

DOMINGOS LOLLOBRIGIDA DE SOUZA NETTO

**PROSTAGLANDINA F2 α COMO AGENTE SINCRONIZADOR E INDUTOR DE
OVULAÇÃO EM FÊMEAS SUÍNAS PLURÍPARAS**

Dissertação apresentada à Universidade Federal de Viçosa, como parte das exigências do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Medicina Veterinária, para obtenção do título de *Magister Scientiae*.

Orientador: **Ciro Alexandre Alves Torres**

Coorientadores: **José Domingos Guimarães**
Jurandy Mauro Penitente Filho

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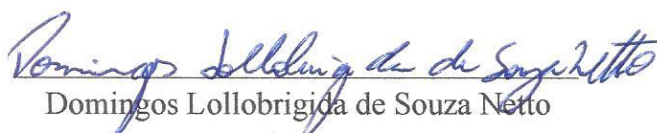
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Assentimento:


Domingos Lollobrigida de Souza Netto
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RESUMO

LOLLOBRIGIDA NETTO, Domingos de Souza, M.Sc., Universidade Federal de Viçosa, fevereiro de 2020. **Prostaglandina F2 α como agente sincronizador e indutor de ovulação em fêmeas suínas pluríparas.** Orientador: Ciro Alexandre Alves Torres. Coorientadores: José Domingos Guimarães e Jurandy Mauro Penitente Filho.

Na suinocultura moderna, um dos principais objetivos é a manipulação do ciclo estral e ovulação na busca de eficiência reprodutiva e produtiva, a fim de diminuir os custos com o número de inseminações artificiais, leitões de baixo desenvolvimento, entre outros. As prostaglandinas se destacam entre os hormônios capazes de interferir na ovulação, por apresentarem rápida ação e ser de baixo custo. O objetivo deste estudo foi testar o d-Cloprostenol (Análogo de Prostaglandina F2 α – PGF2 α) como agente sincronizador e indutor de ovulação em fêmeas suínas pluríparas. Foram utilizadas 125 fêmeas suínas pluríparas de linhagem comercial entre 3ª e 6ª ordem de parto, com escore de condição corporal entre 3,0 e 4,0 (na escala de 1 a 5) e no período pós desmame. Sendo assim distribuídas: Controle, (n = 42) 2 mL de salina (0,9% NaCl) administrada na detecção de estro (DE); Tratamento 0h (n = 44), administração de 0,150 mg d-Cloprostenol na DE; e Tratamento 24h (n = 39) administração de 0,150 mg d-Cloprostenol 24 h após a DE. A de DE foi feito o monitoramento a cada 8 horas, via ultrassonografia transabdominal, do desenvolvimento e ovulação dos folículos. Três inseminações foram realizadas a cada 24 horas, iniciando seis horas após DE. Após 28 dias foi realizado o diagnóstico de gestação. No momento do parto foram avaliadas as leitegadas, com pesagens individuais, número total de nascidos, nascidos vivos, natimortos e fetos mumificados. A PGF2 α não influenciou a resposta ovariana, no início, final e tempo total (P>0,05). Algumas fêmeas apresentaram intervalo de ovulação longo (mais de 8 horas entre ovários) mas a frequência não diferiu entre tratamentos (P>0,05). A PGF2 α não interferiu na taxa de prenhez e de parto (P>0,05). A PGF2 α não influenciou o número total de leitões, nascidos vivos, natimortos, fetos mumificados e tempo de gestação (P>0,05). Menor peso médio corporal ao nascimento dos leitões se deu no tratamento 0h (P<0,05). Também houve diferença de peso corporal entre sexos (P<0,05). A homogeneidade do peso dos leitões não foi afetada pela PGF2 α . Houve diferença (P<0,05) entre a sexta ordem de parto e as demais em relação a redução da probabilidade do leitão vir a nascer vivo. No presente estudo, a PGF2 α não apresentou efeito na indução e sincronização da ovulação, no 0 e 24 horas após a detecção do estro.

Palavras-chave: D-cloprostenol. Hiperprolificidade. Inseminação.

ABSTRACT

LOLLOBRIGIDA NETTO, Domingos de Souza, M.Sc., Universidade Federal de Viçosa, February, 2020. **Prostaglandin F2 α as a synchronizing agent and ovulation inducer in pluriparous sows.** Adviser: Ciro Alexandre Alves Torres. Co-advisers: José Domingos Guimarães and Jurandy Mauro Penitente Filho.

In modern pig farm, one of the main focuses is the manipulation of the estrous cycle and ovulation in the search for reproductive and productive efficiency, in order to reduce the costs with the number of artificial inseminations, low development piglets, among others. Prostaglandins stand out among hormones capable of interfering with ovulation, as they have fast action and low cost. The objective of this study was to test d-Cloprostenol (Prostaglandin F2 α Analog - PGF2 α) in synchronization and ovulation induction in pluriparous sows. One hundred and twenty five females of commercial lineage, between the 3rd and 6th parturition order, with a body condition score between 3.0 and 4.0 (on a scale of 1 to 5) and after weaning. The sows were randomly distributed as follows: Control, (n = 42) 2 mL saline (0.9% NaCl) administered in the estrus detection (ED); Treatment 0h (n = 44), administration of 0.150 mg d-Cloprostenol in ED; and Treatment 24h (n = 39) administration of 0.150 mg d-Cloprostenol 24 h after ED. From ED, follicular monitoring was performed every 8 hours, via transabdominal ultrasound of follicle development and ovulation. Three inseminations were carried out every 24 hours beginning six hours after ED. After 28 days, pregnancy diagnosis was made. At parturition, litter was evaluated, with individual weighings, and classification as total, live, stillborn, and mummified fetuses. PGF2 α did not influence the ovarian response ($P>0.05$) the onset, end and total time. There were sows that presented longer ovulation interval (more than 8 h between ovaries) but their frequency did not differ among treatments ($P>0.05$). PGF2 α did not affect the pregnancy and parturition rates ($P>0.05$). However, it was found that the shorter interval between the onset estrus and ovulation, the higher pregnancy and parturition rates ($P<0.05$). PGF2 α did not influence the piglets number total, live, stillbirths, mummified fetuses, and gestation time ($P>0.05$). Lower average body weight at birth piglet's occurred in the Treatment 0h ($P<0.05$). There was also a difference weight between sex ($P<0.05$). Litter weight homogeneity was not affected by PGF2 α . There was a difference ($P<0.05$) between sixth parturition order and the others in relation reducing the probability of the piglet's born alive. In the present study, the PGF2 α did not present effect on synchronization and ovulation induction, at the 0 and 24 hours after ED.

Keywords: D-cloprostenol. Hyperprolificity. insemination.

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1 INTRODUÇÃO GERAL

A suinocultura moderna passou por diversas alterações nos últimos anos, objetivando o aumento da produtividade com baixo custo. Produtores, técnicos e profissionais foram os responsáveis pela busca por melhorias na eficiência reprodutiva, de modo a diminuir as perdas econômicas (VARGAS et al., 2007).

Matrizes com falhas reprodutivas, causam diminuição dos índices produtivos, pelo aumento do número de dias não produtivos, decréscimo do número de leitões por leitegada e consequentemente redução no número de animais abatidos (LUCIA JR; DIAL; MARSH, 2000).

O entendimento detalhado a respeito do ciclo estral da fêmea suínas é de suma importância, principalmente o intervalo do início do estro ao momento da ovulação, no qual se baseia o emprego da inseminação artificial (FRIES et al., 2010).

Nesse contexto, existem diversas pesquisas para o estabelecimento da manipulação do ciclo estral e/ou ovulação com o uso de protocolos hormonais em suínos (KIRKWOOD; KAUFFOLD, 2015; KNOX et al., 2017; MARTINAT-BOTTÉ et al., 2010). Dentre os hormônios utilizados, a prostaglandina F_{2α} (PGF_{2α}) apresenta elevado potencial para uso.

A PGF_{2α} tem papel importante na ovulação, luteólise, implantação e manutenção da gestação e alterações fisiológica no parto e pós parto (WEEMS; WEEMS; RANDEL, 2006). PEÑA et al., (1998, 2001) utilizaram análogo de PGF_{2α} em suínos no intuito de melhorar a eficiência reprodutiva em períodos de aumento de falhas ligadas à reprodução, em consequência do estresse térmico no verão.

