

Alltech® Pig Press

Welcome to the summer edition of our **Alltech Pig Press** newsletter, which focusses on **Selenium - Carefully Choosing Your Source This Summer.**

In this latest edition, we look at the market outlook for the European and Irish pig sectors and discuss the importance of selenium, as well as highlighting the differences between organic and inorganic sources of selenium and choosing the superior source for your herd.

Market outlook: EUROPE

Pig producers across the EU continue to face several challenges affecting the market. Production is still being impacted by high input costs, and the threat of ASF persists over the region, limiting export opportunities. Following the significant contraction in the EU herd in 2022, EU short-term outlooks forecast production volumes to decline by 5% across the whole year, a drop which is being driven by a strong reduction in slaughter numbers. Following the falling

production and supply levels, EU prices have seen continued growth since the end of January 2023.

Market outlook: IRELAND

Irish pig prices have remained relatively stable for the past several weeks, with producers receiving €2.34–2.42/kg from Irish processing plants. The national herd is less stable, however, with reports estimating that it has declined by 9% (approximately 12,000 sows) over the past 12 months. This sharp decline in sow numbers has really tightened the supply of pigmeat in Ireland, and all going well, this will be reflected by an improvement in pig price. It's also anticipated that the exposure to ongoing high costs of production will lessen slightly in the latter half of the year.



Alltech® PigPress

What is selenium and why is it important for your pigs?

Selenium is an essential trace mineral for pigs. It acts as a powerful antioxidant (therefore preventing oxidation) and plays a critical role in:

- Immune health
- Reproduction
- Mitigation of oxidative stress
- Growth and development

Selenium deficiency

Selenium deficiency is related to various diseases in pigs, in addition to decreased growth and poor reproductive performance. Because having adequate selenium in the diet is so important, meeting the pig's selenium requirements is one of the key factors in achieving optimal production efficiency and producer profitability and in providing consumers with a nutritious source of protein.

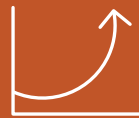
Sows and Piglets - Selenium supplementation is linked to:



Reproductive performance support



Increased piglet viability



More piglets per sow per year



Optimised piglet growth rates

The transfer of selenium in colostrum, milk and placenta results in a higher selenium status and tissue reserves in piglets.

Grower/Finisher Pig - Selenium supplementation is linked to:



Improved selenium retention



Better health



Optimised meat quality (e.g., loin colour and drip loss)



Are All Sources of Selenium The Same?

The simple answer is no! **The source of selenium is what drives its efficiency**, so it's important to select the optimal selenium source for your pig diets to deliver the best performance. Sodium selenite has long served as the traditional form of selenium supplementation in pig diets. BUT... the feed industry is now re-examining the use of selenite in animal feed due to concerns over its high toxicity, negative interactions with other minerals in the diet, poor bioavailability within the pig, and overall safety issues.

Why is Sel-Plex® the superior source of selenium for pigs? Sel-Plex® is Alltech's proprietary organic form of selenium yeast. It offers an excellent source of dietary selenium provided in a very similar form to the selenium found naturally in organic plant matter. Sel-Plex is the proven superior source of selenium for pigs because:



Research: Supported by more than 30 years of research, Sel-Plex is the most studied and proven form of organic selenium available on the market.



Bioavailability: The selenium in Sel-Plex is better absorbed, stored and utilized by the pig when compared with inorganic selenium, helping boost the pig's defence system.



Lower Toxicity: Sel-Plex organic yeast has relatively few, if any, toxicity concerns for humans or livestock.



Complete Supplementation: Sel-Plex is designed to completely replace all supplementary organic and inorganic selenium sources in the diet.



