

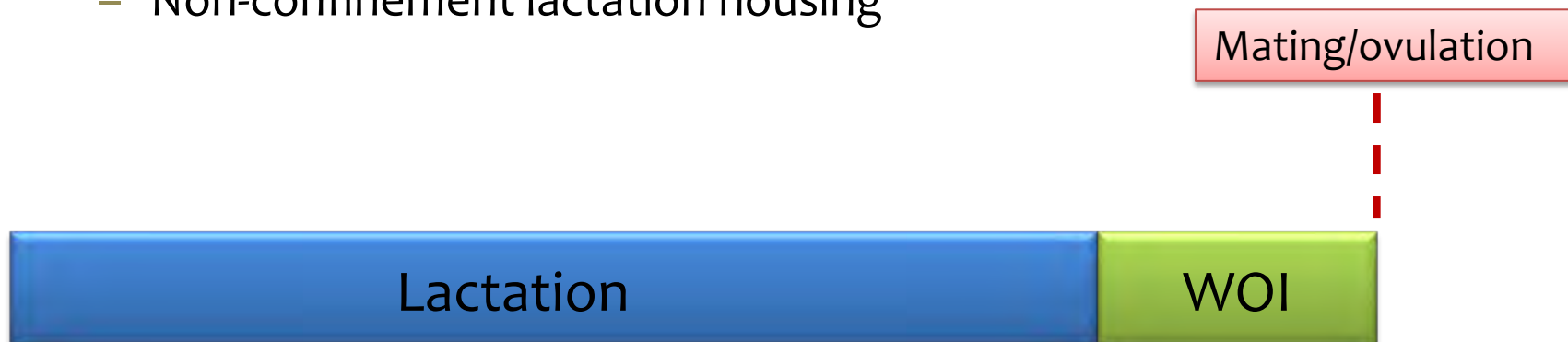
Boar contact and split weaning: effects on oestrus expression during an extended lactation

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Lactation ovulation

- Lactation lengths are **minimised** in order to **maximise litters/sow/year**.
- Limitations of this practice include:
 - Concerns for piglet welfare and performance due to premature weaning
 - Piglet mortality and/or post-weaning growth check
 - Negative public perception
- One alternative is to stimulate **ovulation/oestrus during lactation**
 - Lactation length can be increased
 - Non-confinement lactation housing



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Mating/ovulation

Lactation

A diagram illustrating the concept of lactation ovulation. It features a long blue horizontal bar at the bottom labeled "Lactation". A red dashed vertical line extends upwards from the right side of this bar to a red rectangular box at the top right labeled "Mating/ovulation".



Management strategies to increase lactation length

Hypothesis:

- Removing a portion of the litter (split weaning) on day 18 post-parturition coupled with boar exposure will enable ovulation and oestrus to occur prior to full weaning

