An experimental *Helicobacter suis* infection reduces daily weight gain in pigs

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*Helicobacter suis* (*H. suis*) is a Gram negative, long, spiral-shaped bacterium colonizing the stomach of more than 60% of pigs at slaughter age. The prevalence is very low in sucklings, increases from the time of weaning and is highest in adult animals. This bacterium is considered to be one of the risk factors associated with gastric ulcers in pigs. The effect of experimental inoculation with *H. suis* on the daily weight gain over the period of inoculation to euthanasia of 44 medicated early weaned piglets from 5 different experimental set-ups was compared to the sham-inoculated negative control animals (N=29) using a multivariable linear regression model including all variables that varied between the experiments as co-variables to correct for their effect (SPSS 17). There was a significant reduction (p<0.05) of approximately 20 g/day (5%) in the daily weight gain of experimentally inoculated animals compared to the non-infected control animals. Results of this study indicate that an *H. suis* infection reduces daily weight gain in pigs and thus may result in substantial economic losses. Clearance of infection with this bacterium may therefore have an economically beneficial effect.