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ABSTRACT:

The objective in this study was to evaluate the efficacy and safety of Florfenicol (Nuflor premezcla® – Intervet/Schering-Plough) administered by feed in the prevention of an outbreak of swine respiratory disease complex (SRD) with clinical outbreak at the end of the nursery period. Efficacy was evaluated against bacterial agents isolated (*P.multocida*, *H.parasuis* y *S.suis*) and a usual medication by feed tilmicosin at 200 ppm (Pulmotil® - Elanco) was established as positive control.

Weekly weaned piglets were distributed in three groups: Group 1: by researcher initiative, 199 piglets were fed with florfenicol at 80 ppm during 15 consecutive days; Group 2: 198 animals were medicated by feed with florfenicol at 200 ppm during 5 days; Group 3: as the positive control, 201 piglets were medicated with tilmicosin at 200 ppm during 15 consecutive days.

All medication was administered at the beginning of the starter feed when animals had an average initial weight of 11,6 kg BW. Piglets had not received any additional medication by feed from the end of treatments to the end of the study.

Animals were identified individually and allocated by pens in three different rooms.

Initial and final weight, mortality, daily feed intake by pen, average daily weight gain, feed conversion rate, percentage of culled, illness index, dyspnoea, depression, temperature, faecal consistency, perianal inflammation, treatment failures/success, indoor temperature and moisture and additional injected antibiotic treatments were recorded.

Results showed that animals fed with florfenicol at 80 ppm had a higher weight gained and a better, higher, ADG with significant differences compared to other groups ($p < 0,001^{**}$). In addition, feed conversion rate was improved in 0,15 and final weights were more homogeneous. Number of injected animals was reduced 36% compared to tilmicosin group.

Performance parameters results and number of injected animals were similar (no statistical differences) in florfenicol at 200 ppm group compared to tilmicosin. In the other hand, illness index and temperature were better in florfenicol at 200 ppm compared to tilmicosin at 200 ppm.

This study demonstrated that florfenicol by feed at both 80 ppm for 15 days as well as 200 ppm for 5 days were effective treatments for the prevention of swine respiratory complex associated with *P.multocida*, *H.parasuis* y *S.suis* and it could be considered as an alternative to tilmicosin treatment for clinical SRD outbreaks at the nursery period.

KEYWORDS:

Florfenicol, tilmicosin, SRD, starter feed, ADG, illness index *P. multocida*, *H. parasuis*, *S. suis*