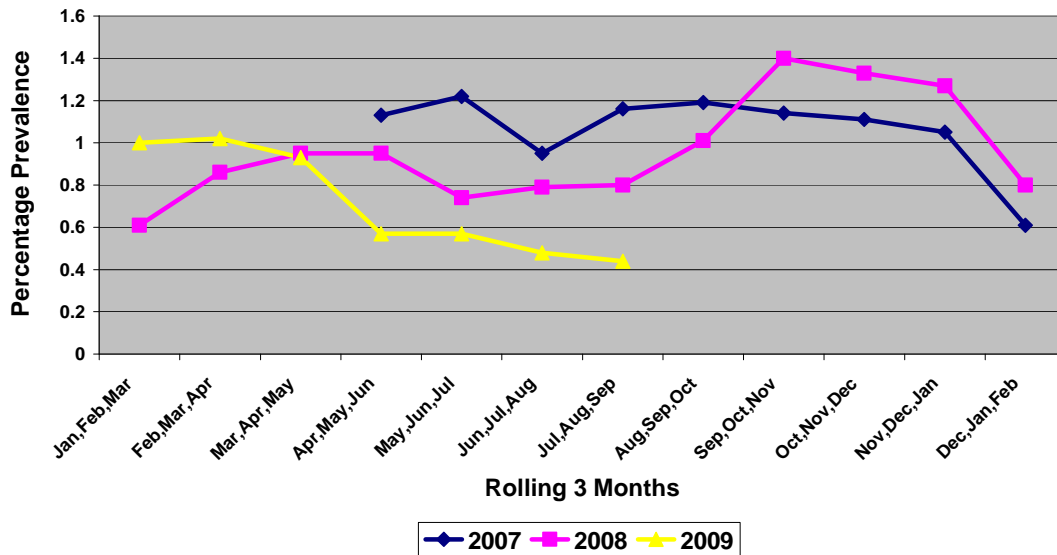


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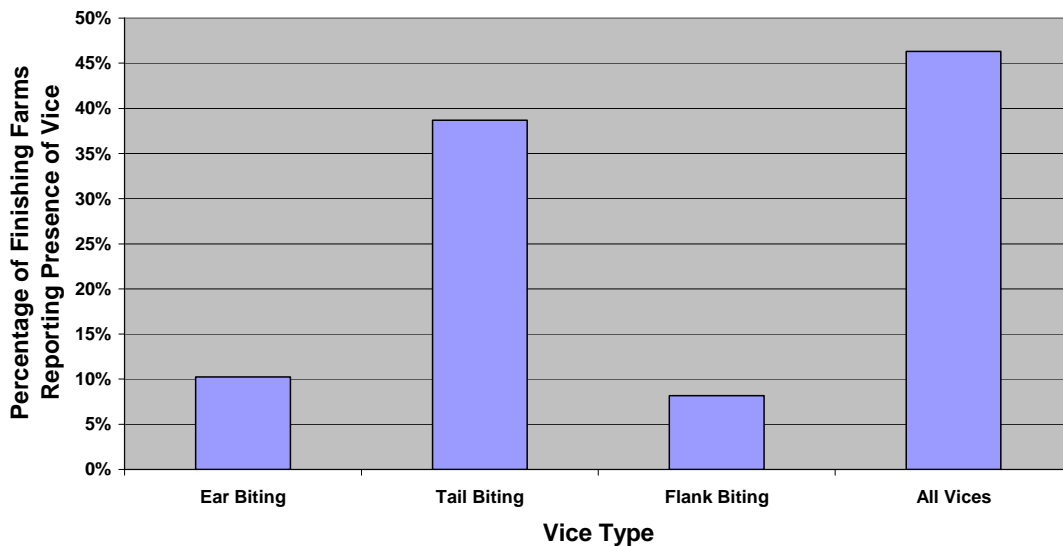
. As part of the ongoing monitoring of conditions which adversely affect the health and welfare of pigs on the farm, NADIS reporting veterinary surgeons record the prevalence of what is usually termed 'vice' in growing pigs. More correctly this should perhaps be referred to as aberrant aggressive behaviour.

Graph 1 - Growing Pig Vices - 2007 - 2009



Graph 1 demonstrates a marked reduction in the levels recorded on farm with the overall prevalence since the spring of 2009 being below 0.6% - approximately half of the levels in the previous 2 years .

