

Observations of perinatal period on primiparous sows kept in different types of farrowing pens

S u m m a r y

The observations were carried out on 24 primiparous Polish Landrace sows, divided into two groups (12 animals per group) before expected date of parturition: 1 - kept in the tripartite farrowing cage pens without bedding of „Meprozet" type, with upper slotted floor and bars restricting possibility of sow movement; 2 - kept in traditional pens of „Danish" type, with straw bedding on concrete floor and possibility of free move. Main symptoms of parturition were observed and noted: time of appearing of colostrums, of the first pains and time of nest building as well duration of parturition was measured. Great attention was paid to sows' behavior and every symptom of aggression and stereotypes. No significant effect of housing system on analyzed traits was observed. Sows kept in traditional pens (2) started to nest building on average 27.2 hours before farrowing, while the sows in the cage pens (1) manifested activity simulating nest building about 7.9 hours before parturition. The average length of parturition measured as a time from the first piglet birth to removal of the placenta was 376 and 304 minutes in groups 1 and 2, respectively. Duration of farrowing treated as a time the piglets were born amounted to 224 and 128 minutes. Possibility of free moving and nest building in traditional pens (2) had a soothing influence on sows, and it seems to cause shorter parturition. Sows kept in cage pens (1) showed more often aggressive behavior towards their newborn piglets and were restless during parturition with symptoms of stereotypes.