

# Effect of separating sow and piglets the first days after birth

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Separating sow and piglets the first days after birth





## Example from a farm

### Day 1

Morning feeding (8 o'clock) 0

Afternoon feeding (13 o'clock) 1

Evening feeding (19 o'clock) 1

→ 6 hours of valuable time



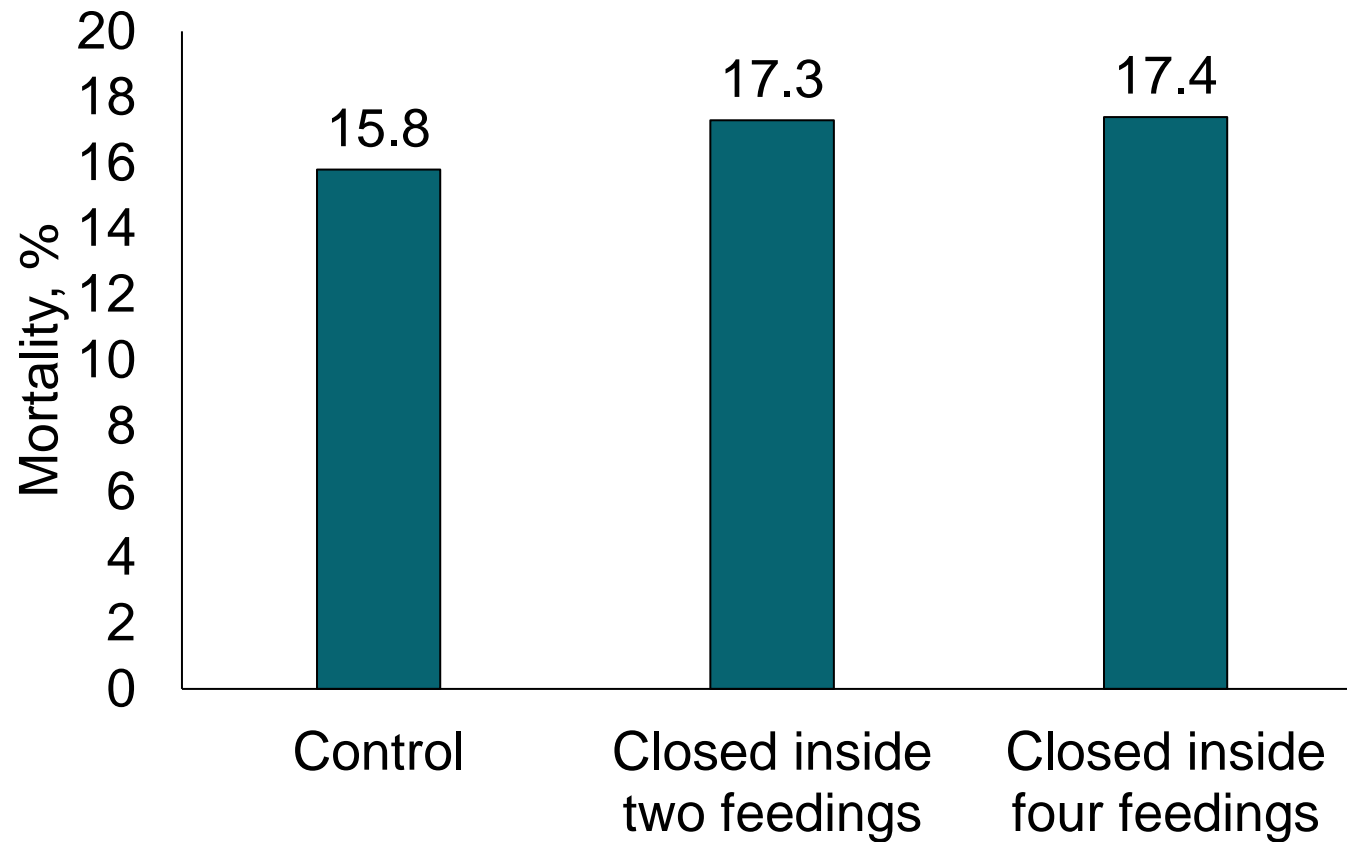


A group of piglets is shown in a pen with straw bedding. Some piglets are standing, while others are lying down. The piglets have green markings on their backs. The pen is enclosed by a black metal barrier.

