

Danish Pig Research Centre - Tail activities

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18-02-2020, Barcelona

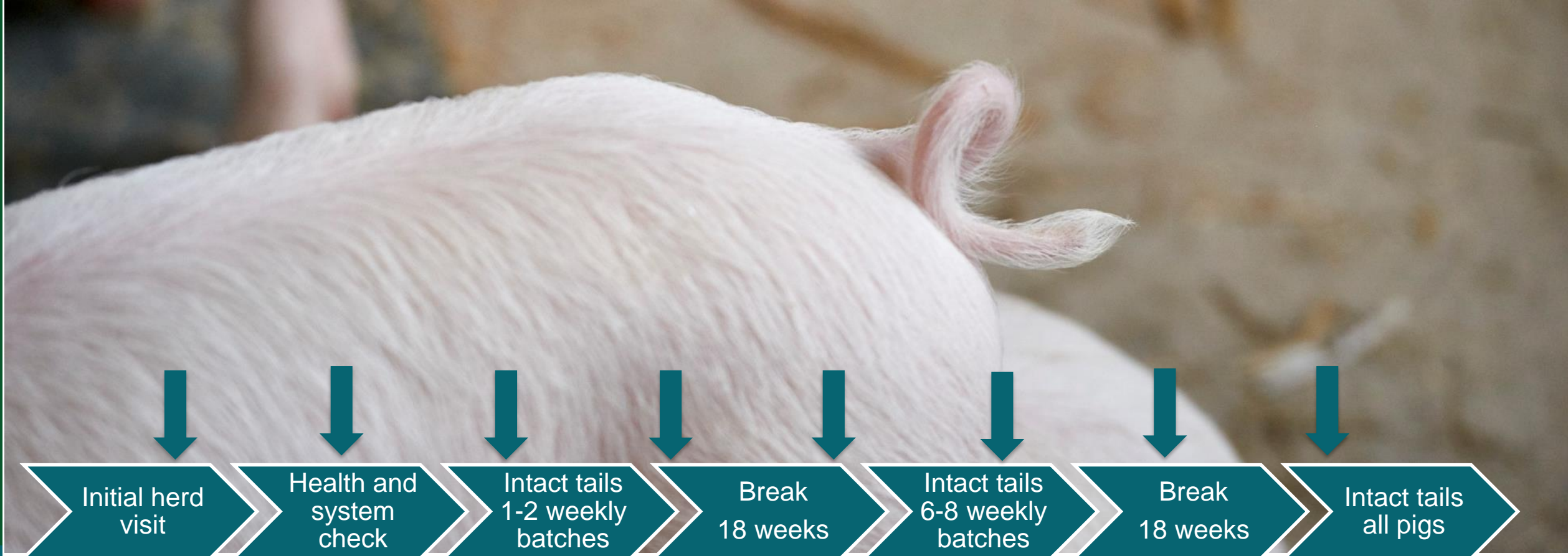
STØTTET AF
Svineafgiftsfonden

SEGES – Danish Pig Research Centre

- Financed by Danish pig producers
 - Production fees and royalties from our breeding system DanBred
- ~ 150 employees
- Operate on ~ 200 commercial farms
- Major tasks:
 - Applied research
 - Development programmes
 - Knowledge transfer to the Danish pig producers



Intact tails - standard herds



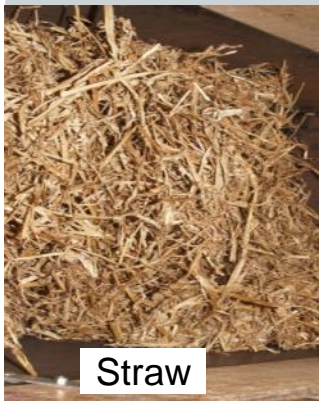
Intact tails – Standard herds – Step I

Herd - tasks

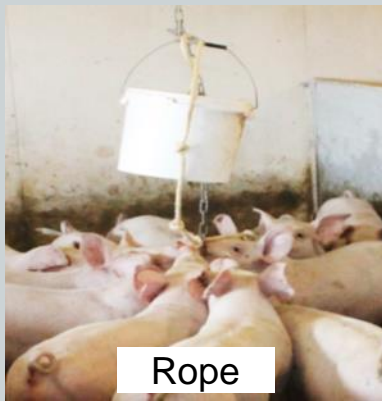
Daily recordings of tail posture in a schedule



