Model and Demonstration Projects on Animal Welfare

Towards more animal welfare experiences from MuD projects

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Dr. Katharina Mees, Tierschutz-Kompetenzzentrum

BMEL
Financial support

BLE
Manager of the project

Animal welfare competence center
Contractor, consultant

Farms
Taking steps towards more animal welfare

Source: Pictures BLE
Model and Demonstration Projects on Animal Welfare

- Aims -

- Improve animal welfare based on single farm solutions
- Put scientific research into practice
- Support farmers concerning network topics (e.g. non-docked pigs, group suckling, etc.)
- Sharing knowledge between farmers
- Social acceptance within the farming community

Source: Pictures BLE
Modell- und Demonstrationsvorhaben (MuD) Tierschutz

Networks

Sows

- Group suckling systems (5 farms)
- Husbandry enrichment for pregnant sows (10 farms)
Group suckling systems
-Experiences until now-

- Specific solutions for each farm
  - Sows and piglets need enough time together with closed pens
  - Genetic aspects of group housing compatibility of sows
  - Separation of sows necessary for handling piglets

Housing enrichment for pregnant sows
-Experiences until now-

- Solutions usually involve new buildings / modifications
  - Reducing time of fixation
  - Access to open-air areas
  - More manipulable materials
  - Allow sows to choose different activities
Networks

- Husbandry of undocked pigs (9 farms at beginning, currently 6 farms)
- Husbandry of non-docked pigs with a special focus on automation technics (11 farms)

Experiences until now
-pigs with non-docked tails-

- Basics are important… and have to be controlled!
- Water
  - Passage rate of nipple drinkers
  - Large bowl drinkers
  - Hygiene of water and pipelines

Source: Pictures BLE
Modell- und Demonstrationsvorhaben (MuD) Tierschutz
Experiences until now
-pigs with non-docked tails-

- Basics are important… and have to be controlled!
  - **Feed**
    - ratio of animals and feeders
    - feed structure
    - free from mycotoxins etc.

Source: Pictures BLE
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Experiences until now
-pigs with non-docked tails-

- Basics are important… and have to be controlled!
  - **Structure of pens**
    - Microclimate
    - Sleep and relax area, play ground
    - Contact grids
    - Thermoregulation (small wallow)

Source: Pictures BLE
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Experiences until now
-pigs with non-docked tails-

- Basics are important… and have to be controlled!
  - **Health**
    - With clinical symptoms
    - Without clinical symptoms but behavioural symptoms

Source: Pictures BLE
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Experiences until now
-pigs with non-docked tails-

- Animal observation
  - Looking at each animal individually
  - Changing your point of view
  - Fast reaction needed to prevent tail biting

Source: Pictures BLE
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Experiences until now - pigs with non-docked tails-

Trends of farm specific scoring results: exemplary for 3 farms with weaners and fattening pigs

- Farm A
- Farm B
- Farm C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Farm A</th>
<th>Farm B</th>
<th>Farm C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Weaners
- Fattening Pigs

![Graph showing trends in intact tails](image)

Activity objects – also for emergency support

- Edible or feed-like, chewable, investigable, manipulable
- New, attractive, clean

Fibre Mix
Rolled Barley/ rock flour
Vegetable carbon
Hay/ straw
Alfalfa hay or pellets

Source: Pictures BLE

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Experiences until now
-pigs with non-docked tails-

- More work - automatic solutions
  - Spreading manipulable materials like straw, hay or other organic materials, mix of different fibre materials
  - Does not replace animal observations!

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Experiences until now
-pigs with non-docked tails-

- Challenges: Animal welfare versus minimizing the environmental impact?
  - Animal welfare and environmental impact can be compatible
    - Open-air areas are only one point to increase housing conditions → more emissions

Source: Pictures BLE
Modell- und Demonstrationsvorhaben (MuD) Tierschutz
Experiences until now -pigs with non-docked tails-

**Challenges**: Animal welfare versus minimizing the environmental impact?

- But there are different opportunities to achieve both targets
  - Nutrient efficiency (N, P)
  - Separation of urin and faeces
  - Type and structure of pen surfaces
  - Structure of pens
  - Scraper for removal of manure in open-air areas

Experiences until now -pigs with non-docked tails-

**Challenges**: Financial impacts

- Finding ways to show the consumers the improved animal welfare

- Costs are higher for pigs with undocked tails
- Costs vary a lot between farms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>2017 median (range)</th>
<th>2018 median (range)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weaners</td>
<td>8,30 € (6 - 17 €)</td>
<td>5,10 € (1,5 - 14 €)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fattening pigs</td>
<td>6,20 € (3 - 54 €)</td>
<td>11,50 € (9 - 61 €)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Better animal observation means less veterinary costs and less animal losses.
Experiences until now
-pigs with non-docked tails-

- **Challenges:** Necrosis of tails and ears
  - Causes: mycotoxins, endotoxins, stress of metabolism, genetics disposition etc.

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Outlook and legal regulations in Germany

- **Action plan for non-docked tails:**
  - Risk analysis on all farms until July 2019
  - 1 % of all pigs non-docked, slowly increasing with success

  - Chance to try with small number of animals!
  - Gathering experiences, learn about new husbandry!
  - MuD farms and farmers give information and advice to others!
Thank you for your attention!

Source: Pictures BLE
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