

FIELD TOLERANCE OF A FLORFENICOL DRINKING WATER CONCENTRATE IN WEANED PIGS

F Voisin¹, E Pagot¹, A Trotel¹, R March², M Busquet³

¹CTPA – ZOOPOLE Développement, Ploufragan, France, ²HIPRA, Animal Resources Department, Spain,

³HIPRA, Marketing Department, Spain, marta.busquet@hipra.com

INTRODUCTION

Diarrhoea, perianal inflammation/irritation and rectal prolapses might occur following treatment of pigs with florfenicol¹, mainly in young animals. All these effects are transient and completely resolve without treatment. The objective of this study was to evaluate the effects on productive parameters and clinical signs that might occur following administration of a florfenicol 23 mg/ml drinking water concentrate (SELECTAN[®] ORAL) to weaned pigs under field conditions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A total of 231 clinically-healthy crossbred pigs of 28 days of age and weighing between 5-10 kg were housed in 3 different pens with free access to water and non-medicated feed in a standard farm. One hundred were ear-tagged for further follow-up. All animals received orally 10 mg/kg b.w./day of florfenicol (SELECTAN[®] ORAL) through drinking water for five consecutive days (day 1 to day 5) when aged 32 days. Total water consumption was recorded daily in all animals from day 0 to day 6. Body weight was determined on day 0 and 7 on ear-tagged pigs in order to determine the effect of the treatment on growth performance. Clinical signs, including diarrhoea, perianal inflammation, rectal prolapses and systemic signs, were evaluated in ear-tagged pigs from day 0 to day 7 and scored using a scale ranging from 0 (none), 1 (mild), 2 (moderate) to 3 (severe).

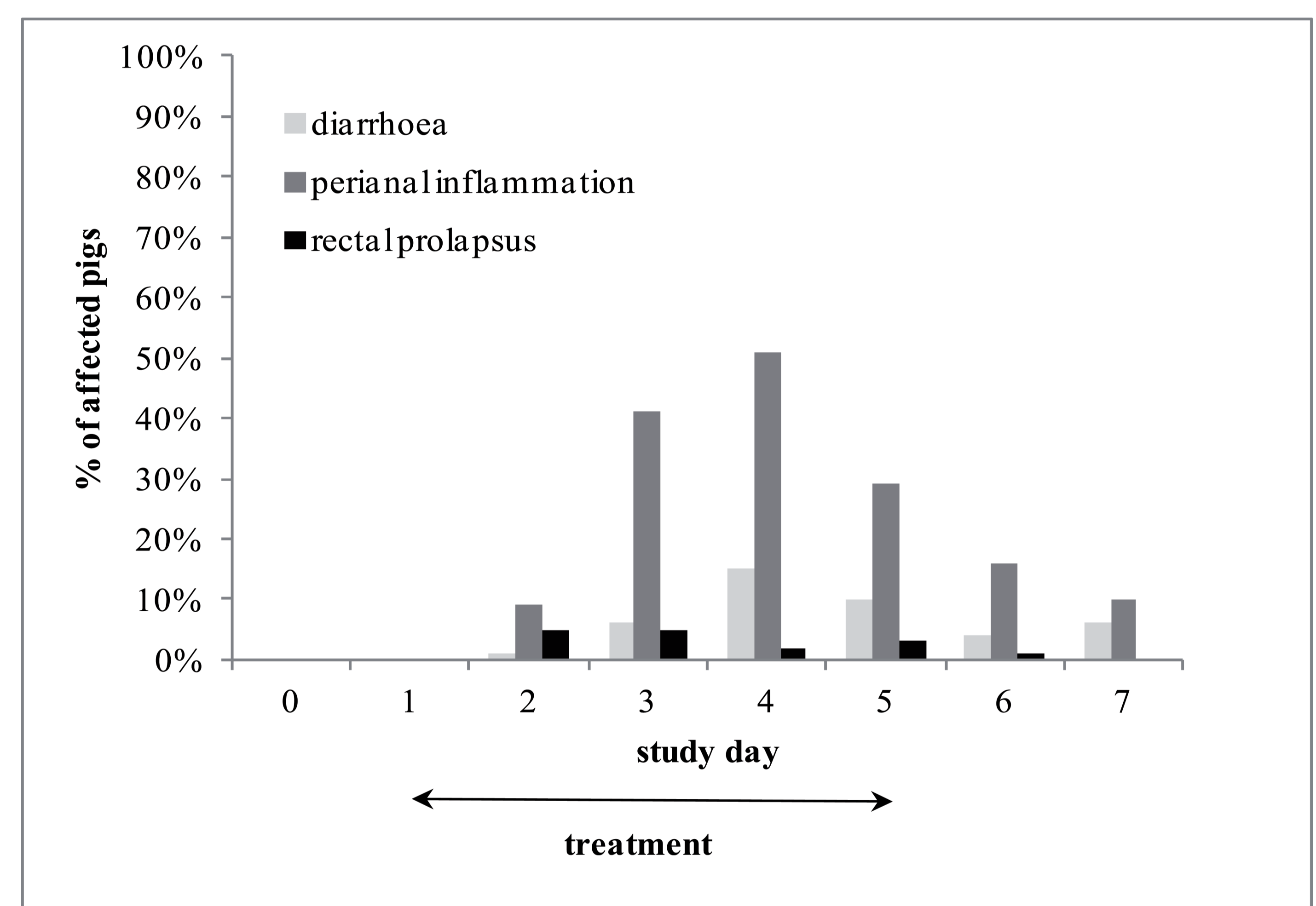
RESULTS

Total water consumption increased from 166.5 L (day 0) to 254.9 L (day 6). During the same period, mean body weight increased from 8.97 ± 1.54 kg (day 0) to 10.81 ± 1.93 kg (day 7) ($p= 0.01$). Average daily weight gain (ADWG) was 263 ± 92 g/day (mean ADWG reported in literature for animals of similar age and breed: 178-267 g/day)².

Results for the changes in clinical signs are shown in Fig. 1. Diarrhoea started on day 3 (6% of animals affected), peaked on day 4 (15% of animals affected) and decreased afterwards. Of the total of animals affected throughout the study, most appeared as a single episode (77% of

cases) and mild (80% of cases = soft feces). Perianal inflammation showed a similar pattern but started on day 2 (9% of animals affected) and peaked on day 4 (51% of animals affected). Of the total of animals affected, mostly were on 1 or 2 consecutive occasions only (72% of cases) and mild to moderate (50% = red; and 33% = red and a bit irritated, respectively). Rectal prolapses occurred in 14% of animals in total from day 2 onwards but mostly as a single episode and mild (86% of cases). A rectal prolapses scored sever was never observed. The general health status of animals remained unaffected by treatment.

Figure 1. Changes in clinical signs following oral administration of florfenicol (10 mg/kg) for 5 consecutive days to pigs (n= 100).



CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The present study supports that growth performance and general health status is not affected when weaned pigs are medicated with 10 mg/kg b.w. of a florfenicol 23 mg/mL drinking water concentrate (SELECTAN[®] ORAL) for five consecutive days. Transient diarrhoea and perianal inflammation may be observed during treatment, although such effects rapidly disappear.

REFERENCES

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Laboratorios Hipra, S.A.
Avda. la Selva, 135
17170 Amer (Girona)
Spain

Tel (34) 972 43 06 60
Fax (34) 972 43 06 61
hipra@hipra.com
www.hipra.com