



## Colostrum Management

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Red Deer Swine Technology Workshop - October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019

Selective Breeding has increased total born by four pigs in the past 13 years. Larger litters are associated with increased farrowing length, increased preweaning mortality (Figure 1) and increased challenges for the farrowing room staff.

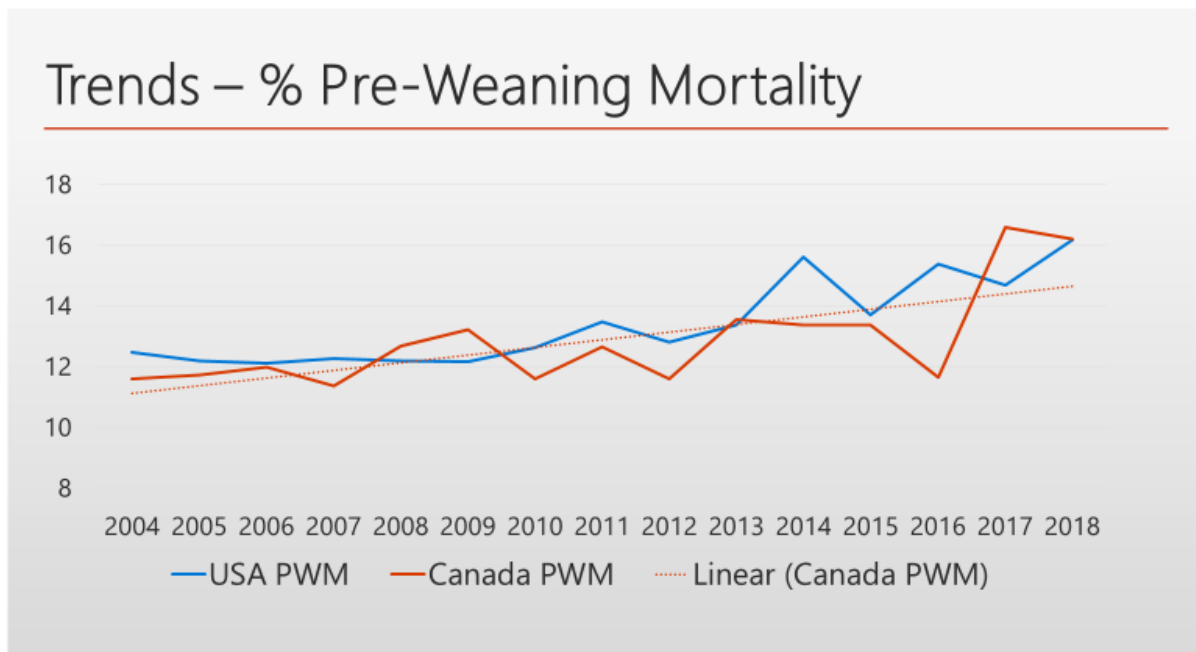


Figure 1. Trends in Pre-Weaning Mortality.

Birth weight matters to the survival of piglets with birthweights less than 1.0 kg leading to a significant risk of pre-weaning mortality.

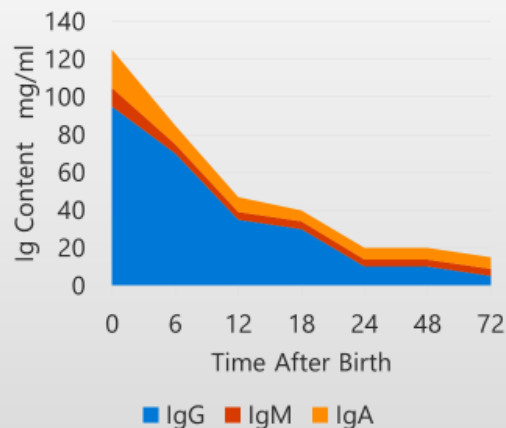


Colostrum and colostrum intake are vital to the success of piglets. Colostrum provides nutrition, thermoregulation, growth factors and immune cells. Colostrum quality begins to decline rapidly after the birthing process begins. Twelve hours after the birthing process has begun immune cell concentration has declined by 70%.

Ideally, piglets should receive colostrum from their own mothers within 15 minutes following their birth.

## Colostrum Timing Goals

- Maximize intake within first 6 – 12 hours
  - Max 18 hours
- First suckle after birth within 15 minutes is ideal
  - Range 3 – 30 minutes



Teat location matters, teats at the front produce more colostrum and milk at a higher quality. Special attention needs to be made to ensure piglets on the hind teats are closely observed to ensure sufficient intake.

Factors affecting low colostrum intake include:

- Low Birth Weight
- Large Litter Size
- Born Late in Farrowing Sequence
- Infrequent Suckling
- Sampling only a few Teats
- Chilling