

CONSTRUINDO SABERES, FORMANDO PESSOAS E TRANSFORMANDO A PRODUÇÃO ANIMAL

BEHAVIOR OF WEANED PIGLETS AT 14 AND 35 DAYS OF AGE SUBMITTED TO THE CROSS-MAZE WITH GLASS WALL

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The weaning is still one of the most critical moment at swine breeding. It is due in this stage, many stressing factors happen simultaneously. An increase of aggressiveness and impairment of cognition and memorization process has been observed on weaned piglets less than three weeks. The aim of the work was to verify the influence of weaning at 21 and 35 days on the behavior and cognition of piglets submitted to the cross-maze with glass wall. The ethics committee of the Universidade Federal de Viçosa approved the experimental protocols as well as the animal care procedures used (protocol nº 90/2014). It was performed two experimental behavior assays with an elevated cross-maze, made at Universidade Federal de Viçosa-MG, between 11th September and 2nd December of 2014. Sixty piglets (castrated males and females), from 5 gilts, were distributed in a completely randomized experimental design, between 2 treatments (age and weaning) and 30 repetitions with one animal in each one. The experimental unity consisted of two evaluation performed for each animal among three observation periods. In this study it was used the non-parametric test of KRUSKAL-WALLIS, using the PROC NPAR1WAY of SAS (*Statistical Analysis System*) software, 9.4 version, which corresponds to F test of ANOVA, focusing on non-parametric test. The weaned piglets at 35 days were more efficient on exploiting the maze, presenting a higher number of piglets jumping and vocalizing. The vocalizing time was higher among weaned piglets at 21 days at first period and among weaned piglets at 35 days at second period. There was a higher reaction of the glass wall among weaned piglets at 35 days. At same period, the weaned piglet at 35 days were more efficient on exploiting the environment. In conclusion, the early-weaned piglets at 21 days of age presented a behavior negatively influenced on the way they face the environment at adverse situations, thus, the weaned piglets at 35 days were more efficient on exploring the cross-maze, overcoming the difficulties.

Key-words: cognition, memory test, swine, weaning age

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