate and boar longevity. The study was carried out on 91 boars of various genotypes (44 Pietrain (P), 14 purebred Large White (LW) or Landrace (LD), and 33 crossbred PxLW) sourced from 9 successive quarantine periods at the INRA-UEICP unit (May 2008 to October 2009). Live weight was recorded at farm of origin, at 150 days of age on average, at arrival in quarantine, at arrival in semen production unit (AIC), and 3 and 6 months thereafter. Leg soundness was also evaluated at those same times. Average growth rates were 736 ± 60g/d (birth- 150d of age), 530 ± 126g/d (150d of age- AIC entrance) and 514 ± 154g/d (AIC entrance-6 months). Frequency of premature culling was not associated with growth rate. Growth rate after admittance to the AIC was not associated with leg soundness recorded at arrival to the AIC. Further investigations should focus on more in-depth evaluations of locomotory disorders. More data are also required to assess the relationship between the various flooring conditions in French boar studs, previous growth rate and boar longevity.