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Characteristics of estrous cycles in gilts treated with gonadotropins after estrus or treatment with a progestogen

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REVISÉD

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2 **Characteristics of estrous cycles in gilts treated with gonadotropins after estrus or**
3 **treatment with a progestogen**

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6
7 **Abstract**

8 A combination of eCG (400 IU) and hCG (200 IU) (P.G. 600®, Merck Animal Health, Summit,
9 NJ, USA) stimulates puberty in gilts, but variation in the estrual response exists among farms.
10 We hypothesized that some of the variability is a consequence of gilts that have commenced
11 cycling being inadvertently treated. The objective of Experiment 1 was to determine the effect
12 of im P.G. 600 on estrous cycles in sexually mature gilts. Gilts in Treatment 1 (n = 16) received
13 P.G. 600 at the onset of daily boar exposure. Gilts in Treatments 2 through 5 (n = 16/treatment)
14 were allowed to express a natural first estrus and were then treated with P.G. 600 during the first
15 estrous cycle as follows: Treatment 2, at Day 6, Treatment 3 at Day 12, and Treatment 4 at Day
16 18 of the estrous cycle. Treatment 5 gilts received no P.G. 600. The proportion of gilts
17 displaying a normal estrous cycle (18 to 24 d) was greater ($P < 0.05$) for Treatments 4 (100%)
18 and 5 (100%) compared to Treatments 1 (73.3%) and 3 (60%), with Treatment 2 having a value
19 (87.5%) that was not different from the other groups. For Treatment 3, 33% of gilts displayed an
20 increased inter-estrus interval that averaged 32.5 d. Concentrations of progesterone remained
21 elevated 20 d after the onset of first estrus in Treatment 3 gilts, which supports the concept that
22 P.G. 600 administered at Day 12 of the estrous cycle induced follicular growth, ovulation, and

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