

Survey of the Spanish swine industry on *Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae* acclimation of gilts



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INTRODUCTION

The introduction and management of replacement gilts has to be considered as a risk factor of the perpetuation of *Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae* (*M. hyo*) in the farm^{1,2}. Improper acclimation may result in sub-populations due to some replacement gilts that may be naïve and others *M. hyo* shedders at the time of integration into a *M. hyo* positive sow herd. This may result in increased *M. hyo* colonization of the suckling piglets and increased *M. hyo* related respiratory disease in growing pigs^{3,4}.

The objective of the survey was to learn more about conditions, procedures, methods and goals of the *M. hyo* gilt acclimation protocols in the Spanish swine industry.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

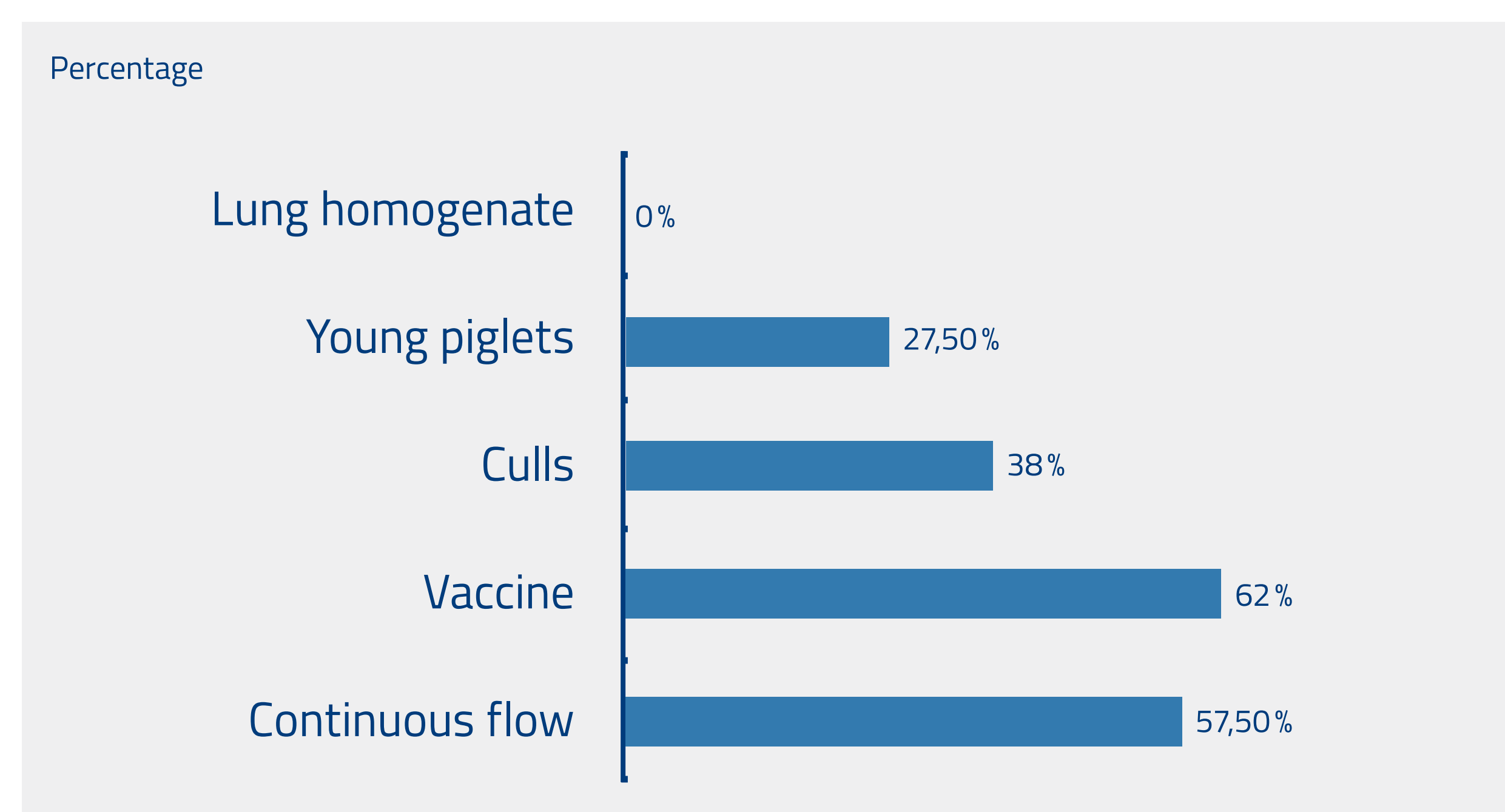
A survey composed of 14 questions was designed to identify which gilt acclimation methods for *M. hyo* are being used in Spain nowadays. The survey was completed by 45 veterinarians and producers of *M. hyo* positive sow farms, representing 44.362 sows from different regions in Spain. The average herd size was 500 sows.

RESULTS

The most important findings were:

- In 71 % of farms, gilts from *M. hyo* positive multipliers are introduced.
- 37 % of the producers consider that it is not necessary to acclimate sows for *M. hyo*
- 34 % of the producers start the acclimation process late, introducing the replacements older than 20 weeks of age
- 62.5 % use vaccines against *M. hyo* during the acclimation.
- 27.5 % use young piglets and 38 % use cull sows during the acclimation process
- 92,5 % do not perform diagnostics to verify an adequate acclimation
- 57,5 % of acclimation sites are continuous flow.
- 70 % of the producers of these sites think that continuous flow can improve the acclimation process.
- 62,5 % use antibiotics during the acclimation process.
- In 67 % of the farms the assessment of the stability in the sow herd is based on clinical signs .
- 17.5 % of the responders feel that their acclimation protocol keeps their sow herd stable to *M. hyo*
- 50 % of the veterinarians or farmers think that their acclimation process is not ideal.
- 87.5 % of the responders believe that a proper gilt acclimation plays a major role in commercial *M. hyo* control of pigs

Figure 1: Gilt acclimation process for *M.hyo*.



DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

A high percentage of the producers or veterinarians (87.5%) are convinced that a proper gilt acclimation program plays a major role in the *M. hyo* stability of their farms. Even though 50% of the respondents believe that their acclimation process is perfect, many of them do not have a clear definition of the necessary time for a proper acclimation and start the process too late. Besides, the majority of the farms (92,5%) do not verify the acclimation process of the gilts.

Therefore, the survey indicates some opportunities to improve the acclimation process such as the followings:

- The implementation of an early and efficient exposure method is needed.
- A "Best practice" for *M. hyo* diagnostics has to be developed.

REFERENCES

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