

Farm characteristics to improve insemination strategies in pigs

Dorothe Ducro-Steeverink

Institute for Pig Genetics



Introduction

Reproduction efficiency is varying between farms

Reproduction results like litter size are affected by many physiological processes:

- ovulation
- fertilisation
- embryonic survival
- foetal survival
- etc.

Fertilisation is the starting point of reproduction efficiency

Introduction

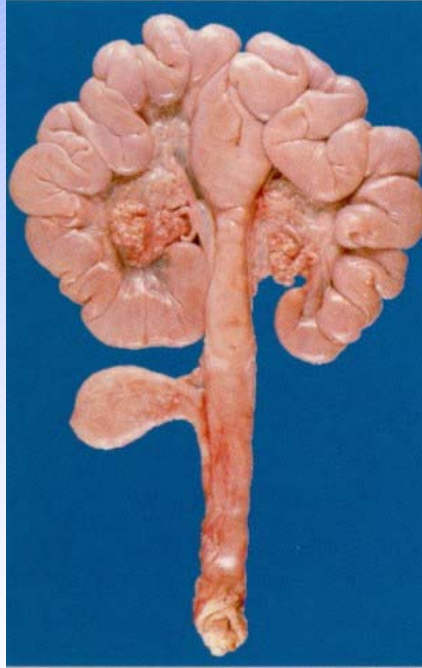


- Fertilisation is influenced by timing of insemination
- At this moment insemination extension is based on general knowledge

Goal:

Show how insemination strategy can be improved on farm based characteristics

Fertilisation

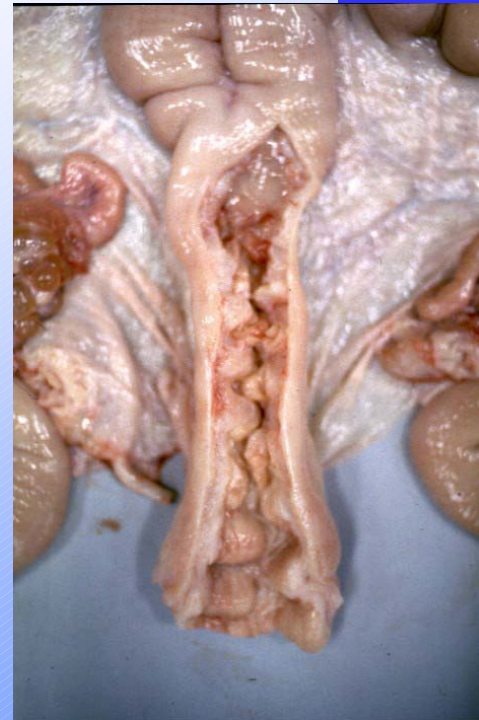


Male facts:

- Management of production of semen for AI (Number of sperm cells, quality of sperm cells)
- Timing of insemination

Female facts:

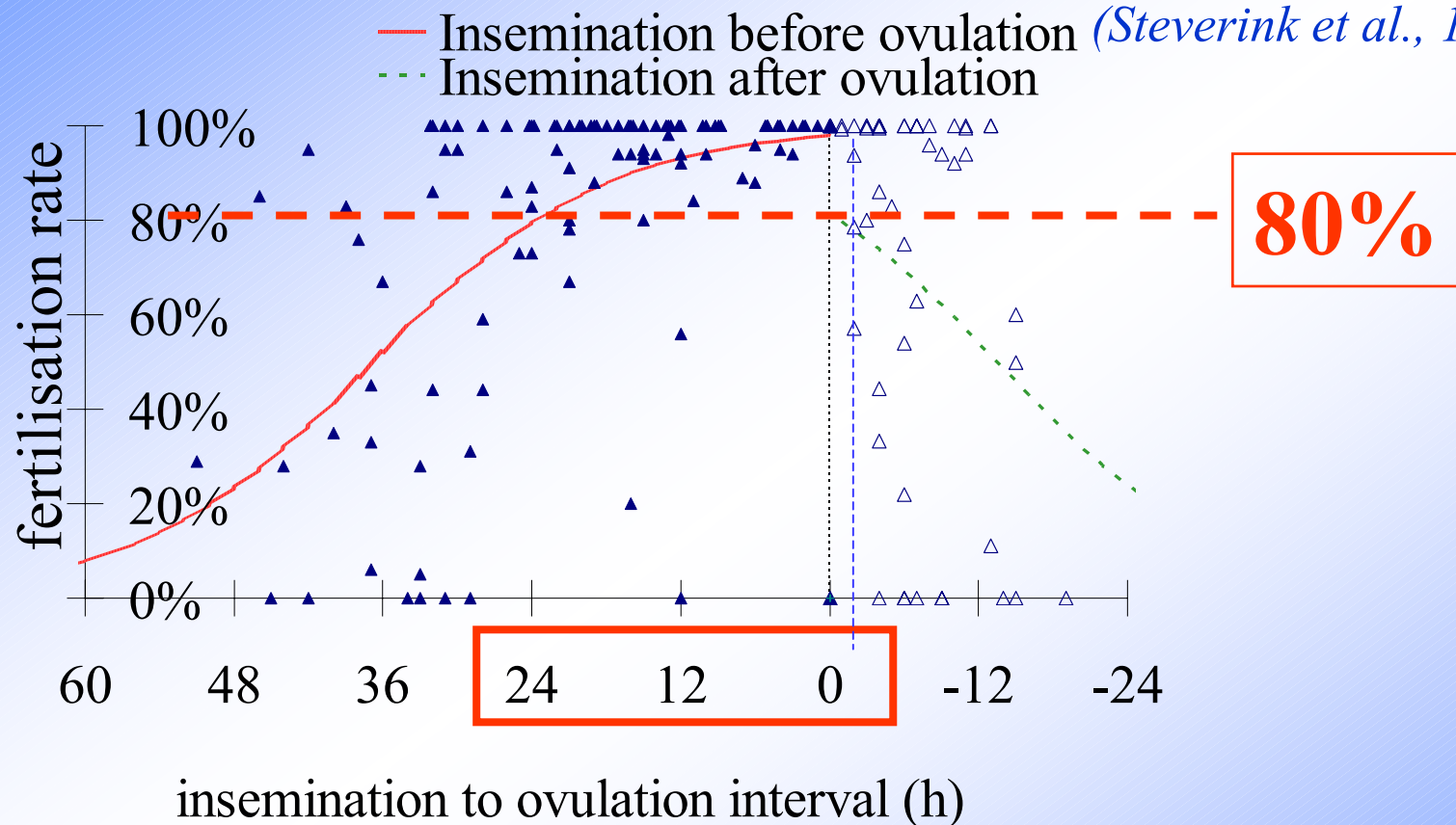
- Uterus environment
- Quality of the oestrus
- Moment of ovulation