Em bovinos estudos demonstraram que análogos de PGF_{2α} podem induzir a ovulação do folículo dominante em protocolos de inseminação artificial em tempo fixo (IATF) (CASTRO et al., 2018; PFEIFER et al., 2014, 2018). Porém é importante o conhecimento do estágio de desenvolvimento folicular no momento da aplicação do indutor de ovulação, para se ter uma resposta adequada ao estímulo hormonal (DE RENSIS; KIRKWOOD, 2016).

Portanto, de acordo com as informações acima objetiva-se com esse trabalho avaliar a ação das prostaglandinas no mecanismo de indução e sincronização das ovulações em fêmeas suínas pluríparas, bem como o momento ideal para aplicação, a fim de proporcionar homogeneidade da leitegada e redução do número de inseminações.

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2 REVISÃO BIBLIOGRÁFICA

2.1 Foliculogênese

Os suínos domésticos são considerados poliéstricos contínuos não sazonais, ou seja, manifestam estros consecutivos durante o decorrer do ano. Sendo interrompida fisiologicamente durante os períodos de gestação e lactação (ANDERSON, 2004; FRIES et al., 2010; MELLAGI et al., 2007). O ciclo estral dura em média 21 dias, com variação de 19 a 23 dias.

Folículos que crescem até 2 ou 3 milímetros (mm) necessitam apenas de fatores de crescimento locais para o desenvolvimento inicial (PRUNIER; QUESNEL, 2000), dispensando os efeitos dos hormônios gonadotróficos (DRIANCOURT; LOCATELLI; PRUNIER, 1995). A partir do 14^a e 16^a dia do ciclo, os folículos selecionados têm aumento no seu diâmetro, e do 16^a ao início do estro cerca da metade dos folículos entram em processo de atresia, os demais folículos continuam seu crescimento até a ovulação (HAFEZ; HAFEZ, 2004).

O crescimento folicular final até o momento da ovulação acontece de quatro a seis dias, onde folículos com 1 a 4 mm atingem em média de 6 a 10 mm, já aptos a ovularem (MORBECK et al., 1992). Durante esse crescimento os folículos passam por mudanças estruturais e metabólicas, como proliferação celular, aumento do volume antral, aumento na secreção de inibina e estradiol, e expressão dos receptores do Hormônio Luteinizante (LH) (FOXCROFT; HUNTER, 1985).

Após a ovulação há formação dos corpos lúteos (CLs), iniciando-se a fase luteal, de 16 a 17 dias. Com a regressão do corpo lúteo (CL), inicia-se a fase folicular de 3 a 6 dias (HAFEZ; HAFEZ, 2004). Posterior à lise dos CLs, cerca de 15 a 25 folículos de 1 a 4 mm são recrutados e selecionados e se desenvolvem até a ovulação, com ativação de receptores de hormônios gonadotróficos, como o Hormônio Folículo Estimulante (FSH) nas células da granulosa e LH nas células da teca (PRUNIER; QUESNEL, 2000).

A partir da ativação dos receptores de FSH e LH no folículos antrais, as células da teca são estimuladas a secretarem andrógenos, por ação do LH, esses por sua vez serão convertidos a estrógenos nas células da granulosa (DING; FOXCROFT, 1994). Os estrógenos tem ação direta na estimulação das divisões mitóticas nos folículos e aumento na expressão de receptores de FSH (KNOX, 2005). Nas células da teca o LH estimula a expressão de enzimas para produção de andrógenos (MAGOFFIN, 1989).

Nas células da granulosa há produção de inibina, hormônio responsável pela inibição do desenvolvimento de folículos não dominantes devido ao feedback negativo do FSH. Os folículos dominantes continuam o desenvolvimento, e na medida que crescem o estrógeno e o FSH auxiliam na formação de receptores de LH nas células da teca e diminuição dos receptores de FSH na células da granulosa (STABENFELDT; DAVIDSON; BRINSKO, 2004).

A maturação folicular por sua vez é sinalizada ao hipotálamo e adeno hipófise pelo aumento da secreção de estrógeno no antro folicular, o qual resulta em pico de LH em torno de trinta horas antes da ovulação, ocasionado desenvolvimento acelerado no folículo, fazendo com que haja alterações, com a ruptura do mesmo e liberação do ócito (FOXCROFT et al., 2006). Essas alterações são realizadas por hormônios sintetizados pelas células da granulosa, como relaxina, prostaglandina $E2\alpha$ e $PGF2\alpha$, para afetar a estrutura das células da teca (PEÑA et al., 1998).

Os corpos lúteos são formados pela hipertrofia e hiperplasia das células da teca e granulosa, em conjunto com intensa angiogênese, próximo do 11^a e 12^a dia os CLs estão na sua completa maturação. Sob influência do decréscimo do LH, há elevada produção de progesterona, no intuito de auxiliar no reconhecimento e manutenção da gestação. Em casos onde não há reconhecimento materno da gestação, por volta do 16^a dia, se inicia o processo de luteólise, diminuindo as concentrações de progesterona, proporcionando novo crescimento folicular, reiniciando novo ciclo estral (HAFEZ; HAFEZ, 2004).

2.2 Momento da ovulação e duração do estro

Em geral grande parte da fêmeas suínas retornam ao estro de 3 a 5 dias pós desmame. Sabe-se que existe estreita relação entre duração do estro (DE) e intervalo desmame-estro (IDE), na qual estros mais curtos são acompanhados de IDE mais longos, e o inverso também é verdadeiro (PATTERSON et al., 2001).

Em tratando de rotina de granja, estimar o momento da ovulação se torna um desafio, pois existe alta variabilidade entre animais e diversas possibilidades de falhas no manejo reprodutivo. Essa relação entre IDE e DE, e a íntima ligação de ambas com o momento da ovulação proporcionam a melhor e mais simplificada forma de identificar a ovulação em granjas. Identificando esses parâmetros de forma correta é possível planejar a escolha do protocolo de inseminação artificial ideal para as matrizes (SOEDE; NISSEN; KEMP, 2000;

WEITZE et al., 1990). Salientando que o melhor período para inseminar é entre 28 h antes e 4 h após a ovulação (NISSEN et al., 1997).

Diversas pesquisas demonstram a relação entre início do estro pós desmame e tempo de ovulação. KNOX e RODRIGUEZ ZAS (2001) demonstraram que matrizes pós desmame com retorno de estro em 3 dias e entre 6 a 8 dias, ovularam em média 46,2 e 30,2 horas, respectivamente. KEMP e SOEDE (1996) também observaram redução da DE (diminuição média de setenta minutos a cada hora) e intervalo do início do estro à ovulação (média de 35 minutos a menos por hora) com o aumento do IDE. Em alguns casos houve diminuição de aproximadamente 6 horas para duração do estro e 4,8 horas para intervalo início do estro e ovulação a cada dia a mais no IDE, no caso de 3 para 6 dias (BELSTRA; FLOWERS; SEE, 2004).

VIANA et al. (1999), relataram a mesma relação entre IDE e ovulação, pela concentração de ovulações a cada 24 horas após o início do estro, dividindo nos seguintes intervalo 0 a 24, 24 a 48, 48 a 72 e acima de 72 horas, respectivamente, IDE de 3 dias (0; 58,4; 37,5 e 4,2 %), IDE de 4 dias (3,2; 67,7; 29,2 e 0 %) IDC de 5 dias (0; 91,6; 8,3 e 0 %) e IDE de 6 e 7 dias (10; 90 e 0 %).

Baseado na endocrinologia da reprodução, os hormônios FSH, prolactina e progesterona não tem efeito sobre o IDE e ovulação, exceto o LH. Ao desmame, porcas com IDE de 4 dias apresentaram maiores secreções pulsáteis e basais do LH em relação a IDE de 6 dias, indicando desenvolvimento folicular retardado, e que esse possa ser dependente do feedback dos esteroides (SHAW; FOXCROFT, 1985). Em relação aos estrogênios, fêmeas com IDE mais longo, mostraram maior intervalo aumento do estradiol e o início do estro, indicando menor sensibilidade ao estrógeno, consequentemente atraso nos sinais de estro (ROJKITTIKHUN; EINARSSOU; EDQVIST, 1993).

2.3 Prostaglandinas na ovulação

As prostaglandinas foram descobertas por (KURZROK; LIEB, 1930), desde então têm sido utilizadas nos processos reprodutivos em muitas espécies domésticas. São sintetizadas no próprio organismo a partir dos fosfolipídios da membrana celular que, ao sofrerem a ação da fosfolipase A, produzem o ácido araquidônico. Este, por sua vez, por ação da cicloxigenase, dá origem às prostaglandinas e por ação da 5-lipoxigenase, dá origem aos leucotrienos (YOUNG; ANDERSON; PLENDERLEITH, 1984).

