

## PREVALENCE OF UMBILICAL OUTPOUCHINGS IN PIGS – A CROSS SECTIONAL STUDY

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### Background and Objectives

Umbilical outpouching (UO) is a clinical term for umbilical hernias, cysts, and abscesses in the umbilical region of pigs. The welfare of UO pigs is challenged, in the stable and during transport due to risk of ulcers and other complications, and transport regulations increase the cost and complicate transport of UO pigs. The true prevalence of UO is unknown as no scientific reports with randomly sampled herds exist. This cross-sectional study estimates the prevalence of UO in Danish piglets and weaned pigs.

### Material and Methods

Thirty conventional herds, with at least 800 weaned pigs and 200 sows, were selected randomly from the danish husbandry register and visited from September 2020 to May 2021. Piglets were examined the last week in the farrowing stable and weaners were examined between weeks three and eight after weaning; all sampling was random at pen level. The abdominal area was palpated on all pigs and all irregularities were registered; the results presented here are outpouchings measuring at least 2x2 cm.

### Results

The prevalence of piglets with UO was 4.4 % (n = 8 052 pigs) ranging from 0.8% to 13.5% between herds. The prevalence for weaned pigs were 2.7% (n = 19684) ranging from 1.0% to 5.2% between herds.

### Discussion and Conclusion

The observed prevalence of UO is probably underestimated as euthanasia of UO pigs is common, especially in some herds. This likely affects the prevalence for the weaners most, whereas the variations in the farrowing unit may be caused by different weaning age and healing stage of the umbilicus. In 2020 the Danish farmers produced 32.600.000 pigs (including exported weaners) so according to this study approximately one million pigs are affected by UO yearly. Many of these pigs are wasted and this challenges sustainability as well as welfare and economy.