



## Economic importance of Sarcoptic mange

Deaths are unlikely unless concurrent infection(s) are involved. Results from the field show that good control of this condition may increase lactation, reduce piglet mortality from over laying and increase weaning weights. Other costs include those at the abattoir due to trimming and downgrading and the repair to damaged pens and fittings. Breeding sows need 5% less food after eradication of Sarcoptic mange.

In growing pigs the most significant losses are those associated with reduced growth rates and poor FCRs. Most studies reveal depressions in growth rate of 4.5-12.0%.

## Pathology

Following infestation, encrusted lesions rich in mites occur on the inner surfaces of the ears. These lesions can coalesce and occupy three quarters of the surface of the pinnae of the ears. As the encrustation disappears, focal red erythematous associated with hypersensitivity appear on the rump, but often on the flanks and abdomen as well.

If this typical hypersensitivity response is not seen in growing pigs a hyperkeratotic mange can occur. These lesions are characteristic of the condition and look like asbestos. They are accompanied by mites.

Hyperkeratotic mange is often considered to be a disease of poor management and/or poor nutrition.

## Diagnosis

Scabies should always be considered when growing pigs, with small red papules on their bodies, are seen rubbing.

Finding the actual sarcoptic mites in skin scrapings is diagnostic of this condition. It would appear that any group of pigs with Sarcoptic mange contain two sub populations – a large number of pigs have small mite populations, but develop a marked hypersensitivity reaction, and a small number of pigs house large numbers of mites, but show no hypersensitivity.

Differential diagnosis should include parakeratosis, exudative epidermitis, niacin or biotin deficiencies, swinepox, dermatomycosis, sunburn, photosensitisation and insect bites.

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