No endométrio há produção de $\text{PGF2}\alpha$, que posteriormente é transportada pela veia uterina, sendo grande parte transportada até os pulmões onde é degradada rapidamente em metabólitos inativos. A principal enzima envolvida nesse processo é a 15- hidroxiprostaglandin-desidrogenase (15 - PGDH), que se transformará em 15 ceto derivados por oxidação do grupo hidroxila mediante a sua ação. Essa enzima se encontra em grandes quantidades no útero de vacas gestantes (KANKOFER; HOEDEMAKER, 1993). Contudo, uma fração é carregada pela veia uterina e por mecanismo de contracorrente passa desta para a artéria ovariana até os ovários.

As prostaglandinas provocam diversos feedbacks nos processos fisiológicos no organismo. Por exemplo, na reprodução estão envolvidas amplamente na liberação de hormônios, ovulação, luteólise, motilidade uterina, parto, pós parto e transporte de espermatozoides (WEEMS; WEEMS; RANDEL, 2006).

O papel das prostaglandinas na ovulação não está totalmente esclarecido, sugere-se que as prostaglandinas causam aumento da capacidade da hipófise de responder ao GnRH no pós-parto em bovinos (RANDEL et al., 1996). Em ovinos, pode estar diretamente ligada à ovulação, pois a COX-2, prostaglandina E (PGE) e $\text{PGF2}\alpha$ aumentam e permanecem elevada até o momento da ovulação nos folículos pré-ovulatórios (MURDOCH; MCCORMICK, 1993).

Em bovinos, no período pré-ovulatório, ocorre um aumento das prostaglandinas no líquido folicular. Sendo que essas são sintetizadas nas células da granulosa de folículos maduros, podendo também estimular a síntese de enzimas colagenolíticas que degradam os tecidos conjuntivos da parede folicular (BRIDGES; FORTUNE, 2007). Em ratos e ovelhas é observado esse mesmo mecanismo (MURDOCH et al., 1986; REICH et al., 1991). Outra hipótese baseia-se na resposta inflamatória localizada no folículo antes da ovulação (PRIDDY; KILLICK, 1993).

As células da granulosa, à medida que a ovulação se aproxima, são capazes de sintetizar a enzima ativadora de plasminogênio, mediante ação das gonadotrofinas, mesmo que o FSH esteja em maior concentração que o LH. Esse ativador converte o plasminogênio em plasmina, que é capaz de enfraquecer a parede do folículo. Nesse caso é possível que em função da ação das prostaglandinas em estimular a produção do ativador, haverá maior síntese dessas enzimas proteolíticas que ocasionarão o enfraquecimento da parede folicular, provocando aumento da pressão no interior do folículo, de modo que haja ruptura e liberação do oócito (LI et al., 2006; POYSER, 1981).

2.4 Heterogeneidade e ovulação

Alta prolificidade baseia-se na busca pela diluição dos custos fixos das matrizes, principalmente em matriz lactante, pois consiste no aumento do tamanho de leitegada no nascimento. Porém, quando se avalia a produção como todo, as despesas na maternidade são menores em relação as fases de crescimento e terminação (TALAMINI et al., 2006). Outra justificativa é a ênfase do melhoramento genético na busca por leitegadas mais numerosas, visto que, algumas mudanças físicas terão de serem feitas em razão das novas regras de bem estar animal (ROHR; DALLA COSTA; DALLA COSTA, 2014). Consequentemente haverá maior exigência em aumentar a produtividade por matriz para equilibrar o aumento nos custos de produção.

Entretanto, esse foco pode reduzir a eficiência produtiva, ocasionando aumento de leitões com baixo peso ao nascimento, e consequentemente aumento da falta de uniformidade da leitegada, maiores taxas de refugagem e mortalidade na maternidade (KAPELL et al., 2011; MUNS; NUNTAPAITOON; TUMMARUK, 2016; QUESNEL et al., 2008).

Ambiente uterino, taxa de ovulação, qualidade oocitária, intervalo ovulação-fertilização, tempo de ovulação, capacidade uterina, eficiência placentária, estado nutricional, genética da matriz, além de fatores ambientais são consideradas causas da variação de peso corporal da leitegada ao nascimento (WU et al., 2006; YUAN et al., 2015).

Fatores que envolvem variações no desenvolvimento embrionário não estão completamente elucidados, podendo estar relacionados a distintos graus de maturação oocitária e variações no tempo entre ovulações de folículos antrais em desenvolvimento (POPE, 1994; POPE et al., 1990).

A interferência da ovulação no desenvolvimento embrionário, fica evidente após o 11º dia da gestação, nessa etapa o concepto inicia o processo de alongação com diâmetro de 10 mm, porém podem existir conceptos menores de 7 mm de diâmetro, esses podendo apresentar mais de 8 horas de atraso no desenvolvimento em relação aos demais. Esses conceptos de desenvolvimento tardio apresentam menores taxas de alongação, por consequência menor ganho na superfície de contato com o útero, podendo ocasionar aumento de desuniformidade, leitões mais leves ou até morte embrionária (GEISERT; SCHMITT, 2002).

Variações de 1 a 4 horas no tempo entre ovulações não interferem no desenvolvimento embrionário, e diversas pesquisas demonstram que o intervalo de ovulação da maioria das matrizes estão nessa faixa (SIGNORET; DU MESNIL DU BUISSON;

MAULÉON, 1972; SOEDE; NOORDHUIZEN; KEMP, 1992), descartando a influência da ovulação na heterogeneidade da leitegada. Por outro lado alguns animais apresentam intervalos maiores, chegando até nove horas. Mesmo assim grande parte dos folículos ovulam dentro de curto período de tempo, os mais tardios provavelmente geraram embriões com desenvolvimento retardado (POPE, 1994; XIE et al., 1990a, 1990b). Nesses casos a desuniformidade pode ser explicado em partes pelo tempo de ovulação, porém outros fatores devem contribuir em maiores proporções com esse fenômeno. O principal fator da variação do peso dos leitões está relacionado a eficiência placentária, a qual é prejudicada pela limitação do espaço uterino e diminuição do tamanho das placentas em casos de aumento no número de leitões (KNOL; LEENHOUWERS; VAN DER LENDE, 2002; PÈRE; DOURMAD; ETIENNE, 1997; ROOTWELT et al., 2013; VALLET; FREKING; MILES, 2011; VAN DER LENDE; SCHOENMAKER, 1990).

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Prostaglandin F2 α as a synchronizing agent and ovulation inducer in pluriparous sows¹

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to verify the use of d-Cloprostenol (Prostaglandin F2 α Analog - PGF2 α) on synchronization and induction of ovulation in pluriparous sows. One hundred and twenty five females of commercial lineage, between the 3rd and 6th parturition order and after weaning, were randomly distributed as follows: Control, (n = 42) 2 mL saline (0.9% NaCl) administered in the estrus detection (ED); Treatment 0h (n = 44), administration of 0.150 mg d-Cloprostenol in ED; and Treatment 24h (n = 39) administration of 0.150 mg d-Cloprostenol 24 h after ED. From ED, follicular monitoring was performed every 8 hours by ultrasound. Three inseminations were carried out every 24 hours beginning six hours after ED. After 28 days, pregnancy diagnosis was made. At parturition, litter was evaluated, with individual weighings, and classification as total, live, stillborn, and mummified fetuses. PGF2 α did not influence (P>0.05) the onset, end and total time. There were sows that presented longer ovulation interval (more than 8 h between ovaries) but their frequency did not differ among treatments (P>0.05). PGF2 α did not affect (P>0.05) the pregnancy and parturition rates, neither the number of total, live, stillborn, and mummified fetuses. Treatment 0h showed lower birth weight (P<0.05). Litter weight homogeneity did not affect by PGF2 α . There was a difference between sixth parturition order and the others in relation reducing the probability of the piglet's born alive.

Keywords: d-cloprostenol; hyperprolificity; insemination

INTRODUCTION

Biotechnologies would become useful tools to increase productivity according to the vision and reality of each producer. Recent researches aim at strategies to reach this objective, among them the reduction of sperm concentration in the inseminating dose, reduction of the number of intrauterine inseminations, and more recently control of the estrous cycle and ovulations (Bortolozzo et al., 2015).

