Herd diagnosis of low pathogen diarrhoea in growing pigs – a pilot study - DTU Orbit
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Herd diagnosis of low pathogen diarrhoea in growing pigs – a pilot study

The major indication for antibiotic use in Danish pigs is treatment of intestinal diseases post weaning. Clinical decisions on antibiotic batch medication are often based on inspection of diarrhoeic pools on the pen floor. In some of these treated diarrhoea outbreaks, intestinal pathogens can only be demonstrated in a small number of pigs within the treated group (low pathogen diarrhoea). Termination of antibiotic batch medication in herds suffering from such diarrhoea could potentially reduce the consumption of antibiotics in the pig industry. The objective of the present pilot study was to suggest criteria for herd diagnosis of low pathogen diarrhoea in growing pigs. Data previously collected from 20 Danish herds were used to create a case series of clinical diarrhoea outbreaks normally subjected to antibiotic treatment. In the present study, these diarrhoea outbreaks were classified as low pathogen (<15% of the pigs having bacterial intestinal disease) (n =5 outbreaks) or high pathogen (≥15% of the pigs having bacterial intestinal disease) (n =15 outbreaks). Based on the case series, different diagnostic procedures were explored, and criteria for herd diagnosis of low pathogen diarrhoea were suggested. The effect of sampling variation was explored by simulation.

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