

III. — SOWS AND PIGLETS FEEDING

Feed restriction during late lactation in the sow

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This experiment was made on 36 *Large White* sows after 1st or 2nd farrowing (75 and 25 p. 100 respectively) with the aim of determining the effects of a severe feed restriction (50 p. 100) during the last two weeks of a lactation period of 35 days.

At the moment when the sows were divided into groups (52 groups of 18 sows each) they exhibited comparable performances with respect to weight (gestation net weight + lactation weight variation, *i.e.* + 33 kg, on an average) and number of suckled piglets (8.1 on an average). The diet containing 15.5 p. 100 crude protein and 2 950 kcal digestible energy per kg was offered to the animals either at a level close to *ad libitum* feeding (5 kg/day) or restricted (2.5 kg/day).

Reduction of the feeding level significantly increased the weight loss of the sows during the last two weeks of lactation (20.2 versus 12.3 kg) and mainly during the first week of the experiment. Parallel to that the growth of the piglets decreased : 16 p. 100 decrease of the litter weight from 21 to 35 days in the restricted group and this decrease was also more marked during the first week of the experiment (23 p. 100).

The effects of this feed restriction did not seem to have any repercussion on the performances of the sows during the subsequent reproductive cycle (weight variation of the sows ; number of piglets at farrowing). However, it was observed that the number of animals returning in œstrus after the mating following weaning was larger.

Effect of fasting multiparous sows the day of weaning on their reproductive performances

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Fourty *Large White* sows were distributed into 4 groups taking into account the mean weight and parity of the animals in order to study the eventual influence of feed and water starvation on the day of weaning, after a lactation period of 35 days. The treatments involved sup-