Alltech® PigPress



Hazel Rooney
Pig Technical Coordinator, Alltech Ireland

Benefits of Sel-Plex for pigs

With over 30 years of research, Sel-Plex is the most studied and proven form of organic selenium available. Our research trials have highlighted the following key benefits:

1. Increased sow reproductive performance (Figure 1)
2. Increased selenium concentrations in weaned piglets (Figure 2)
3. Optimised meat quality (Figure 3)

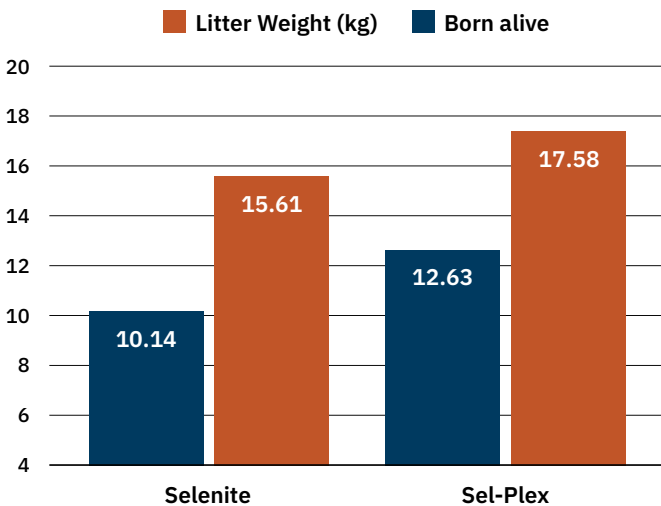


Figure 1. Effects of dietary selenium sources on the reproductive performance of sows.

Effect of organic selenium on weaned piglets per sow per year =

+2.5

more live piglets compared to control

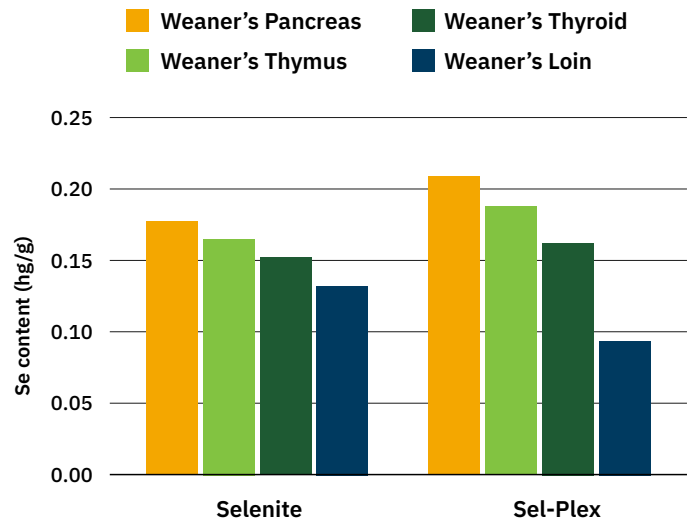


Figure 2. Effects of selenium sources in sow diets on the selenium status concentration of weaning piglets. *Chen et al., 2016*

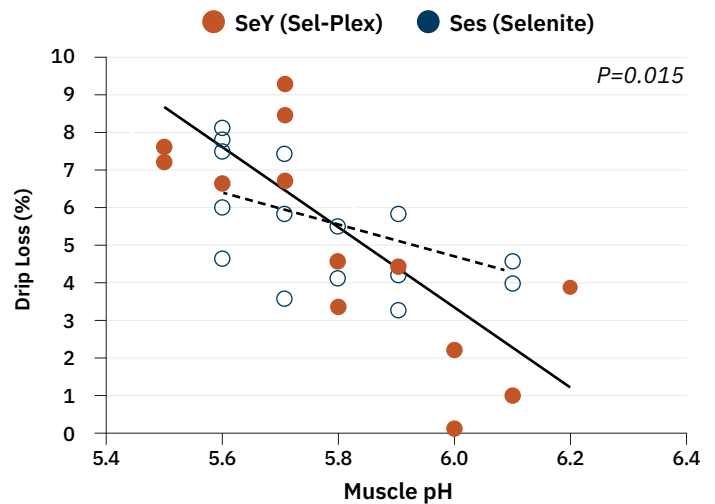


Figure 3. Drip loss (%) as affected by dietary treatment and muscle pH *Calvo et al., 2017*

If you would like to hear more about choosing the right selenium source for your diets, or if you have any questions on the information provided in this newsletter, please contact Hazel Rooney at:

T: +353 86 0682660
E: hazel.rooney@alltech.com