The estrus synchronization through hormonal protocols is an useful tool in artificial insemination. Prostaglandin F2 α (PGF2 α) has been shown to induce and synchronize ovulation in cattle (Castro et al., 2018; Leonardi et al., 2012; Pfeifer et al., 2018, 2014), with the advantage of reduced cost over other synthetic hormones used for the same purpose.

The fact of inducing and synchronizing ovulations can create an environment that favors the presence of more homogeneous embryos, hindering the occurrence of early embryonic death. Since embryonic survival after 35 days is indirectly related to ovulation, since the limitation of uterine capacity causes a large part of prenatal mortality in pigs. In this case, more developed embryos are more capable of competing for biochemical factors in the uterus and tend to have a larger placental surface for exchanging nutrients between fetus and mother (Bazer et al., 1969a, 1969b; Freking et al., 2007; Vallet and Christenson, 1993; Van der Lende et al., 1990; Vonnahme et al., 2002).

The objective was to evaluate if the administration of PGF2 α induce and synchronize ovulation of pluriparous swine females, as well as the ideal time of application, in order to provide greater litter homogeneity and reduction of the number of inseminations.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Ethics

All animal handling procedures were approved by the Ethics Committee for the use of Animals (process N°. 012/2019) and were performed in accordance with the principles of ethics of animal experimentation.

Local and animals

The animals were housed in Coimbra, Minas Gerais, Brazil (20°45'14" S, and 42°52'54" W), in a commercial pig farm. One hundred and twenty five pluriparous sows

between, from 3rd to 6th parturition order, clinically healthy and classified as suitable for reproduction. Were used with weaning interval for all sows from 2 to 5 days, body condition score ranging from 3.0 to 4.0 (Scale 1 to 5); (Sobestiansky et al., 1998). The animals were kept in individual cages, with ad libitum water and fed once a day, in the morning.

Oestrus Detection

To detect estrus, all animals were teased with a sexually mature male, at 09:00 and 15:00 hours. The onset of estrus was detected by the standing reflex of tolerance to the male and to the man (immobility in response to manual pressure in the lower back), as well as frequent urination, decreased consumption, raised ears and arched back. In this study, only the sows that presented estrus at 09:00 were selected.

Experimental design

The animals were randomly distributed into three treatments: 1)- Control treatment (Control) - 42 animals were administrated with 2 mL of saline (0.9% NaCl), intramuscular at the onset of estrus detection, 2)- Treatment 0h (0h) - 44 animals received 0.150 mg of d-Cloprostenol (PGF Analog, Prolise®, Tecnopec, São Paulo, Brazil) at the onset of estrus and 3)- Treatment 24h (24h) - 39 animals received 0.150 mg of d-Cloprostenol (PGF Analogue, Prolise®, Tecnopec, São Paulo, Brazil) 24 hours after estrus detection.

Ultrasound of the ovaries

All animals were submitted to evaluation by transabdominal ultrasonography (Mindray DP-2200 VET®, Shenzhen, China), with a convex transducer positioned in the abdominal region, on the right and left flanks, approximately at the midpoint between the femur-tibial-patellar joint and the last rib, ten centimeters above the last three mammary glands (Weitze et al., 1989). Examination was performed every eight hours to observe follicular growth until the end of ovulation. The onset of ovulation was determined when the number of follicles was lower than in the previous examination and the end of ovulation was determined when no follicle was visualized.

Artificial insemination

Three inseminations were carried out, six, thirty and fifty-four hours, after the estrus detection. The intrauterine artificial insemination technique, at 15 to 20 cm after the cervix, was used cooled semen with 1×10^9 live sperm in 60 mL of commercial diluent (Bortolozzo et al., 2005; Watson and Behan, 2002).

Pregnancy diagnosis

Diagnosis of pregnancy was performed in all sows at 28 days after the last insemination, by transabdominal ultrasound examination (Mindray DP-2200 VET®, Shenzhen, China). Where the transducer was located on the skin surface on the abdominal region, cranial to the pelvic limb and dorsal to the last three mammary glands (Williams et al., 2008). The images showed the anechoic placental attachments and the embryo inside them. The pregnancy rate of the sows was registered.

Litter evaluation

At the parturition time, all piglets were individually weighed with electronic scale ranging from zero to fifty kilograms (Baspan®, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil). It was recorded: gestation length, the piglet sex, litter size, as well as the total numbers born alive, stillborn and mummified fetuses. The parturition rate was also calculated.

Statistical analysis

Data were analyzed by the Statistical Analysis System (SAS version 9.4). Quantitative variables were submitted to Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and Bartlett test to check for error normality and homogeneity of variances, respectively. Ovulation data parameters, number of born piglets and gestational length were evaluated in a block design (GLM procedure) according to the model:

$$Y_{ijk} = \mu + T_i + B_j + e_{ijk}$$

Where: μ , constant; T_i , effect of treatment; B_j , effect of block (shed); and e_{ijk} , error.

Data of weight data of piglets were evaluated (MIXED procedure) considering the female effect and sex of the piglet according to the model:

$$Y_{ijk} = \mu + T_i + S_j + (TS)_{ij} + F(TS)_{k(ij)} + e_{ijk}$$

Where: μ , constant; T_i , effect of treatment; S_j , effect of sex of the piglet; $(TS)_{ij}$, interaction; $F(TS)_{k(ij)}$, effect of female; and e_{ijk} , error.

The onset and end of ovulation for treatments was evaluated by survival analysis (LIFETEST procedure) and the equality over strata (treatments) was tested by Log-Rank and Wilcoxon tests.

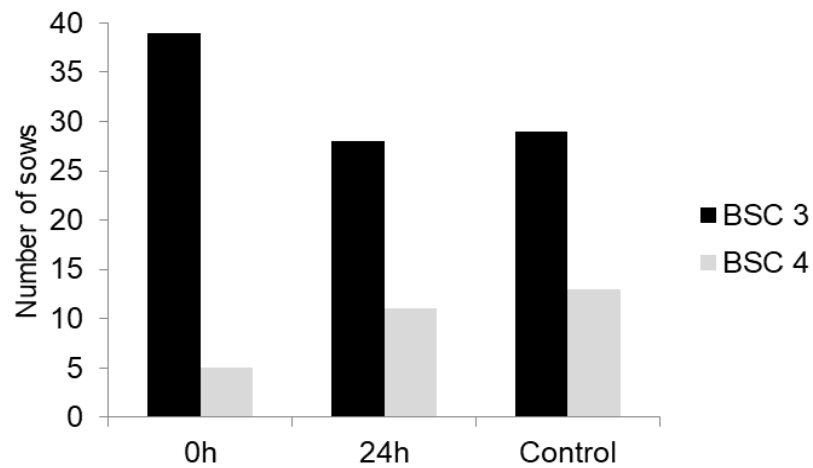
Percentage data were arranged in contingency tables and evaluated by Fisher exact test (2×2 tables) or Freeman-Halton test ($r \times c$ tables).

Data of Body score condition (BSC) and parturition order were analyzed by Kruskal-Wallis test. Correlations among variables were evaluated by Pearson's correlation (quantitative variables) and Spearman's correlation (qualitative variables). Significant level adopted was $\alpha = 0.05$.

Qualitative (BSC, parturition order, treatment, pattern of ovulation and shed) and quantitative (beginning and end of ovulation, and weaning-estrus interval) data were used as explanatory variables in a multivariate logistic regression (LOGISTIC procedure) to evaluate the effect of these variables on the probability of pregnancy, parturition and piglets born alive. Stepwise selection was used and only explanatory variables significant at $P < 0.10$ were kept in final model.

RESULTS

The distribution of the body score condition (Figure 1) and the parturition order among animals within treatments did not differ ($P > 0.05$; Table 1). The distribution of the ambient temperature over the hours is showed in Table 2.



*BSC, body score condition.

Figure 1. Distribution of the BSC in commercial sows, submitted to the application of prostaglandins or not at different times during estrus.

Table 1. Median values (first and third quartiles) of the parturition order and body score condition (BSC) according to treatment, in commercial sows.

Variable	0h	24h	Control	<i>P</i> -value*
Parturition order	4 (3-5)	4 (3.5-5)	4 (3-5)	0.3843
BSC	3 (3-3)	3 (3-4)	3 (3-4)	0.0678

* By Kruskal-Wallis test. BSC, body score condition.

Table 2. Distribution of the ambient temperature over the hours, during the period of administration of PGF₂α.

