



Skin lesions monitoring on slaughtered pigs [↗](#)

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ABSTRACT

On a high speed slaughter line for pigs, skin scratches were separately scored in the posterior region (defined as the area including the hind legs and the tail) and the anterior one (as the remaining area), while the whole carcass was examined for external hematomas. Chronic ear and tail lesions referable to the rearing phase, and bursitis were recorded as retrospective welfare indicators.

EXTERNAL LINK

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THIS PROTOCOL ACCOMPANIES THE FOLLOWING PUBLICATION

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PROTOCOL STATUS

Working

GUIDELINES

To score acute traumatic lesions (scratches) on slaughtered pigs, the carcass was divided into two parts: the “posterior” region, which included the hind legs and the tail, and the “anterior” region defined as the remaining area (starting from the loin up to the front limbs, the head and the ears). In order to easily scan the carcasses during their rapid passage on the dressing line (480 pigs/h), a 3 point scoring system for each of the two carcass regions was used: score 0, up to one scratch or bite; score 1, from two to five scratches or bites; score 2, more than five scratches or bites or any wound which penetrates the muscle. In addition, external hematomas were recorded as presence or absence (binary score).

The presence of lesions with a chronic onset such as notches, necrosis, bites and scars were evaluated on ears and tail as welfare indicators referable to the rearing cycle, as well as the presence of bursitis. Bursitis was only evaluated on the forelimbs, because hind legs were not completely visible to the observer since the carcass was hung upside down above the inspection area. These lesions were recorded as present or absent (binary score) regardless of the size, in accordance with the possibility to be detected in the few seconds allocated to the observer. For ear and tail lesions, only the older ones were recorded as retrospective welfare indicators, since the recent ones were already recorded with the scratches scoring system as pre-slaughter fighting or transport lesions, so that recent hyperaemic or fresh bleeding lesions were not recorded as retrospective indicators. Post-mortem artefacts due to the slaughtering process were excluded on the basis of the absence of pathological or physiological changes occurred in-vivo such as, for example, necrosis or scarring. In order to get a representative batch sample, about 100 carcasses per batch were recorded.

BEFORE START

Get the material to easily record the data (prepared paper sheet or tablet).

MATERIALS TEXT

Get a tablet with an Excel sheet or a paper one to rapidly record the lesions.

SAFETY WARNINGS

Pay attention to the slaughter line and to carcasses that can detach from the hook.

BEFORE STARTING

Get the material to easily record the data (prepared paper sheet or tablet).



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