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Introduction

Menangle virus was detected in a disease outbreak in Australia in 1997. This is thought to have been the only known outbreak. This virus is a paramyxovirus and is associated with reproductive disease and congenital defects in pigs. It has fruit bats as its reservoir host.

This virus does not appear to be highly infectious to man, but it can cause a febrile illness.

The disease

Typically Menangle virus infection in pigs is not highly contagious and spreads slowly in a herd. Following initial spread on a farm this virus is maintained by it infecting young pigs as they lose their protective maternal immunity. Thus, the virus is better able to survive on large farms where there is a steady source of susceptible animals. After the initial infection in breeding herds, all gilts are seropositive by mating time and so on-going reproductive failure is not seen.

The main cause of reproductive losses appears to be in utero infection that often results in foetal death. Where a whole litter is lost early in pregnancy delayed returns to oestrus are seen.

Clinical signs

A marked increase in mummified foetuses and stillborn piglets occurs. Decreased farrowing rate is seen. Many sows show delayed oestrus.

Treatment

There is no specific treatment. No fruit bats – no risk of disease!

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