Time	Temperature (° C)	Time	Temperature (° C)
00:00	16.38 ± 0.78	12:00	25.20 ± 0.51
01:00	15.91 ± 0.81	13:00	25.94 ± 0.51
02:00	15.86 ± 0.74	14:00	26.32 ± 0.59
03:00	15.38 ± 0.82	15:00	26.14 ± 0.55
04:00	15.12 ± 0.85	16:00	25.23 ± 0.47
05:00	14.89 ± 0.89	17:00	22.74 ± 0.39
06:00	14.79 ± 0.90	18:00	20.41 ± 0.47
07:00	15.14 ± 0.95	19:00	19.18 ± 0.52
08:00	17.80 ± 0.71	20:00	18.45 ± 0.55
09:00	19.80 ± 0.66	21:00	17.78 ± 0.59
10:00	21.78 ± 0.57	22:00	17.29 ± 0.60

11:00

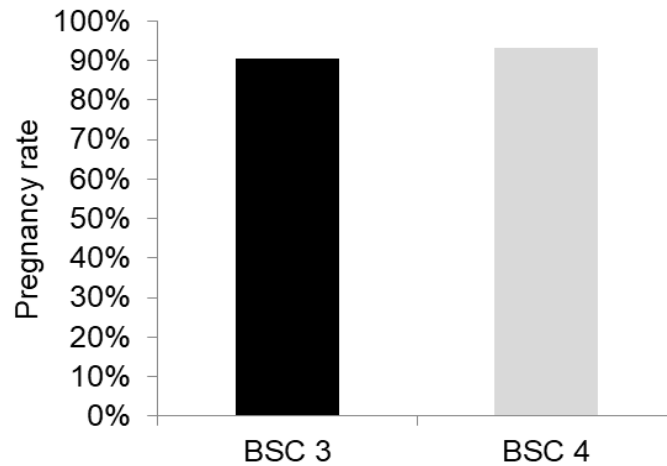
 23.70 ± 0.48

23:00

 16.97 ± 0.63

*Measured by Data Logger (HOBOPRO v2, Onset Computer Corporation, Massachusetts, United States).

The BSC did not affect the pregnancy rate ($P > 0.05$; Figure 2).



* $P = 1.0000$ by Fisher exact test.

Figure 2. Pregnancy rate according to body condition score, in commercial sows.

The administration of PGF2 α did not affect the ovarian response (Table 3), with no difference ($P > 0.05$) between the beginning and end of ovulation, total ovulation time and the probability of the beginning and end of ovulation (Figures 3 and 4).

Table 3. Onset and end of ovulation and total duration time of ovulation, in commercial sows (Mean $\pm$ SEM).

Variables	0h	24h	Control	<i>P</i> -value
Onset of ovulation (h)	41.5 ± 1.5	41.8 ± 1.6	41.3 ± 1.5	0.7762
End of ovulation (h)	45.6 ± 1.6	44.9 ± 1.5	45.9 ± 1.6	0.9772
Ovulation time (h)	4.2 ± 0.8	3.1 ± 0.7	4.6 ± 0.7	0.3956

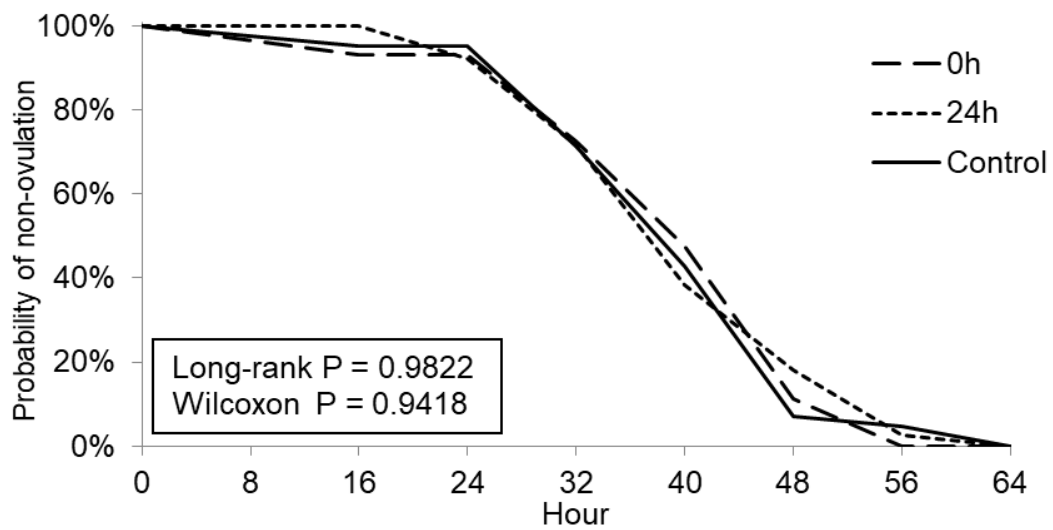


Figure 3. Survival analysis for the onset of ovulation, in commercial sows.

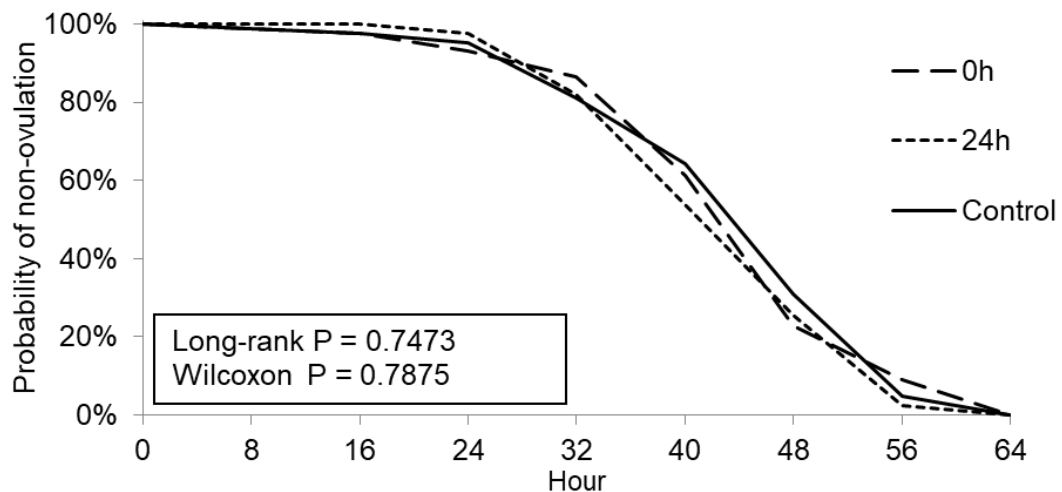
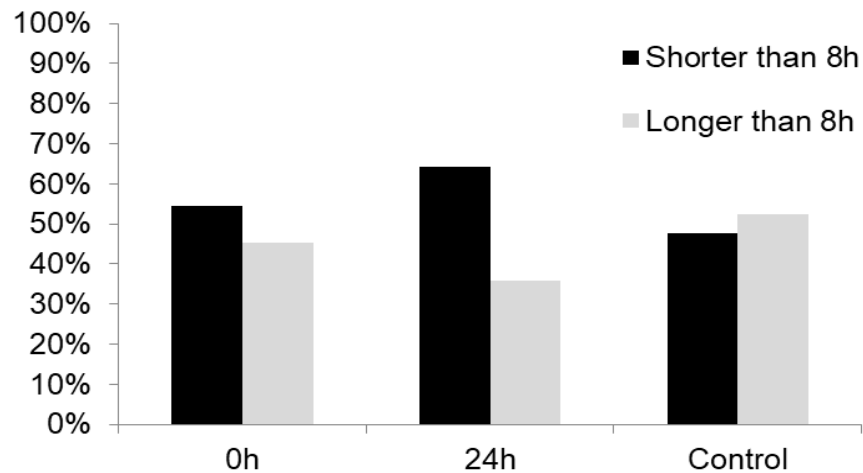


Figure 4. Survival analysis for end of the ovulation, in commercial sows.

A distinct pattern of ovulation was observed between ovaries, with no synchrony in the ovulation process of the follicles from both. In all treatments, animals with prolonged ovulation intervals were found (Figure 5). However, there was no difference ($P > 0.05$) within the treatments in relation to the prolonged ovulation interval.



* P = 0.3292 by Freeman-Halton test.

Figure 5. Ovulation pattern between the ovaries in relation to the time from the first to the last ovulation, in commercial sows.

