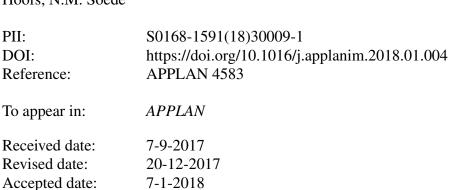
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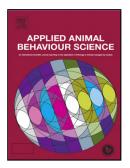
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Effects of loose housing and the provision of alternative nesting material on peri-partum sow behaviour and piglet survival

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Highlights

- Use of jute sacks and straw balls as nesting material was studied in loose-housed and crated sows
- Effects of nesting material and housing were additive
- Loose housing and the provision of nesting materials reduced activity before parturition
- Loose housing and the provision of nesting materials reduced restlessness during parturition
- Less crushing events tended to occur in loose pens vs crates during parturition

Abstract

Sows are strongly motivated to perform nestbuilding behaviour before parturition. This behaviour is often restricted in commercial systems due to confinement of the sow and lack of suitable nesting material to be used on slatted floors. This study aimed to investigate effects of loose vs. crated housing and the provision of alternative nesting material on periparturient sow behaviour and piglet survival. In a 2x2 arrangement, sixty-eight sows were assigned to either

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