

THE INFLUENCE OF NEST BOXES WITH DIFFERENT OPENINGS ON THE GROWTH RATE OF GROWING PIGS

Violeta Juškienė, Remigijus Juška

Lietuvos gyvulininkystės institutas, R. Žebenkos g. 12, LT-5125 Baisogala, Radviliškio r.

Lithuanian Institute of Animal Science, R. Žebenkos 12, LT-5125 Baisogala, Radviliškis distr., Lithuania.

Tel. 8-292 65282. Fax: 8-292 65886. E-mail: LGI@siauliai.omnitel.net

Summary. The experiments with 70 growing native pigs were carried out on the experimental farm of the Institute of Animal Science to determine the efficacy of the nest boxes for pigs with either open or covered openings of different size and the use of curtains made of different materials. The results of the study indicated that the nest boxes equipped with different openings had no significant influence on the growth rate of pigs. It was most expedient to design nest boxes with a wider (0.7 m²) opening covered with a curtain. In the nest box of this type, the temperature was on average by 70C higher than that in the pig -house. Other microenvironmental parameters, such as relative humidity, air velocity and ammonia concentration, were lower; however, CO₂ concentration was by 1.5 to 1.8 times higher than that in the pig – house. It was most expedient to cover the openings with a tough material, i.e., the synthetic tarpaulin. The openings could also be covered with polyethylene woven or ordinary bag material, but their exploitation time was by 4 to 5 times shorter.

Keywords: nest boxes, opening, curtain, growing pigs, microenvironment