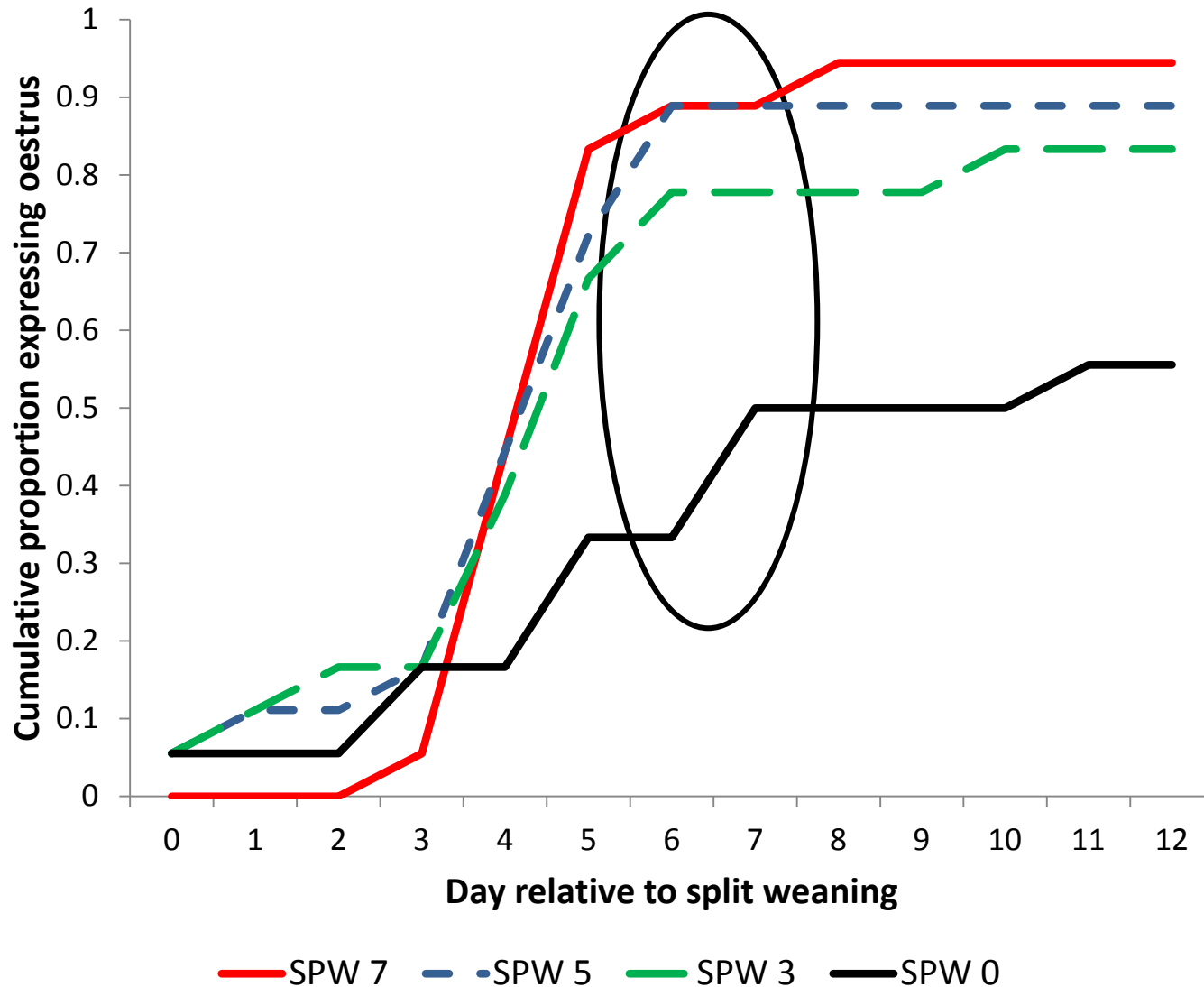
Experimental Design

72 sows (parity 2.9 ± 0.17 ; range 2-6) were used

- On day 2 post-partum, litter size was standardised to 10 piglets per sow
- Sows were allocated, based on LW change (-8.95 ± 0.86) to one of four treatments (n=18 / treatment):
 - **Control:** suckled litter size maintained at 10 from day 2 to 30 of lactation
 - **SPW 3:** 3 piglets weaned at day 18 of lactation
 - **SPW 5:** 5 piglets weaned at day 18 of lactation
 - **SPW 7:** 7 piglets weaned at day 18 of lactation
- From d 18 – 30, all sows received 20 mins of daily fenceline boar exposure in detection mating area
- All sows artificially inseminated at 1st detection of oestrus

Results

- Days to oestrus expression from day 18 post-partum



Summary and Conclusions

- **Fenceline** boar exposure results in
 - Approximately **82% of sows ovulating** whilst lactating
 - 78% of sows ovulating **within 7 days** of start of stimulation
- A **reduction** in suckling load MAY increase the sows capacity to express oestrus while lactating
- **Boar exposure** appears to be an **effective stimulant of lactation oestrus**

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