If 25% hanging tails in a pen → Intervention



Straw



Rope



Jute cloth

SEGES - tasks

Weekly herd visits

- Follow-up

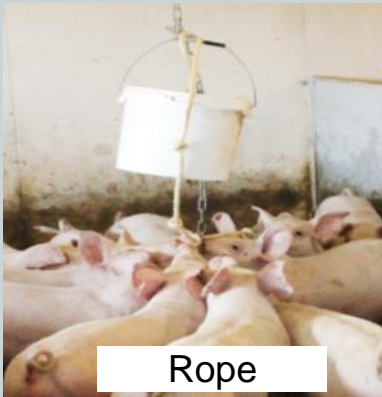
Intact tails – Standard herds – Step II

Herd - tasks

Daily recordings of tail posture



One tail injury → Intervention



Evaluation of interventions with the aim to reduce injury severity → decide on best practice

SEGES - tasks

Herd visit every second week

- Ensure early intervention and no escalation in tail injuries
- Follow-up on pigs in hospital pens and euthanization due to tail injuries

Intact tails – Standard herds – Step III

Herd tasks

Daily recordings of tail injuries



One hanging tail with a tail injury → Intervention



Straw



Rope



Jute cloth

Continuous focus on preventive measures

SEGES - tasks

Herd visit every fourth week

- Ensure early intervention and no escalation in tail injuries
- Follow-up on pigs in hospital pens and euthanization due to tail injuries
- If changes in tail injury prevalence, then risk factor evaluation
- Abattoir recordings (tail injuries)

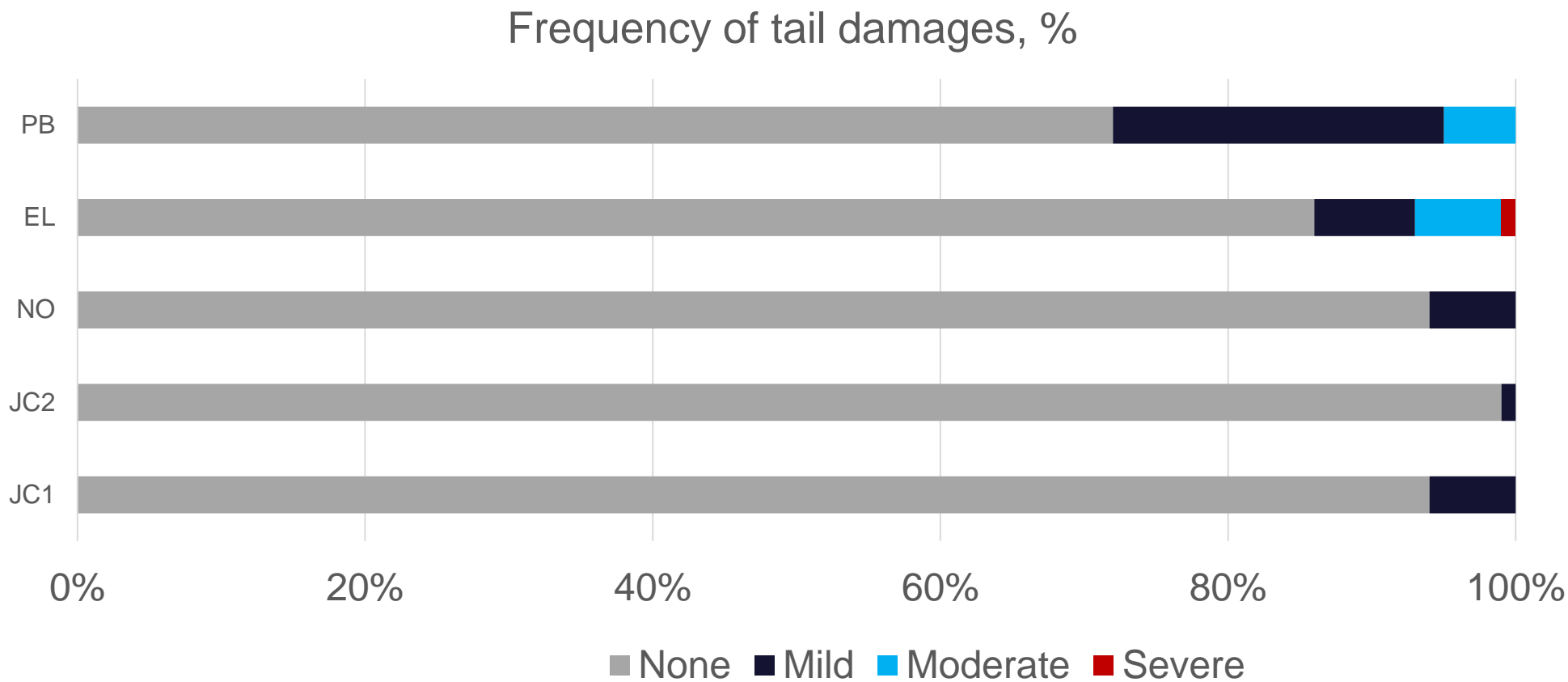
Intact tails

Finisher systems:

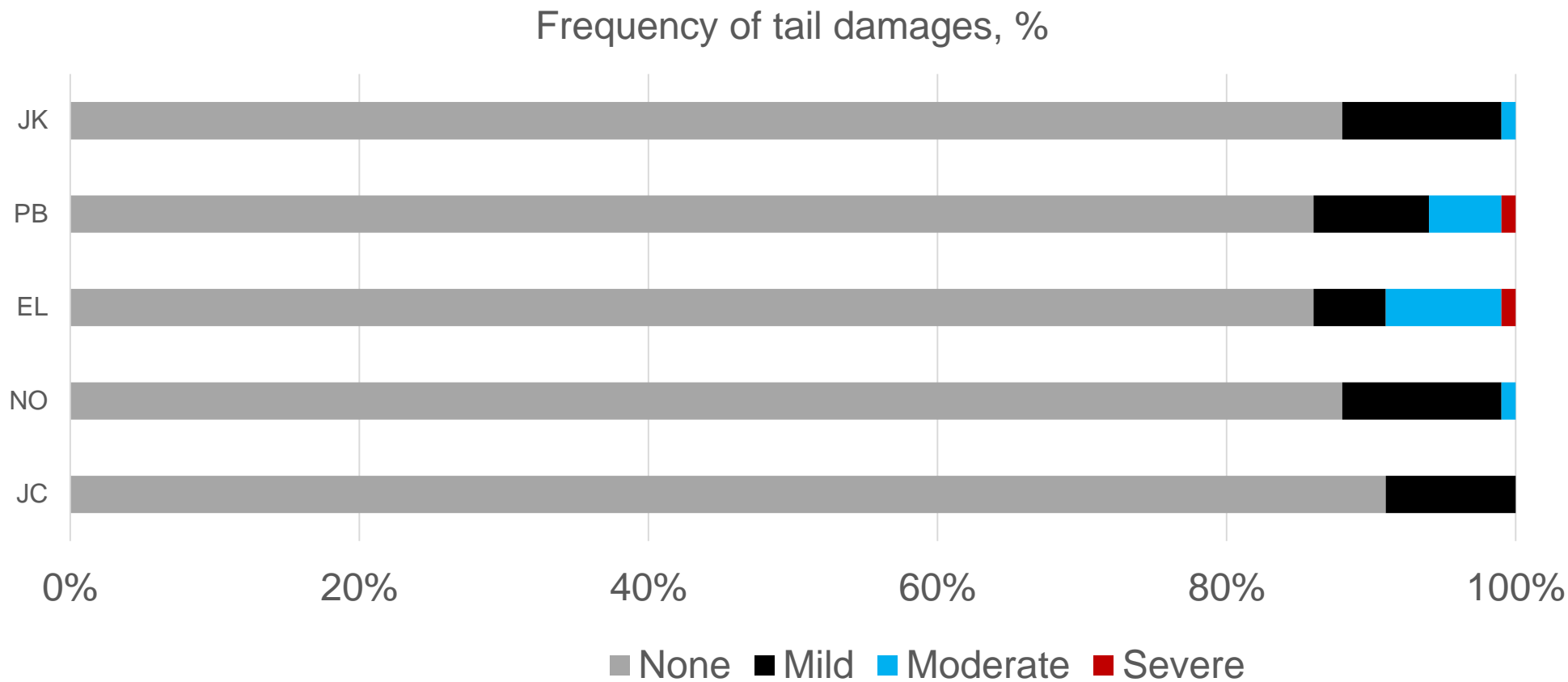
- Partly solid flooring – drained floor
- Liquid feeding – dry feeding
- Home mixed – pelleted feed