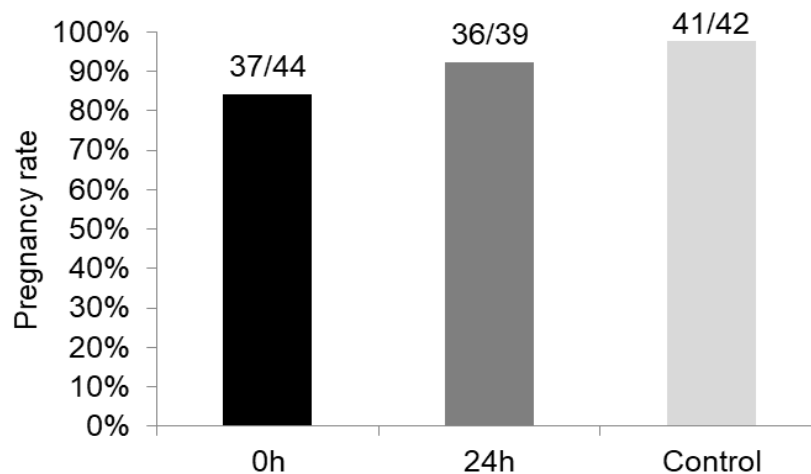
The ovulation pattern between ovaries did not affect pregnancy and parturition rates (P>0.05; Table 4).

Table 4. Pregnancy and parturition rate according to ovulation interval, in commercial sows (Mean $\pm$ SEM).

Variables	< 8h	> 8h	P-value
Pregnancy rate	62/69	53/56	0.3426
Parturition rate	60/69	52/56	0.3811

*P = by Fisher exact test.

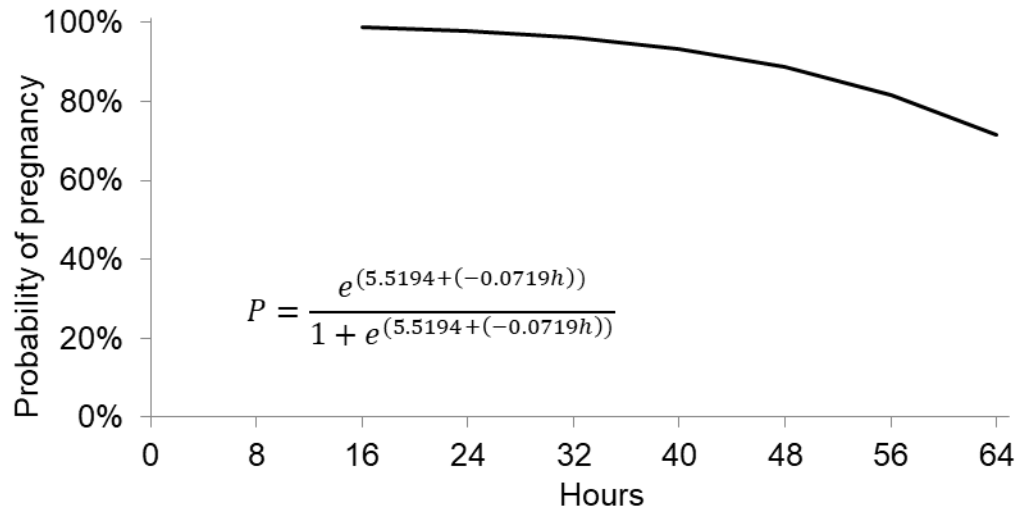
The administration of PGF2 α did not affect the pregnancy rate (P>0.05; Figure 6).



* P = 0.0797 by Freeman-Halton test.

Figure 6. Pregnancy rate in commercial sows, application of different doses of prostaglandins during estrus.

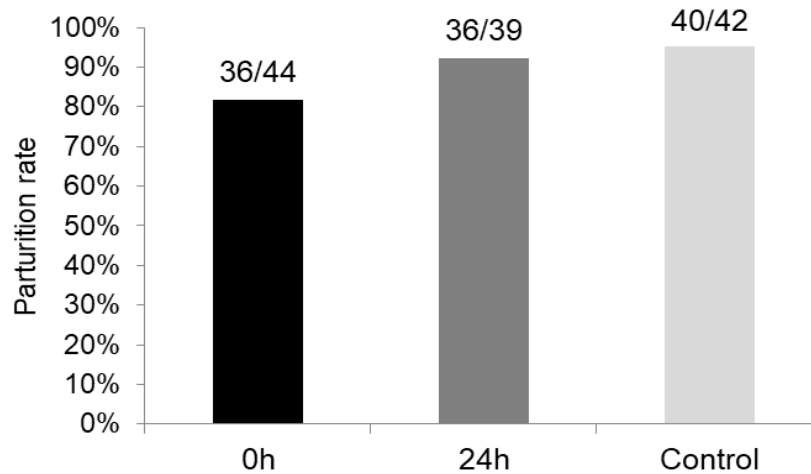
It was found that the shorter the interval of estrus to ovulation, the greater the chances of pregnancy ($P < 0.05$; Figure 7).



* $c = 0.668$.

Figure 7. Probability of pregnancy related to the onset of ovulation, in commercial sows. h = hour of the onset of ovulation.

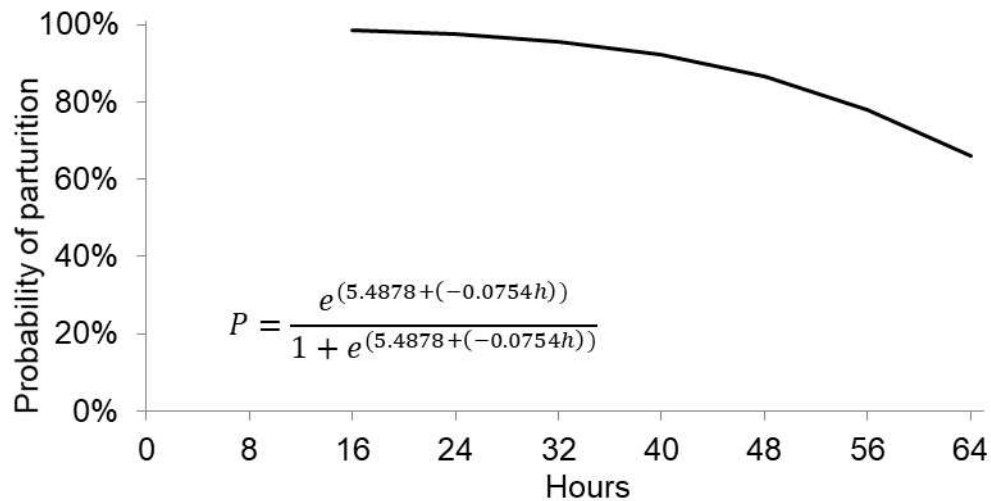
PGF2 α did not affect the parturition rate ($P > 0.05$; Figure 8).



* $P = 0.1262$ by Freeman-Halton test.

Figure 8. Parturition rate in commercial sows, application of different doses of prostaglandins during estrus.

It was noted that the greater the interval from the onset of estrus to ovulation the lower the birth rates ($P < 0.05$; Figure 9).



* c = 0.683.

Figure 9. Probability of parturition related to the onset of ovulation, in commercial sows. h= onset of ovulation time (hours).

The application of PGF2 α did not affect the total number of born, born alive, stillborns, mummified fetuses and gestation length ($P > 0.05$; Table 5).

Table 5. Number of piglets and gestational length in commercial sows, application of different doses of prostaglandins during estrus (Mean $\pm$ SEM).

Variables	T1 (0h)	T2 (24h)	TC (Control)	P-value
Total (n)	16.0 $\pm$ 0.5	15.3 $\pm$ 0.6	14.3 $\pm$ 0.6	0.0769
Born alive (n)	14.5 $\pm$ 0.5	13.7 $\pm$ 0.5	13.1 $\pm$ 0.6	0.1390
Stillborn (n)	0.8 $\pm$ 0.2	1.1 $\pm$ 0.2	0.8 $\pm$ 0.1	0.2107
Mummified fetuses (n)	0.7 $\pm$ 0.2	0.6 $\pm$ 0.1	0.4 $\pm$ 0.1	0.3417
Gestational length (days)	116.4 $\pm$ 0.2	115.9 $\pm$ 0.3	116.6 $\pm$ 0.2	0.3328

There was a difference in litter weight at birth between treatment 0h and Control and 24h treatments ($P < 0.05$; Table 6). There was also a difference between the piglet's sex ($P < 0.05$; Table 6).

Table 6. Weight of the piglet according to treatments and sex of the piglet, in commercial sows, application of different doses of prostaglandins during estrus.