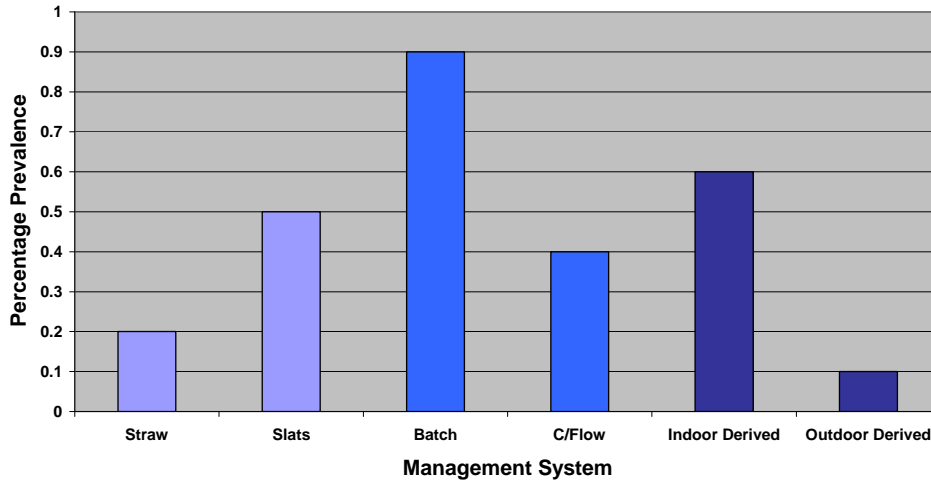
Graph 2 - Growing Pig Vices - Vice Type



In breaking down the types of damage seen, some form of damage was seen on 46% farms but of these, 80% were affected by tail biting with flank and ear biting equally represented in the remainder (Graph 2).

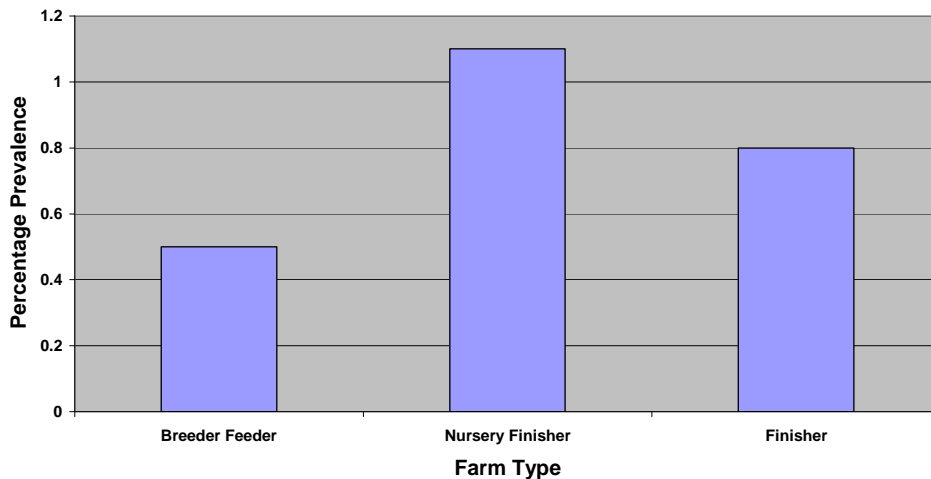
With different management systems, the prevalence of vice on slats was 2.5 times that on straw (0.5 v 0.2) and was far more common in batch systems and indoor derived pigs. The presence or absence of tail docking is not recorded so it is not possible to associate vice with this procedure (Graph 3).

Graph 3 - Growing Pig Vices - Management System



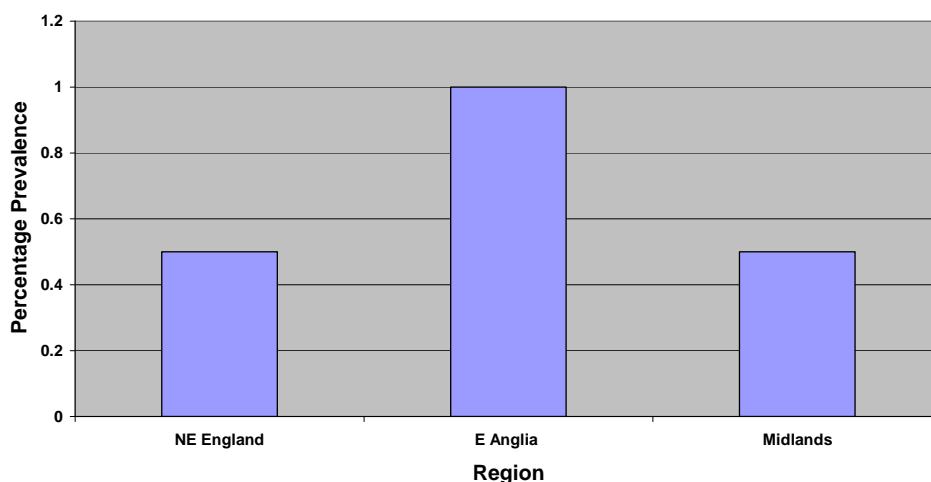
Moreover the levels seen on sites specialised in growing pigs (nursery/finisher and finisher only sites) was noticeably higher than on breeder feeder farms (Graph 4).