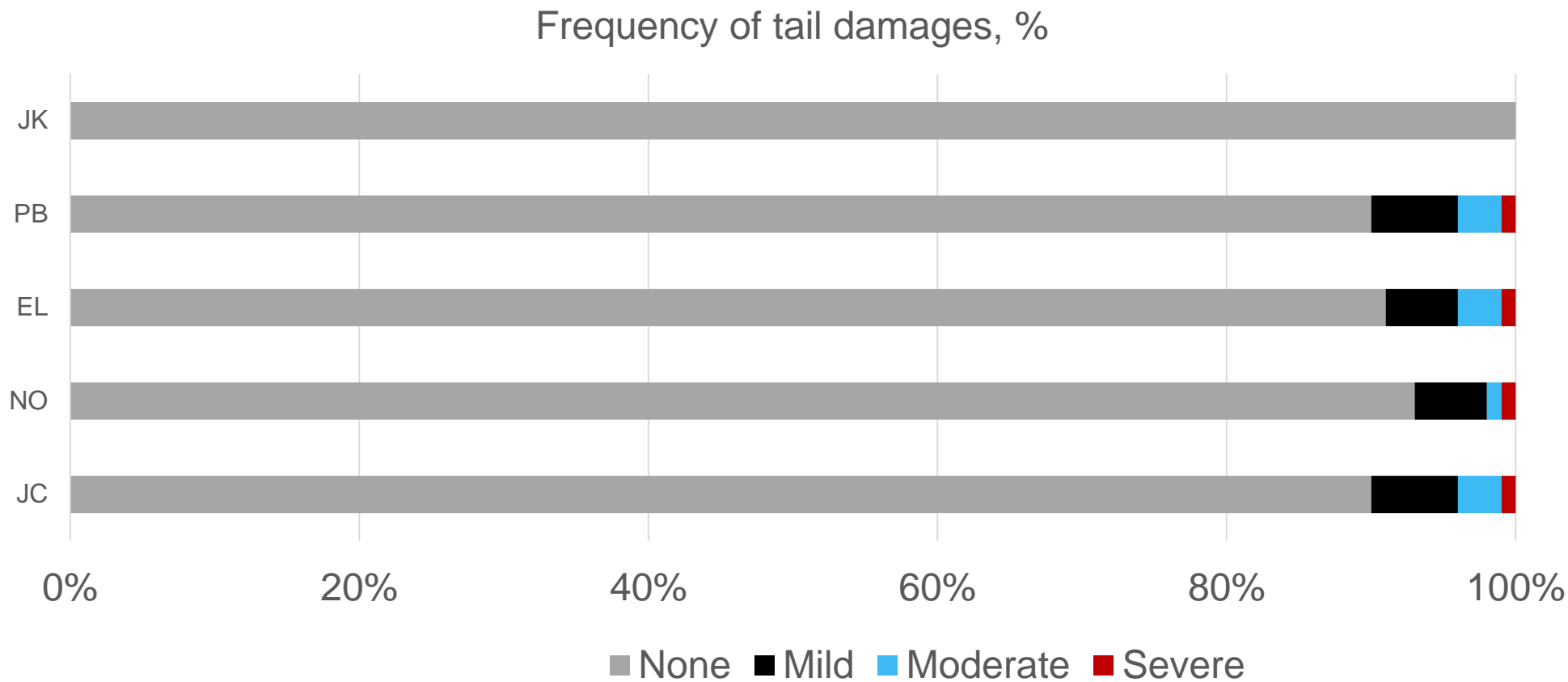
Intact tails – 5-6 weeks after weaning (approx. 2700 pigs)



Intact tails – beginning of the finisher period (approx. 2700 pigs)