Treatment	Weight (Kg)	Sex of the piglet	Weight (Kg)
0h	1.45 $\pm$ 0.02 ^b	Female	1.47 $\pm$ 0.01 ^b
24h	1.52 $\pm$ 0.02 ^a	Male	1.53 $\pm$ 0.01 ^a
Control	1.53 $\pm$ 0.02 ^a		

Within a column, different letters indicate difference by Tukey-Kramer test ($P < 0.05$)

There was a reduction in the probability of the piglet born alive in sows of the sixth order in relation to those of the third to fifth order (Figure 10; Table 8).

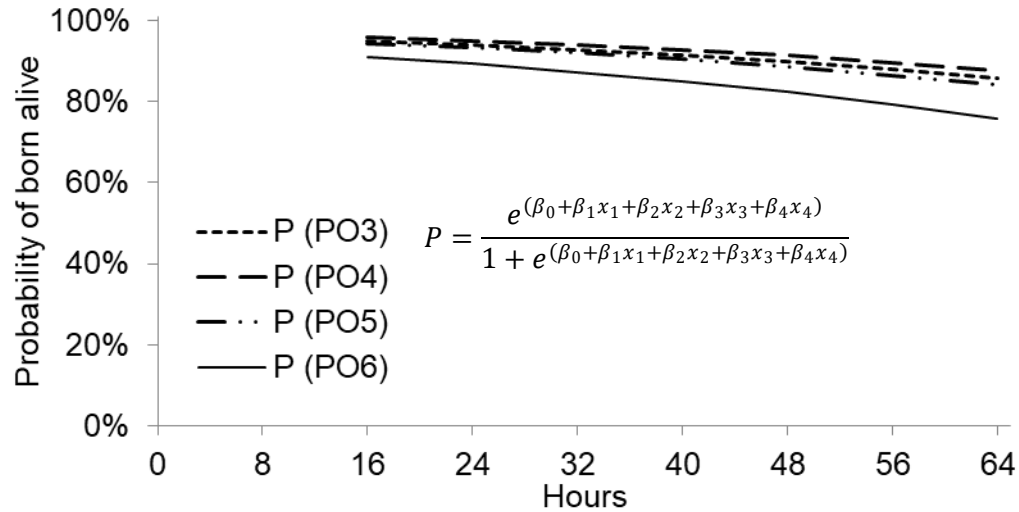


Figure 10. Probability of a piglet born alive related to parturition order (PO) and the onset of ovulation (h), in commercial sows.

Table 7. Analysis of maximum likelihood estimates of the multivariate logistic regression analysis.

Parameter		Estimate $\pm$ SE	Design variables
Intercept	β_0	3.1954 ± 0.3834	-
PO (3)	β_1	0.1431 ± 0.1457	1 0 0
PO (4)	β_2	0.3256 ± 0.1427	0 1 0
PO (5)	β_3	0.0239 ± 0.1394	0 0 1
PO (6)	-	-	-1 -1 -1
Beginning of ovulation (h)	β_4	-0.0243 ± 0.00879	-

PO, parturition order.

Table 8. Odds ratio values (and inverse values within parenthesis).

PO	3	4	5	6
3 vs.	-	0.833 (1.200)	1.127 (0.888)	1.888 (0.530)
4 vs.	-	-	1.352 (0.740)	2.266 (0.441)
5 vs.	-	-	-	1.676 (0.597)
6 vs.	-	-	-	-

PO, parturition order.

Table 9. Number of piglets in commercial sows, according to the parturition order (Mean $\pm$ SEM).

PO	Total (n)	Born alive (n)	Stillborn (n)	Mummified fetuses (n)
3	14.09 $\pm$ 0.81	12.60 $\pm$ 0.74	0.97 $\pm$ 0.20	0.51 $\pm$ 0.20
4	16.03 $\pm$ 0.43	14.67 $\pm$ 0.40	1.00 $\pm$ 0.20	0.36 $\pm$ 0.09
5	14.97 $\pm$ 0.53	13.40 $\pm$ 0.60	0.77 $\pm$ 0.18	0.80 $\pm$ 0.18
6	16.40 $\pm$ 0.86	13.90 $\pm$ 0.60	1.40 $\pm$ 0.28	1.10 $\pm$ 0.48

PO, parturition order.

PGF 2α did not influence the decrease in body weight variation and litter homogeneity (Figure 11).

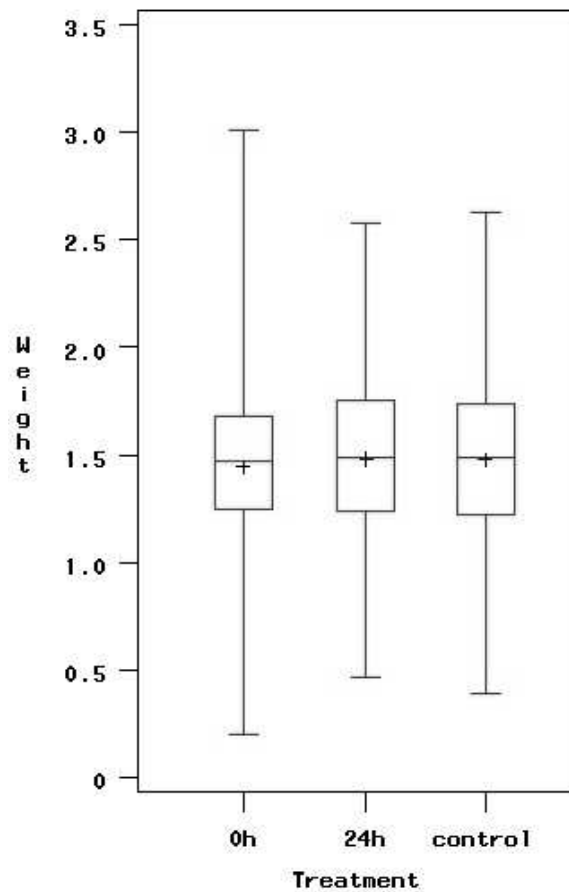


Figure 11. Piglet weight distribution in commercial sows, application of different doses of prostaglandins during estrus.

DISCUSSION

In this study, it was observed a homogeneous distribution between parturition order and body condition score. Females between the third and fifth birth order were selected, due to their lower and similar rates of catabolism during the lactation period. First and second calving females were excluded because of their greater catabolic sensitivity and consequently lower body reserves, resulting in lower reproductive and productive rates (Mellagi et al., 2013).

In this study, we aimed to evaluate the effect of PGF2 α as synchronization and ovulation inductor, however this effect was not observed. All treatments showed similar results for the onset and end of ovulation, consequently total ovulation time. This may be related to the fast metabolism of PGF2 α in the lungs, since in the first passage about 99% is inactivated (Davis et al., 1980). In the swine species the main form of heat release at the thermal stress (ambient temperature above 20°C) is caused by the increase in respiratory frequency (Manno et al., 2006). Two hours after the application of cloprostenol, the ambient temperature (°C), exceeded thermoneutrality, remaining for nine hours above the acceptable limit. This increase in temperature can influence the breath rate of females and consequently the action of the analogue, even with a half-life of approximately 3 hours (Reeves, 1978). By the way, prostaglandin action on immature pre-ovulatory follicle (De Rensis and Kirkwood, 2016), may cause increased intrafollicular pressure and affect the synthesis of collagenolytic enzymes (Poyser, 1984). This fact is supported by the increase in the PGFs concentration in the intra-follicular liquid (Ainsworth et al., 1984, 1975; Berisha et al., 2019; Tsang et al., 1988).

Patterson et al. (2001) reported that PGF2 α analogue via intravulvar did not get the expected effect on estrus duration, ovulation rate, total embryos, embryonic survival, estrus/ovulation interval and conception rate. However Peña et al. (2001, 1998), demonstrated a positive effect of PGF2 α on reproductive indexes during the summer, results that are due to the action of prostaglandin on the uterus instead ovaries. Other studies have observed a beneficial effect of adding PGF2 α analogue to swine semen, which have improved conception and parturition rates (Horvat and Bilkei, 2003), increased piglets born (Kos and Bilkei, 2004) and increased intrauterine sperm reserve (Willenburg et al., 2003). However, according to Kirkwood et al. (2007), the results of intramuscular application or addition of PGF2 α to semen are inconsistent and require further studies.

In the present study, PGF2 α analogue showed no effect on the anticipation of ovulations related to the onset of estrus, a fact also justified by the follicular immaturity.