**So what happens when you separate the piglets for 6 hours a day on the most critical days?**



## But why? Does it affect mortality?



## 6 hours....

- A milk let down for every 50 min
- Lose 7 milk let downs in 6 hours
- 12-gram milk per milk let down ~ 86 gram

OR

- 6 hours = 25% of a day
- Potentially 25% of colostrum or energy intake



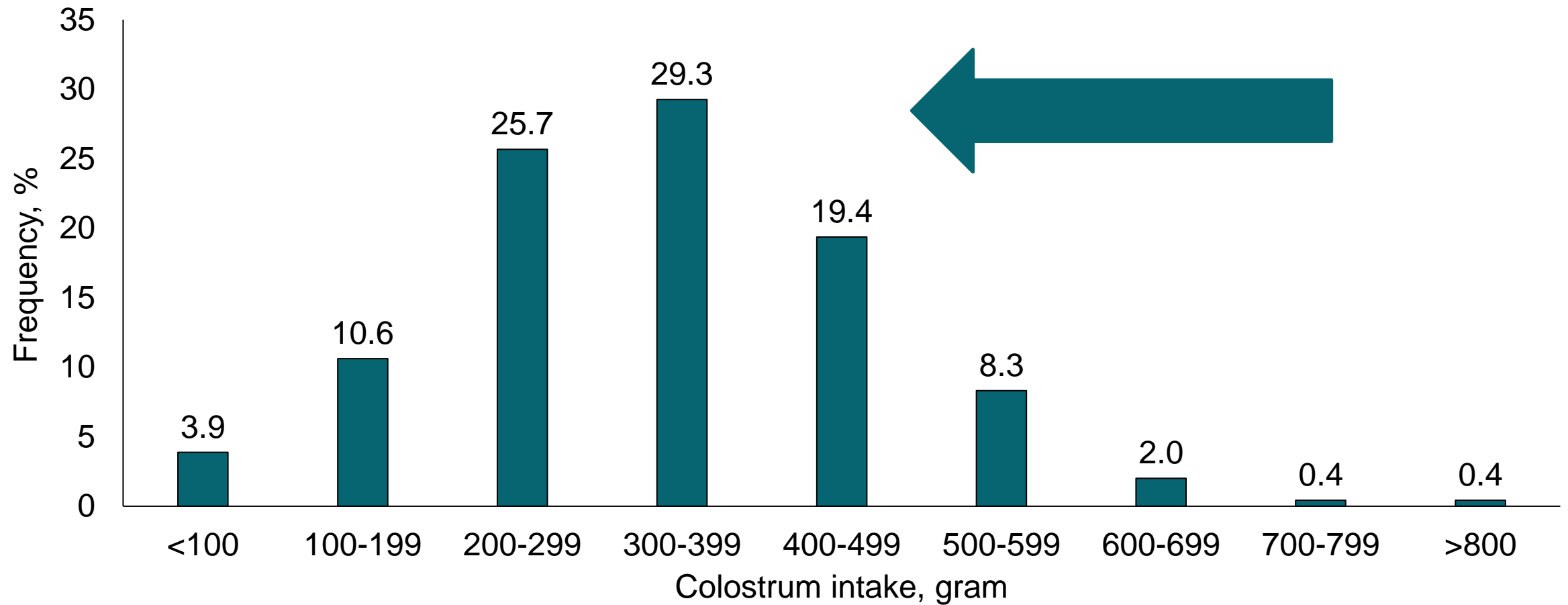




**Colostrum is available for 24 hours**  
**Colostrum covers piglets' need for**  
**energy and antibodies**

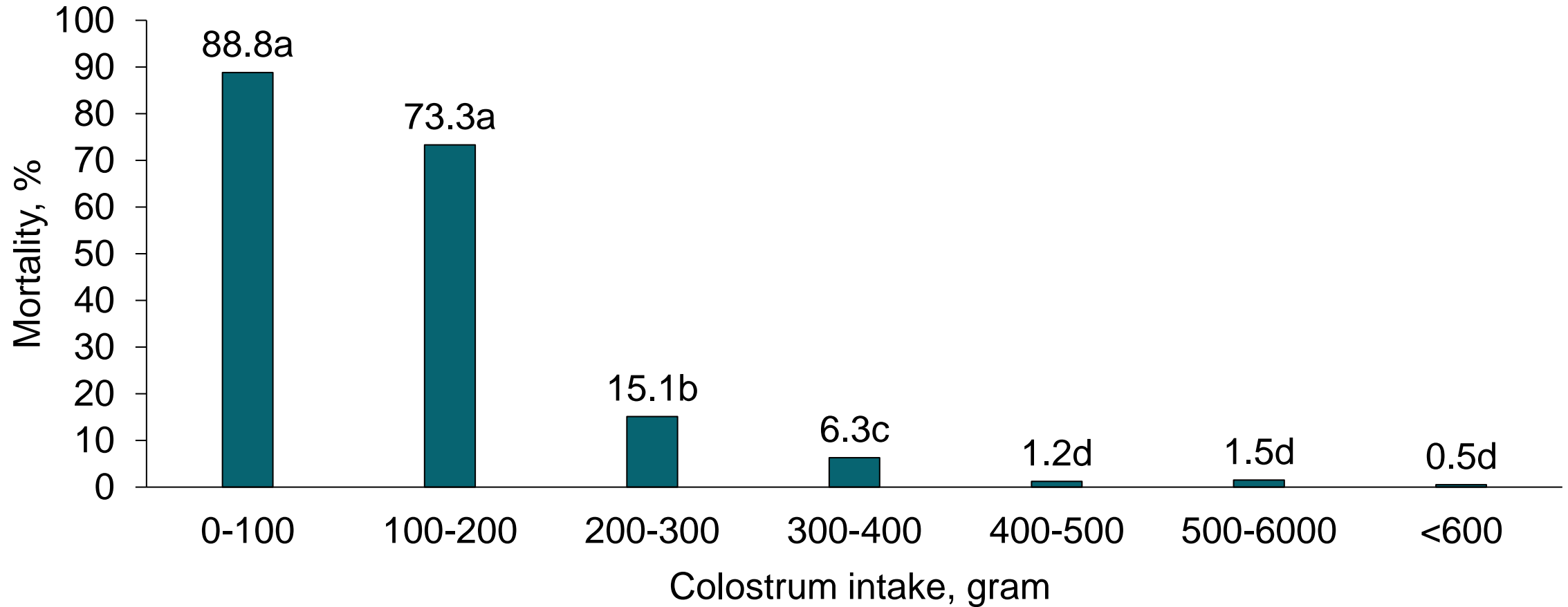


# Variation in piglets' colostrum intake



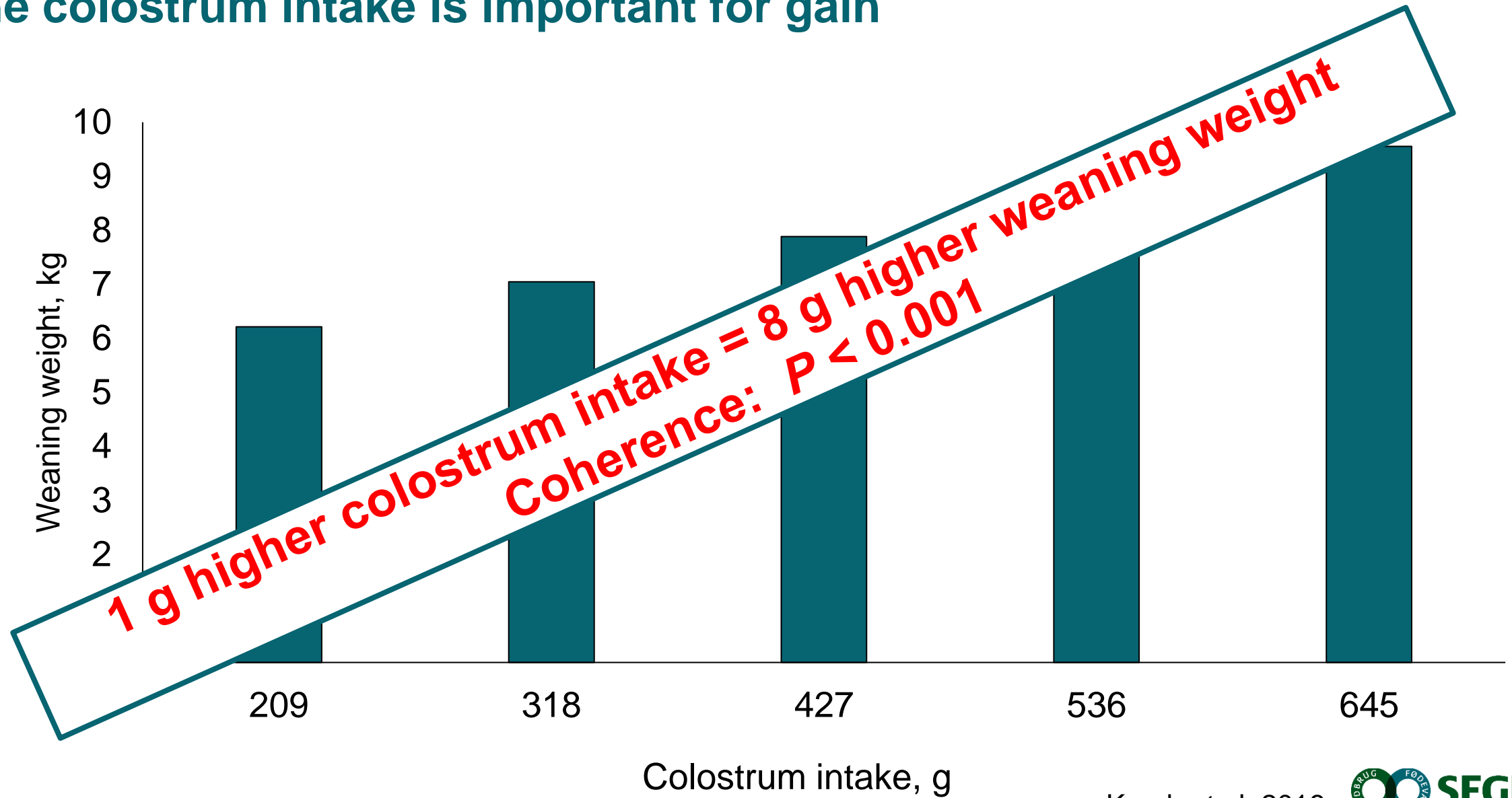


