

THE EFFECT OF DIETS SUPPLEMENTED WITH *SACCHAROMYCES CEREVISIAE BOULARDII* PROBIOTIC YEAST ON THE REPRODUCTIVE PERFORMANCE OF PREGNANT AND LACTATING SOWS

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Abstract. The aim of this study was to assess the efficacy of Levucell SB 10, a probiotic containing *Saccharomyces cerevisiae boulardii* strain, on the health status and productivity of sows and their litters. A total of 243 gilts and sows (PIC) were allocated into two experimental groups, as follows: untreated controls – 125 (C) and Levucell SB 10–118 (1.0×10^9 cfu/kg of feed of the gestation and lactation diets). Homogeneity of the groups was satisfied with regard to the parity (2.74 and 2.78). The treatment started from d 1 of gestation to d 28 of lactation.

Considering the results it can be concluded that the sows of poor health who received feeds with the probiotic supplement are characterised by better fertility and mating effectiveness compared to the control group sows. The addition of the probiotic supplement to the sow diet contributed to the downward trend for the sows' reproductive problems (abscess, abortion). However, it did not have any influence on the sows' condition and the length of parturency. There were no gestation and lactation diet treatment differences for sow back fat thickness (breeding, farrowing or weaning). There were no differences ($P \leq 0.05$) in total number of pigs born, born alive, stillborn or born mummified. The sows on this diet also showed a trend for a larger size of litter but as the number of weak piglets was higher ($P \leq 0.05$) the average size of litter on the 21st and 28th days of life did not differ between the test groups.

Keywords: sows, probiotic yeast, reproductive performance.