

Analysis of the reproductive parameters in a commercial swine farm

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Introduction

- Reproductive technologies have dramatically changed the way pigs are raised for pork production in developed and developing countries.
- From the maternal side, improvements in reproductive efficiency include pigs born per litter, farrowing rate, as well as litters per sow per year.

Objectives

- The aim of the study was to evaluate the reproductive parameters collected for one year in a hyper prolific sow farm to identify main problems and propose possible solutions.

The Farm

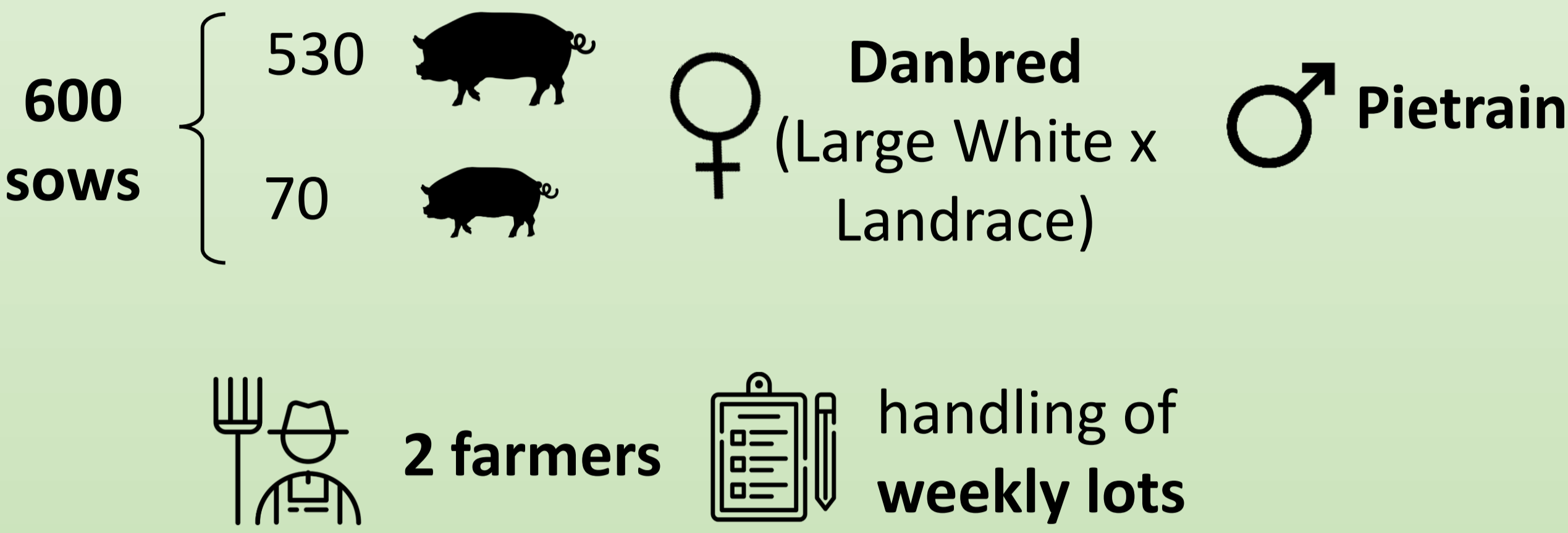
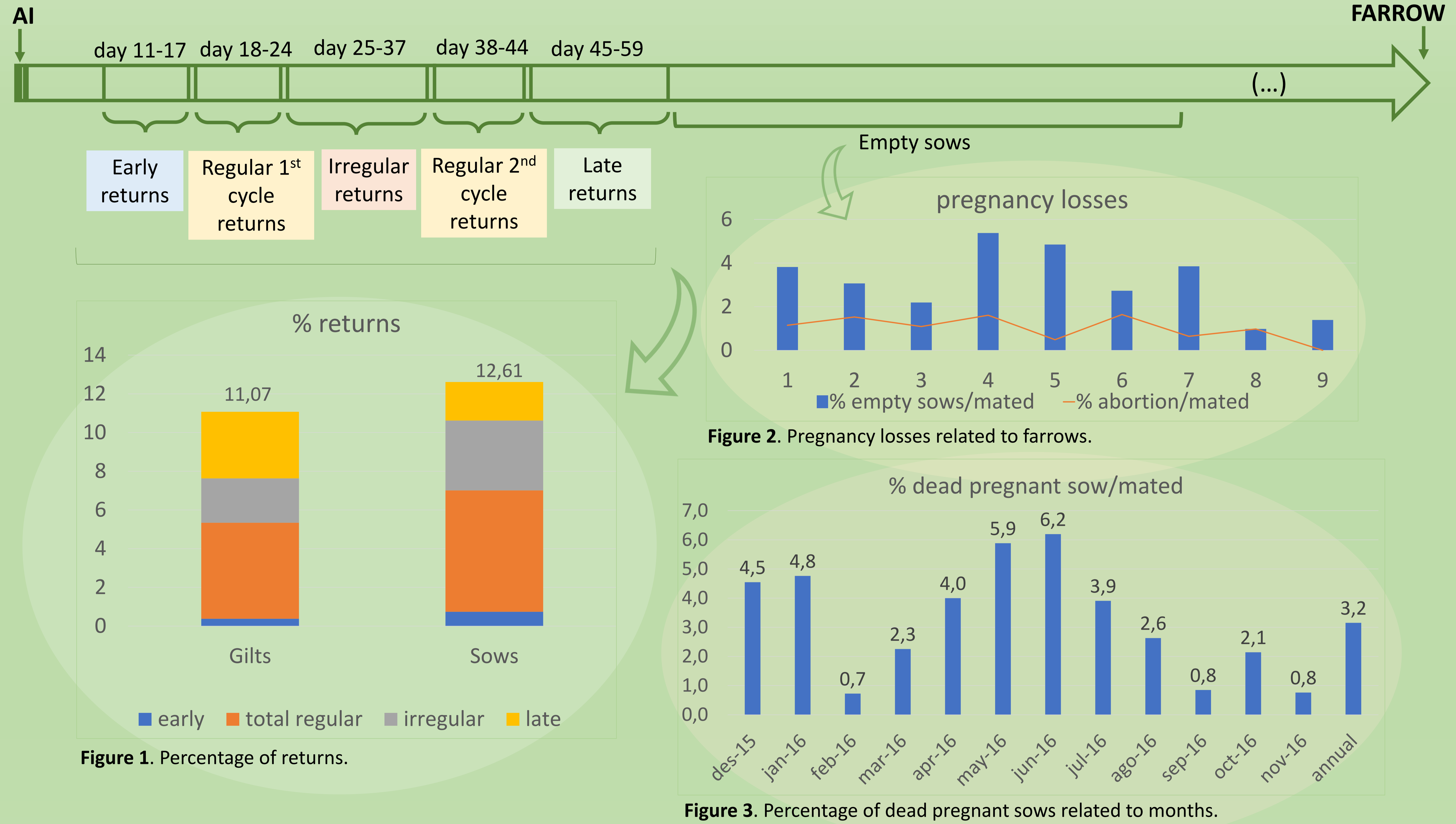