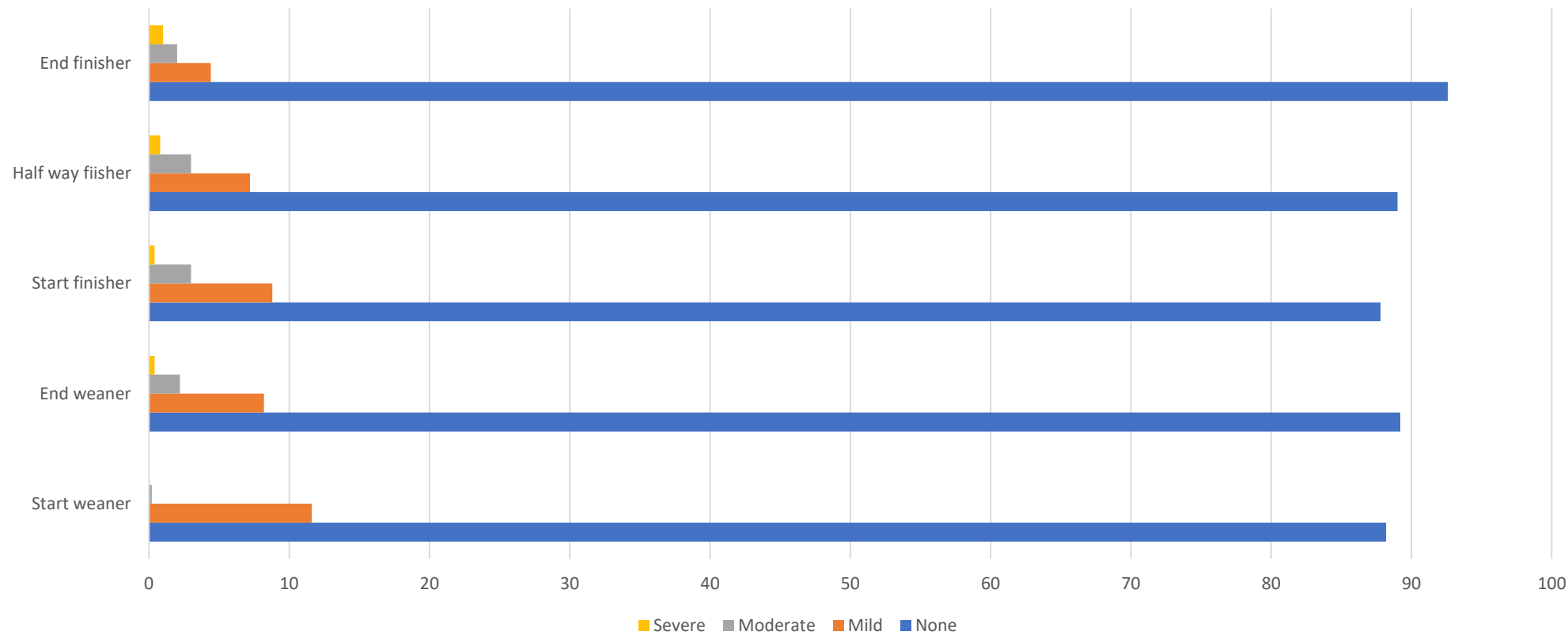


Intact tails – end of finisher period (approx. 2700 pigs)



Intact tails – All herds, average of five scorings (approx. 3000 pigs)

All herds - average of five scorings



Lesson learned

A new task should be mastered

- It takes extra time to look at tail posture
- New employees should be educated

It is important that tail damage is detected early and interventions are initiated to avoid escalation

Tail bites will occur

Straw, rope, jute cloths are effective preventive measures

Lesson learned

Stability is important – avoid sudden changes, eg.

- Feed stop
- Feed composition
- Draught, humid environment, temperature -> risk of illness
- Staff changes
- Crowding

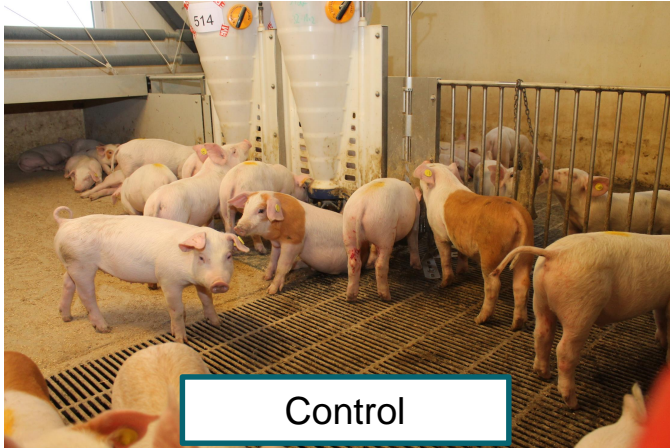


Liquid vs. dry feed – prevalence of tail bites, finishers



Hypotheses: Fewer tail bites if finishers are fed with liquid feed compared to dry feed
Trial: 2 x 20 pens with 16/17 finishers (results expected 2021)
Exclusion: If 3 finishers get a mild/moderate tail damage

Extra eating space and straw - prevalence of tail bites, weaners



Hypotheses: More eating space and strategic supply of straw reduce risk of tail damage
Trial: 200 replicates, 2 x 60 trial pens and 80 control pens (expected to end 2020)
Exclusion: 4 weaners with a tail wound

The ways forward – SEGES Innovation

- Access to resources (reducing risks)?
 - Rooting and enrichment material
 - Water
- Individual risk factors
 - Birth weight, weaning age etc.
- Direct and indirect genetic effects
 - Selection for breeding traits
 - Social breeding value

