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A discussion of Mastitis Metritis Agalactia Syndrome

Keith VanSteenbergh, DVM 1/

Symptoms of mastitis metritis agalactia syndrome in sows are lack of appetite, stop in milk flow, fever of 103 to 105, shivering or trembling, a hot firm udder 24 to 72 hours after farrowing. Most often there is a white mucoid discharge from the vulva. Sows may or may not allow newborn pigs to nurse, with the result that newborn pigs starve to death. Sows will have normal litters of pigs, or may have weak or stillborn pigs.

With a discussion of mastitis metritis agalactia or MMA, we should look at different theories or suggestions as to cause of disease. Numerous ideas or suggestions have been made, but so far none have been proven.

Suggested causes or factors:

Endocrine or Hormone imbalance.

- a. Genetic trait
- b. Alfalfa - Estrogens in alfalfa
- c. Fusarium spp. - A mold on corn that produces estrogens.

Bacteria - Some think boars might be carriers.

- a. Escherichia Coli - most often incriminated
- b. Streptococcus spp.
- c. Staphylococcus spp.

Mycoplasma or PPLO - organisms that Texas workers have isolated from uterus.

Fungus

- a. Ergot - .5 to 1% in ration inhibits normal mammary development - if removed from ergot eleven days before farrowing, mammary glands become functional at farrowing.

Metritis - low grade infection at time of birth or retained afterbirth.

Some suggest this as a toxemia. Others suggest organism comes from digestive tract. There is a constipation of bowel at farrowing.

Mastitis - Staphylococcus spp. and Streptococcus spp. as a low grade infection, which at farrowing time give antigenic reaction.

Management - Lack of exercise or close confinement - filth, chilling of sows at farrowing time, and others think it is more severe in hot weather, in other words, stress on sow. Nutrition has been given as the cause.

Treatment is usually symptomatically, if no milk present, use of hormone from posterior pituitary will cause let down of milk, but repeated injections may be necessary. Antibiotics have been given orally, by injection, and in uterus by balling gun or dose syringe right after farrowing with varying results.

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