



# FACTSHEET

## Skin Diseases Affecting The Pig Caused by Parasites

### **Demodectic mange**

This is caused by *Demodex phylloides*. Treatment is not easy. Cortico-steroid medication and NSAIDs treatment should cease. Antibiotics are helpful. The pigs should be washed at weekly intervals with Amitraz solution.

### **Fleas**

Pigs living in close association with humans will be bitten by the human flea *Pulex irritans*. They may also be infested with the cat flea *Ctenocephalides felis* as well as the sticktight poultry mite *Echidnophaga gallinacea* which is actually a flea. Treatment is by spraying with anti-flea medication such as fipronil.

### **Flies**

There are several species which are attracted to pigs and they can cause physical bite lesions. *Stomoxys calcitrans* will suck blood. Fly Strike will occur but it is rare. Pig muck should be well heaped and kept well away from the pigs. Treatment of fly strike needs to be aggressive with antibiotics, protecting the wound with cream containing Summer Fly Cream and treating the pig with insect growth regulators and insecticide.

### **Lice**

These can be seen with the naked eye as they are large sucking lice called *Haematopinus suis*. They complete their life cycle in a month but they can only be off the pig for two days. Therefore the spread of infection is from pig to pig. They cause pruritus (itching). Control is accomplished by ivermectin or doramectin treatment. This may be given orally or by injection. If whole herd treatment is carried out for three treatments at three weekly intervals, total eradication can easily be carried out.

### **Sarcoptic Mange**

This is caused by *Sarcoptes scabiei* var *suis*. It is the most important and common parasitic disease of pigs. It is a zoonotic disease but human cases resulting from contact with pigs are extremely rare. Crusting particularly on and around the ears and eyes, with pruritus are the main signs. The prepatent period can be as short as 10 days but it is normally two weeks. The normal picture of an infection is for lesions to be seen one month after new infected pigs are brought on to the premises. If the condition occurs in the ears the self trauma will result in aural haematoma. Spread of infection occurs via pig to pig contact particularly from the sow to her piglets. Treatment of mange is accomplished with injections of ivermectin or doramectin. Normally a single injection of doramectin will be effective but ivermectin injection should be repeated after 7 days. Control should be carried out by six-monthly oral medication of ivermectins in the food.

### **Ticks**

The species of tick will vary enormously depending on the country. *Ixodes ricinus* will be found on outdoor pigs. Ticks can be controlled with both oral i.e. in-feed medication and injections of ivermectin or doramectin.

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