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Abstract

In recent decades, significant changes have taken place in the "philosophy" of pig production, with a direct impact on the productive and reproductive parameters of sows, and consequently on the management of farms worldwide. More specifically, pig farming has focused mainly on the genetic improvement of sows to create high prolific sows, with the aim of increasing the size of the calving group, as well as the rapid growth capacity of fattening pigs. These new directions are accompanied by significant changes and effects on the health and welfare of sows and their piglets. Veterinary Science is called upon to contribute both to the utilization of the genetic improvement of pigs (increased multiplicity, rapid growth capacity) and the treatment of its effects on the health, welfare and productivity of pigs. In this direction, research in Veterinary Science is evolving

rapidly, utilizing innovative tools and technological development. Increased litter size in modern industrial farms is a key goal of pig farmers and veterinarians. The handbook aims to support undergraduate students and professional veterinarians both in understanding pathology issues and the management of high prolific sows, and in managing the effects of increased litter size on their health and welfare. In particular, this textbook analyzes: 1) pathophysiological and environmental risk factors for the health and welfare of high prolific sows, 2) effects of the increased litter size on the health and welfare of the sows, 3) the importance and the characteristics of the colostrum/milk, 4) health problems of the newborn piglets with increased litter size and 5) treatment of the effects of the increased litter size on the health and welfare of the piglets.