Table 1. Farm general data. Source: register of the farm.

	Gilts	Sows	Objective	Threshold
Weaned piglets/sow/year	30,39	27,05	30,2	
Weaning-to-breeding interval (days)		12,56	10,9	>10
Interval between farrows (days)	160	170,3	154	
Weaned piglets/farrows	13,93	12,39	13,1	
Farrowing rate (%)	82,06	76,64	90	<85

Problems detected



Discussion

Non optimal fertility

- Regular returns: due to a lack of fertilization following to an inadequate insemination or management problems.
- Irregular returns: insemination of sows not in heat or pregnancy gets interrupted due to stress factors, inadequate management, infectious agents or environment.

High gestation losses (after ultrasound diagnosis)

- Empty sows: it shows an inadequate estrus detection, errors in pregnancy diagnosis or non detected abortions.
- High mortality of pregnant sows: due to the lack of information, causes can not be determined.

Conclusions

Some actions could be done to improve the farrowing rate:

- Check sows **environment**. Reduce stress factors such as movements, fights, temperature and ventilation.
- Improve **estrus detection**. Awareness on heat detection
- Improve the **efficiency of pregnancy diagnosis** done by ultrasonography. More time should be spent to make sure that all empty sows are detected.
- Post-mortem examinations** should be done to get more information about the causes of high mortality in pregnant sows.