Graph 4 - Growing Pig Vices - Farm Type

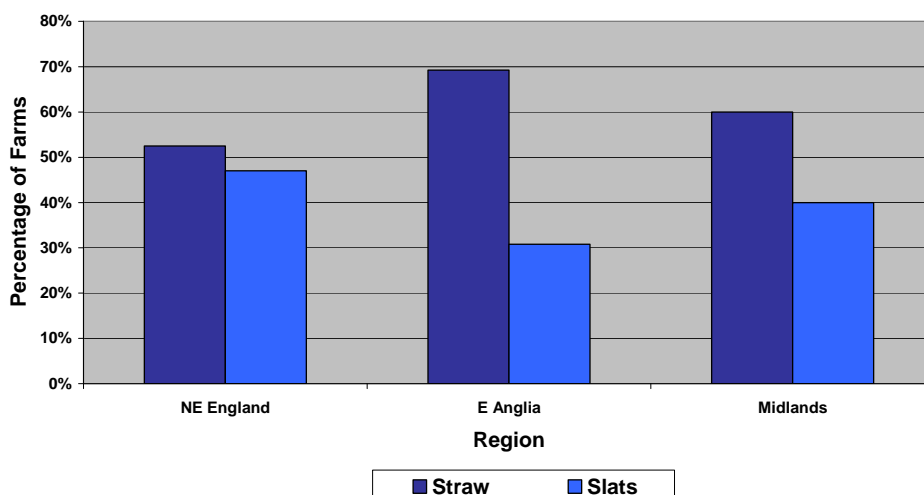


Graph 5 indicates the regional differences in vice with E. Anglia reporting twice the level seen elsewhere. This is somewhat surprising given the predominance of straw based systems in E. Anglia (70% of all recorded farms are straw based compared to a 50/50 split in N.E. England – Graph 6) suggesting that when vice does occur in E. Anglia the within-farm prevalence is higher than in the North-East.

Graph 5 - Growing Pig Vices - Regional

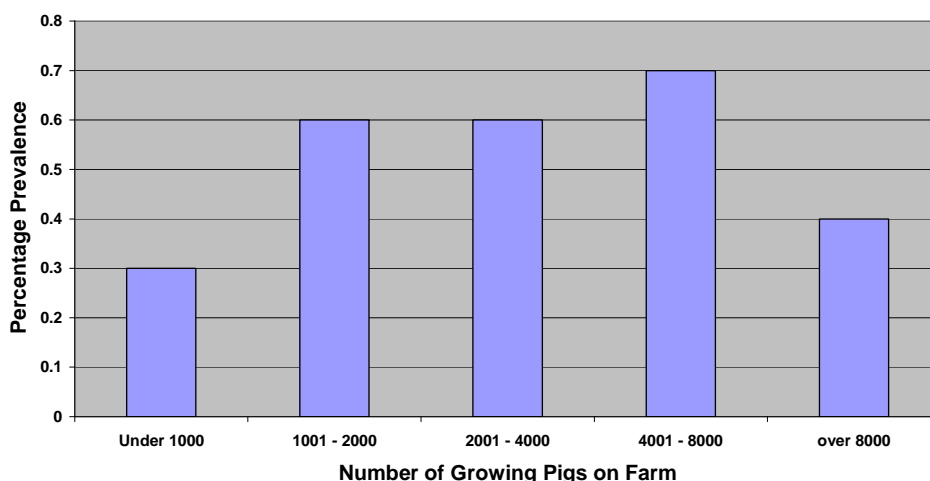


Graph 6 - Straw v Slats by Region



The lowest prevalence of aberrant behaviour in growing pigs occurs in the smallest and largest sites (less than 1000 or more than 8000 pigs), whilst the most usual site sizes – 1000-8000 places – see nearly double the level of problems.(Graph 7)

Graph 7 - Growing Pig Vices - Herd Size



Tail biting and other forms of cannibalistic behaviour in growing pigs are a serious problem accounting for welfare compromise and economic loss. The presence of these conditions across all types, sizes of farms and regions, shows how complex the problem is with no single answer – such as straw provision – proving effective at preventing damage.

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