

**MINIMAL PIGLET LOSSES WITH THE TENDERFOOT[®] „VARIO STEP“ SYSTEM AFTER WEANING
A CASE REPORT**

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Introduction

In Germany the most breeding farms have high losses (> 15 %) of piglets in the first weeks after birth. The reasons can be leg lesions, arthropathia and overlying.

Material and Methods

For a Dalland[®] breeding herd with 400 sows a new farrowing house with the Tenderfoot[®] „Vario Step Floor System“ was build. During the last years production dates like farrowing rate, leg lesions, arthropathia, overlying and other parameters were registrated by a computer program. In a comparison with the old and the new stable floor different parameters for losses during the last and this year were evaluated.

Tenderfoot[®] Vario Step System with a suckling sow



automatic lift for the piglet floor



lift down



lift up

Results

During the year 2003 in the first three weeks after birth there were losses of 11.97 % in the old farrowing house. In the year 2004 we found losses of 8.7 % in the new stable with the Tenderfoot[®] vario step system. In 2003 losses by leg lesions under the piglets were 0.45 % and in 2004 they were 0.13 %. In 2003 the losses with arthropathia were 0.83 % and in 2004 they were 0.05 %. In 2003 the losses of overlying were 4.98 % and in 2004 they were 2.14 % (Table).

Table

Losses of piglets during the first three weeks after birth with out and with using the Tenderfoot[®] vario step system

time	total	leg		
period	losses (%)	lesions (%)	arthropathia (%)	overlying (%)
12 months				
2003	11.97	0.45	0.83	4.98
6 months				
2004	8.70	0.13	0.05	2.14
% of reduction during the two periods	27.3	71.1	94.0	57.0

Discussion

In this breeding farm, which used the Tenderfoot[®] vario step system in the farrowing house since 2004 the farmer could reduce the total losses by 27.3 % and the losses of overlying by 57 % in the first 6 months of this year with the new floor. The losses of lesions, as arthritis and clows, were reduced by 71.1 % and of arthropathia by 94 % with the new floor system. After the birth of the piglets

the mechanic and pneumatic lift for the piglet bed was automaticly letted down, when the sow stood up. When the sows came down, the piglet bed got up and the piglets could suckle. Because of this automatic lift the losses were reduced, as we could show in the new farrowing house with the Tenderfoot[®] vario step floor system. The Tenderfoot[®] grill grate is protected with Plastisol[®], warm, step - and slide - save, with reduced

arthritis and claw lesions. In a comparison study with other floor systems it could be shown, that the Tenderfoot[®] floor have the lowest lesions at all body parts of sows and piglets (G.Jacobs,2002). In the Dalland[®] breeding farm the number of weaned pigs could be increased from 23.5 piglets per sow and year to 24.7 in the first two quarters of this year. The benefit per sow and year increased by more than 14 Euro till now with the Tenderfoot[®] vario step system in the new farrowing house.

Conclusion

In a Dalland[®] breeding farm with high health and normal losses during the fattening period, the Tenderfoot[®] vario step system was installed in a new build farrowing house. Already in the first six months the losses during the suckling period were reduced by 27.3 % and the benefit increased by more than 14 Euro for each sow.