

Optimal handling of entire male pigs at the day of slaughter

Susanne Støier, Helle Daugaard Larsen, Lars Blaabjerg, Peter Vorup, Margit Dall Aaslyng

AIM

To investigate animal welfare at different ratios between entire male pigs and female pigs in the pens during one hour of lairage before slaughter.

METHODOLOGY

On five successive days during a warm period (up to 29°C outdoor temperature), ten pens each containing 14 pigs were observed for one hour. The gender combination in the pens were: 0/14, 4/10, 7/7, 10/4 or 14/0 entire male pigs/female pigs resulting in a total of 10 observed pens per ratio.

To the left an example of how pens with different combinations of entire male pigs (EM) and female pigs (F) were placed on one day of observation. Each day had a new combination, and all combinations were represented in all pens.

Race to stunner	
Pen 1: 0 EM / 14 F	Pen 1: 4 EM / 10 F
Pen 2: 14 EM / 0 F	Pen 2: 10 EM / 4 F
Pen 3: 7 EM / 7 F	Pen 3: 7 EM / 7 F
Pen 4: 10 EM / 4 F	Pen 4: 14 EM / 0 F
Pen 5: 4 EM / 10 F	Pen 5: 0 EM / 14 F

Every five minutes, a scan was made identifying how many (and which) pigs were laying down.

Rest index = the total number of pigs laying down*100/the total number of observed pigs

Previously, studies have shown that the rest index is closely related to aggression as well as mounting behaviour.

CONCLUSION

Even though a lower rest index was seen in pens having many entire male pigs compared to pens with mainly female pigs, there is no reason to give specific guidelines regarding the ratio between entire male pigs and female pigs.

RESULTS

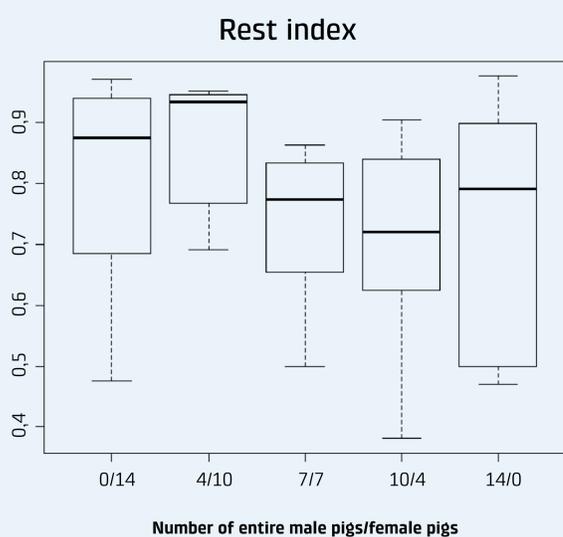


Figure 1. Rest index in pens with different ratios of entire male pigs (first number) and female pigs (second number).

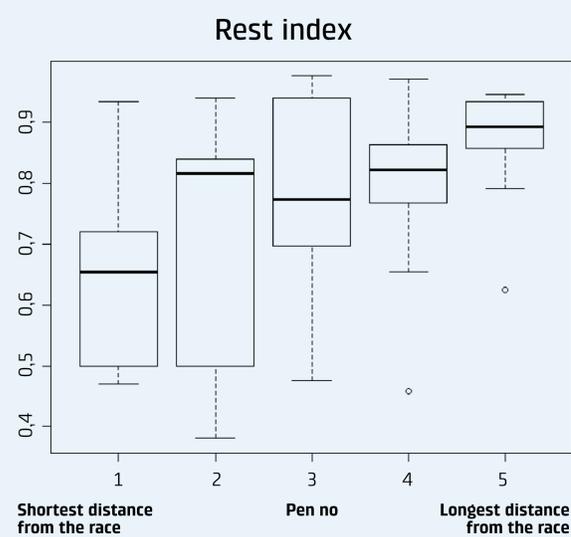


Figure 2. Rest index in pens situated differently from the race to the stunner. 1 was the pen closest to the race, and 5 was the pen farthest off.

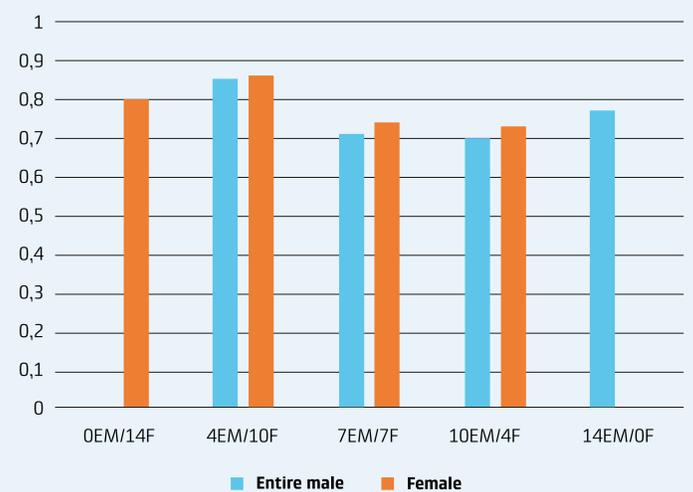


Figure 3. Rest index during one hour of lairage depending on ratio between entire male pigs (EM) and female pigs (F), blue being entire male pigs and orange being female pigs.

CONTACT INFORMATION



Susanne Støier
Director of Meat Technology
sst@dti.dk

