

DERMATITIS

What is the disease?

Dermatitis is inflammation of the skin. Dermatitis in slaughter age pigs can be bacterial (e.g. erysipelas, staphylococcal), fungal (i.e. ringworm), viral (i.e. porcine dermatitis and nephropathy syndrome (PDNS)) or parasitic (i.e. sarcoptic mange). Other conditions of note impacting on carcass quality include injuries (from fighting, travel etc.), melanoma and abscess. Separate factsheets are available for erysipelas, melanoma and abscess.

PDNS presents as spotty skin haemorrhages, most commonly over the hind limbs and perineum, and is less often seen over the flanks, around the front legs and abdomen, and occasionally around the head and ears. Animals may appear lethargic and mortalities in affected pigs can be approximately 15%, with death typically seen in the first few days of infection.

How common is it on-farm?

Dermatitis caused by parasitic, fungal and bacterial infections has become much easier to control with piggery intensification but may still be present. PDNS is rarely seen and a pig with severe PDNS would be unlikely to make it to slaughter.

How is it spread?

Most pathogens or pests causing dermatitis are spread by pig to pig contact or arise from bacteria that are commonly found on the skin.

Carcass impacts

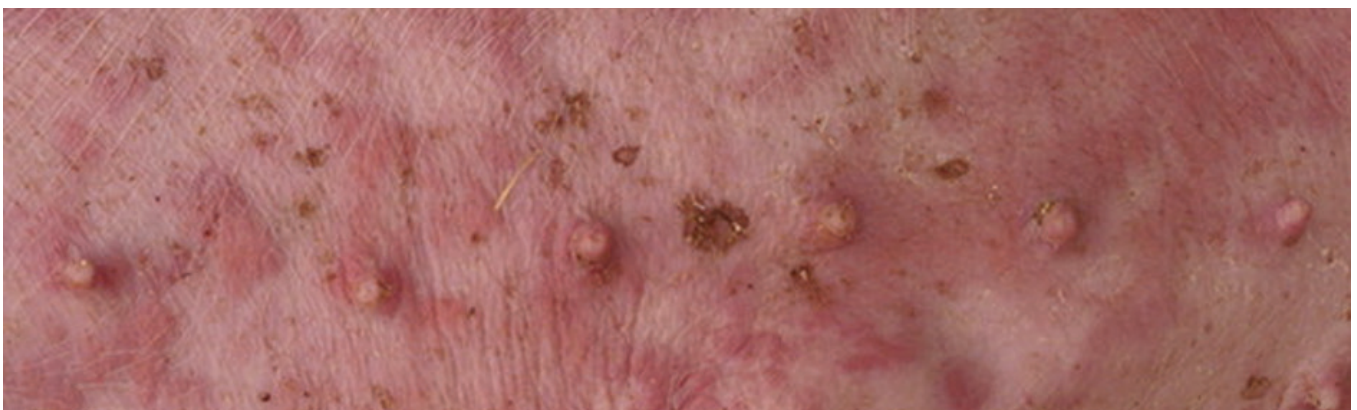
In the absence of other disease, affected skin will be either trimmed off in localised infections. Where lesions are widespread, all skin is condemned, or the carcass is downgraded.

Treatment

The cause of the dermatitis must first be determined; consult with your veterinarian or consider using the Pig Health Monitoring Scheme, if available.

Prevention

Vaccination programs will reduce the prevalence of PDNS and erysipelas, pesticide treatments can either control or eradicate mange or lice, correct stocking, density pen hygiene, and reducing fighting, will generally reduce the prevalence of bacterial dermatitis.



Lesions seen in bacterial skin infections • Source: Holyoake & Fahy, Pig Research Centre