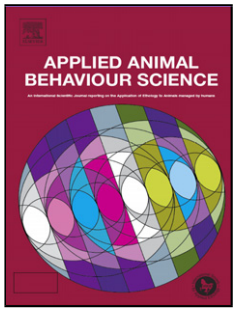

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Drinker position influences the cleanness of the lying area of pigs in a welfare-friendly housing facility

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Highlights

- Inappropriate eliminative behaviour in pigs causes fouling of lying areas.
- Reducing fouling is a priority for designing pig facilities.
- Placing drinkers outdoor decreased urination on inside lying areas.
- Placing drinkers outdoor decreased defecation on inside lying areas.
- Drinker position can improved the cleanliness of pigs' dedicated lying areas.

Abstract

Understanding eliminative behaviour in pigs is a priority for designing pig facilities. Pigs prefer to lie in areas separated from where they eliminate (urinate, defecate). Welfare-friendly housing facilities include separate areas for lying (solid floors) and elimination (slatted floors). To prevent pen fouling, ways to reduce the amount of eliminative behaviour on the solid floor area are essential. This study investigated whether the position of the drinkers influences areas preferred for eliminative behaviour in growing-finishing pigs (n = 432; over two batches) assigned to one of three drinker treatments: two drinkers placed in the inner slatted area (IN group; n = 8 pens), two drinkers in the outer slatted area (OUT group; n = 8 pens), or a drinker in each of the inner and outer slatted areas (IN_OUT group; n = 8 pens). We predicted that the OUT group would have fewer elimination events on the inner solid