Results of a trial of the *Lawsonia* vaccine Enterisol® in a fattening herd growing piglets from 7 kg through to 100 kg

By Anne Ovesen

The herd which carried out the trial is a conventional fattening herd which buys 7-kg piglets from the pool and fattens about 14,000 animals a year.

All the piglets in the trial came from the same sow herd.

900 piglets were each vaccinated with 2 ml Enterisol the day after arriving in the herd; all vaccinations were carried out by oral drenching. 900 unvaccinated piglets were used as the controls.

The piglets were weighed when they were moved into the nursery and again when they were transferred to the fattening accommodation.

In the fattening accommodation, 300 of the vaccinated animals were monitored along with 300 of the unvaccinated animals.

Results from the weaner nursery

- Daily weight gain increased by 10 g
- Animals more uniform in weight on transfer to fattening accommodation
- Reduced number of other diseases

Results from fattening accommodation

- Daily weight gain increased by 22 g
- Animals more uniform in weight; it was estimated that there were about 10% fewer animals that had to be transferred to the buffer unit because of not being ready to send to slaughter when the fattening accommodation was emptied.
- No medication needed; this had sometimes been given to fattening pigs in the past.

Vaccination with Enterisol was continued after the trial had been completed.

Production results for the weaner nursery over the period from 1 Aug to 6 Nov 2006 (all vaccinated animals) showed the following:

Daily weight gain 484 g per day
This is an increase of 71 g per day compared to the same period in 2005.

We don't yet have figures for daily weight gain during fattening for a full period where all the animals were vaccinated. When this information is available, a decision will be taken on whether to continue vaccination or not.

Discussion and conclusion

The trial has not shown a particularly large increase in daily weight gain. No accurate feed consumption details were recorded and it is therefore impossible to assess feed conversion efficiency.
The reason for continuing to vaccinate was the greater uniformity of weight observed in individual batches. An additional advantage of vaccination was that it was no longer necessary to give anti-diarrhoeal medication in the fattening accommodation.

These, of course, are only the results from a single herd, and clearly that doesn't necessarily mean they reflect the whole picture. If you think that *Lawsonia* vaccination could do something for your herd, I'd recommend you to have the relevant blood samples taken so that you can make sure you're vaccinating at the right time - then the key thing is to try out the vaccine in your own herd.