

## Farmers' Corner- A Knowledge Hub

### Mitigation of iron deficiency anaemia (IDA) in piglets

Piglet anaemia also called iron deficiency anaemia is generally associated with young, rapidly growing piglets deprived of iron in their diet or from their environment. It has been a potential problem and a major cause of piglet mortality especially in intensive farming where the piglets have no access to soil. It is a major concern of swine industry throughout the world. In Andaman and Nicobar Islands, field level survey and analysis revealed that around 50-60% piglets are suffering from Iron Deficiency anaemia. A piglet is born with a total of 40-50 mg of iron in its body. Sow's milk is deficient in iron; a piglet cannot obtain more than 1 mg of iron daily from this source. With an iron requirement of about 7-8 mg daily to maintain blood hemoglobin level in the normally growing piglet, it is apparent that without supplemental iron, body stores will not last very long. When there is a deficiency of iron, the piglet cannot synthesize an adequate amount of hemoglobin. A piglet is born with a normal level of haemoglobin in the blood of 12-13g/100ml and this rapidly drops down to 6-7g/100 ml by 7-10 days of age. This leads to decreased oxygen-carrying capacity of blood and increased susceptibility of the piglet to different diseases. If not treated in time, the piglet may die due to respiratory problem or anoxia. Moreover, a piglet with IDA suffers from weakness and reduced growth rate. Supplementation of iron is the only effective treatment to control piglet anaemia. ICAR-Central Island Agricultural Research Institute, Port Blair has developed an effective iron supplementation regime to control IDA in piglets. It is known as 2-7-10-15 module of iron therapy in which a piglet is supplemented orally with ferrous sulphate @ 30 mg/kg body weight on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> day of birth.



**Benefit:** The technology is very much effective in mitigation of iron deficiency anaemia in piglets. This module of iron supplementation reduces piglet mortality by 10-15 % and improves weaning body weight by 5-10%.

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