In the present study, an increase in the intervals between the beginning and end of ovulation was observed due to the lack of synchronization of the ovulation process between the ovaries. It can be seen that the main reason was the evaluation of the ovaries by ultrasound by long intervals, which was established every eight hours due to the farm routine. And even with the visualization of only a few follicles on ultrasound, there was no confirmation of the end of ovulation, as it was determined only when no follicle was seen. Probably shorter intervals of 30 to 60 minutes in ultrasound assessments would be needed to determine the closest time of ovulation. Another reason may be related to different follicular responses to luteinizing hormone (LH), as they are in different degrees of development, with great heterogeneity related to diameter, morphology and hormonal concentrations (Hunter et al., 1989; Hunter and Wiesak, 1990), as a result of the recruitment of follicles of various sizes in the selection. In the reviewed papers, we observed duration of induced and spontaneous ovulation ranging from 4.6 and 1.8 hours (Soede et al., 1992) to 4.5 and 3.8 hours (Signoret et al., 1972), respectively.

The probability of pregnancy and parturition over the onset time of ovulation shows that the earlier the ovulation in relation to the start of estrus, the greater the chances of carrying the pregnancy to term. This could be related to the maximum concentration of estradiol and the peak of LH, the greater the interval between both, the lower the embryonic survival rates, thus affecting oocyte quality and subsequent embryonic development (Hunter et al., 1993; Soede et al., 1994). Hormonal changes can affect the uterine environment, which in turn cause failures in the transport of gametes and embryos (Hunter, 1990).

The fact that fetal mummification was high in this study may be related to failure of placentation due to the restriction of uterine space when there are more piglets (Borges et al., 2005; Bortolozzo et al., 2012; Magnabosco et al., 2013; Sobestiansky and Barcellos, 2012).

In the case of piglet weight, in the present study, 0h treatment differed from 24h and Control treatments, probably because 0h treatment showed higher number of total born. The occurrence of lighter piglets and significant variations in birth weight, is often caused by high prolificacy (Marandu et al., 2015; Milligan et al., 2002; Wolf et al., 2008). This greater number of piglets per litter makes it possible to reach the limit of uterine capacity, which in turn restricts fetal growth (Père et al., 1997; Van der Lende and Schoenmaker, 1990). In these cases, a diminished placental efficiency might cause a decrease in nutrients via the placenta and lower weight of piglets at birth (Knol et al., 2002; Vallet et al., 2011).

Quiniou et al., (2002) observed an average reduction of 35 grams per piglet born in litters with 16 piglets born in total compared to litters with 11 piglets. Consequently, resulting in piglets with less energy reserve, greater sensitivity to cold, lower intake of colostrum and lower survival rate. This fact is more intense in piglets with birth weight lower than 1 kg.

In relation to the weight of the piglets by sex, males had a higher weight compared to females, probable due to the anabolic effect of testosterone, in higher concentrations in males (Chen and Dziuk, 1993; Wise and Christenson, 1992).

The lower probability of piglet survival in sows in the sixth order of parturition may be related to a higher litter and / or a longer parturition duration, due to the decrease of uterine tone at birth in older sows (Dial et al., 1992; Pejask, 1984). Studies show loss of productivity in sows above the fifth parturition order, in which they were more likely to stillborn (Leenhouders et al., 1999), 1.6 times more likely to stillborn and 2 times more likely to mummified, regardless of the length of parturition (Borges et al., 2005), and about 0, 53 to 0.75 less live piglets per litter compared to parturition orde from 3 to 5 (Koketsu et al., 2017).

There are several reasons for the heterogeneity of litter body weight, especially the placentation, but the ovulation process could also interferences, providing the asynchrony of embryonic and fetal development in the initial pregnancy. In the case of high prolificity sows with high ovulation rates, the ovulation interval is long and the fertilization process occurs at different times, resulting in embryos with different degrees of development (Xie et al., 1990a, 1990b).

CONCLUSIONS

In the present study, the PGF2 α did not present effect on synchronization and ovulation induction, at the moment and 24 hours after ED, and also did not affect the litter weight homogeneity at birth.

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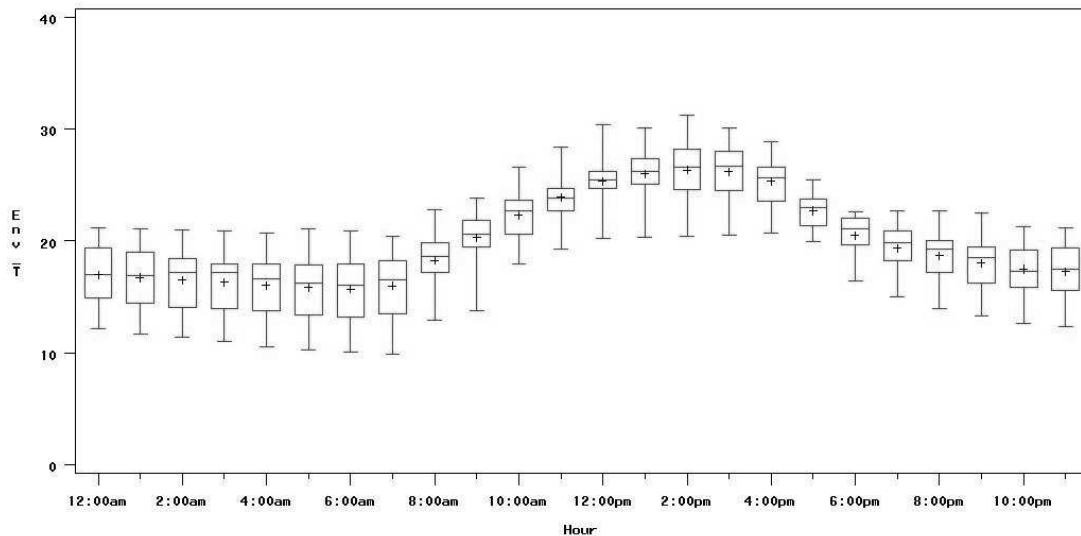
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APPENDIX 1

Supplementary Table 1. Pearson and Spearman correlation coefficients.

	WEI	OvB	OvE	OI	BA	SB	MM	TOT	GL	LW
BSC	0.26**	-0.01 ^{ns}	-0.07 ^{ns}	-0.09 ^{ns}	-0.14 ^{ns}	0.01 ^{ns}	0.02 ^{ns}	-0.15 ^{ns}	-0.04 ^{ns}	-0.05 ^{ns}
PO	0.08 ^{ns}	-0.24**	-0.17 ^{ns}	0.16 ^{ns}	0.02 ^{ns}	0.05 ^{ns}	0.22*	0.11 ^{ns}	-0.07 ^{ns}	-0.08 ^{ns}
WEI	1	-0.10 ^{ns}	-0.19*	-0.21*	0.06 ^{ns}	0.04 ^{ns}	0.06 ^{ns}	0.09 ^{ns}	-0.11 ^{ns}	-0.02 ^{ns}
OvB		1	0.88**	-0.21*	-0.12 ^{ns}	0.25**	0.02 ^{ns}	-0.04 ^{ns}	0.10 ^{ns}	0.11 ^{ns}
OvE			1	0.27**	-0.14 ^{ns}	0.23*	-0.03 ^{ns}	-0.07 ^{ns}	0.17 ^{ns}	0.19*
OI				1	-0.05 ^{ns}	-0.03 ^{ns}	-0.12 ^{ns}	-0.08 ^{ns}	0.15 ^{ns}	0.19*
BA					1	-0.13 ^{ns}	0.03 ^{ns}	0.90**	-0.09 ^{ns}	-0.67**
SB						1	0.33**	0.25**	-0.04 ^{ns}	-0.09 ^{ns}
MM							1	0.37**	-0.09 ^{ns}	-0.15 ^{ns}
TOT								1	-0.12 ^{ns}	-0.68**
GL									1	0.17 ^{ns}
LW										1

** P < 0.01; * P < 0.05; ^{ns} not significant (P > 0.05). BSC, body score condition; PO, parturition order; WEI, weaning-estrus interval (days); OvB, beginning of ovulation (hours); OvE, end of ovulation (hours); OI, ovulation interval (hours); BA, born alive (n); SB, stillbirth (n); MM, mummified (n); TOT, total (n); GL, gestational length (days); LW, average litter weight (Kg).



Supplementary Figure 1. Distribution of the ambient temperature over the hours, throughout the experimental period.