

**Title:** “Identifying barriers and implementing solutions to practical on-farm pain management during castration” **NPB - 18-037**

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**Scientific Abstract:** Surgical castration is a painful husbandry procedure performed on piglets in the United States (US) to improve meat quality. Veterinarians play a crucial role in developing pain management protocols. However, providing pain management for castration is not common practice in US swine production systems. Therefore, the objective of the present study is to identify factors influencing swine veterinarian decision-making in regard to pain management protocols for piglet castration using focus group methodologies. Swine veterinarians (n = 21) were recruited to participate in one of three focus groups. Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim and analyzed by two independent coders who identified three areas of focus, including (1) the lack of approved products validated for efficacy, (2) economic limitations and challenges, and (3) deficient guidelines and training for veterinarians to develop protocols. Although participating veterinarians acknowledged the importance of pain management from an animal welfare standpoint, these barriers must be addressed to ensure that castration pain can be successfully mitigated on-farm

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