## Reducing colostrum intake means increasing mortality



Nuntapaitoon et al. 2019

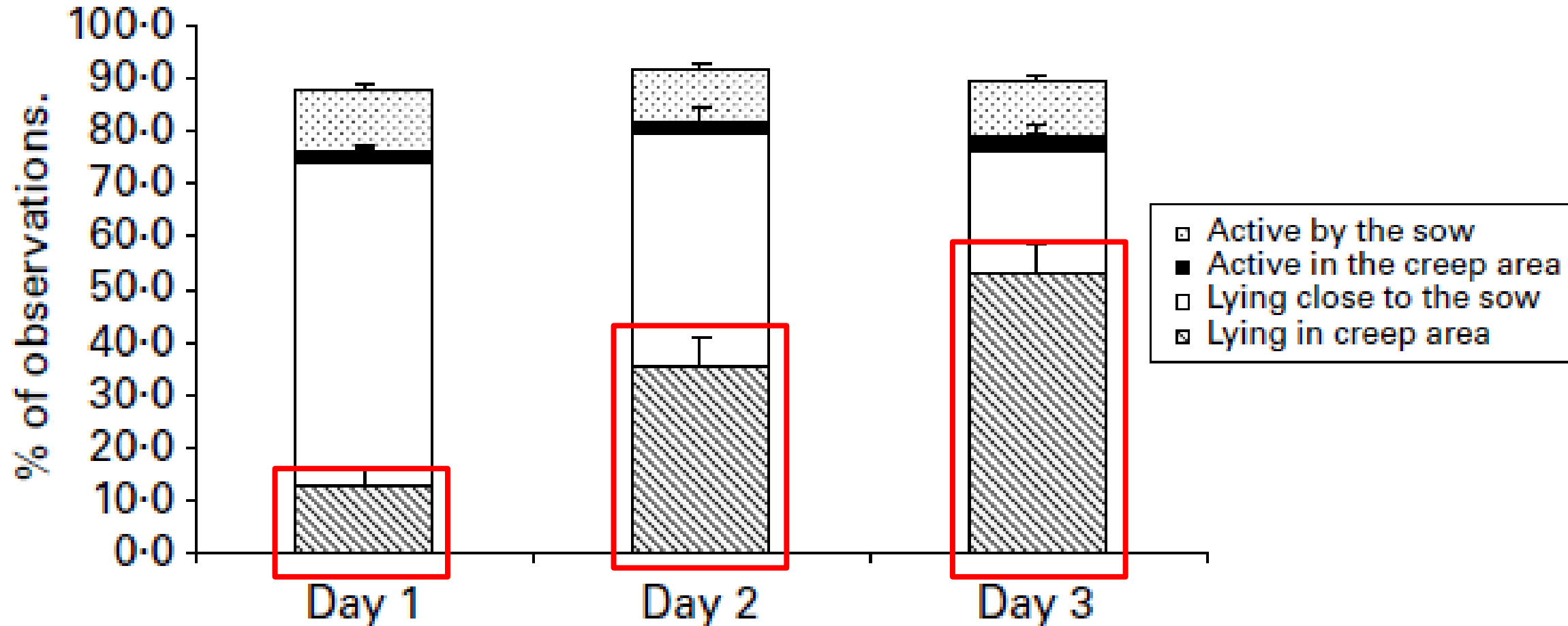
## The colostrum intake is important for gain



Krogh et al. 2016



## Piglets' use of the creep area increases from day 1 to 3



# How can we attract piglets into the creep area?



Temperature in the pen and creep area



Temperature source: Piglets prefer radiant heat over a light bulb



Location of creep area and accessibility



Lying comfort: Soft bedding (eg. straw)



Smell and sound of the sow and other piglets



# Piglets can be attracted into the creep area

## CONTROL – Creep training

- 1 h around feeding (day 1 and 2)



## TRIAL – Attract piglets to use the creep area

- Straw, sock with grains, jute sack





# Piglets can be attracted into the creep area

## CONTROL – Creep training



## TRIAL – Attract piglets to use the creep area





## Take home messages

- No apparent effect on mortality
- Restrict piglets' access to energy
- Use your common sense
  - How long you separate sow and piglets
    - During litter equalization
    - During feeding of the sow
    - During other management routines
- Instead: attract piglets into the creep area
- Use saved time on small and cold piglets





**Time for questions**