Optimal insemination

(Soede et al., 1995)

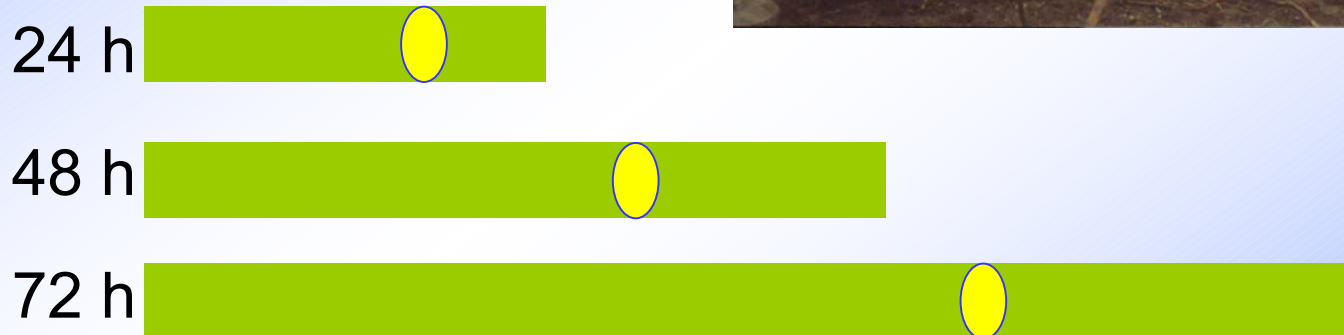
(Steverink et al., 1997)



Optimal fertilisation when insemination takes place between 0 and 24 h **before** ovulation

Ovulation

Is ovulation predictable?

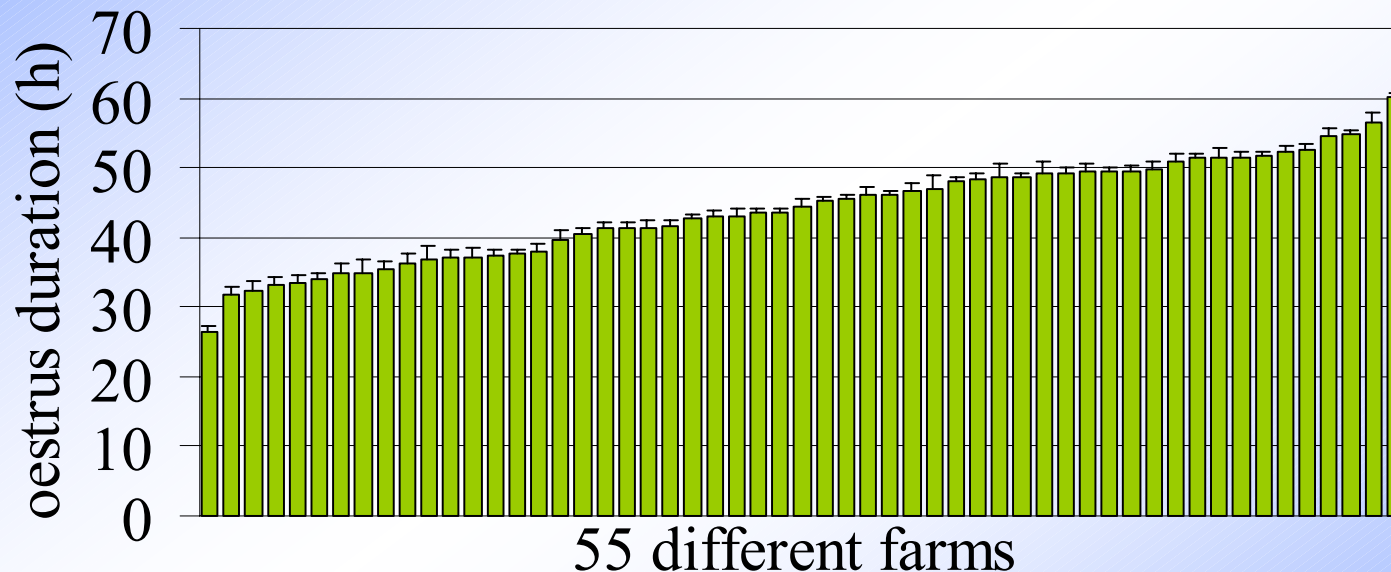


Ovulation takes place at 70% of the oestrus duration

Oestrus duration

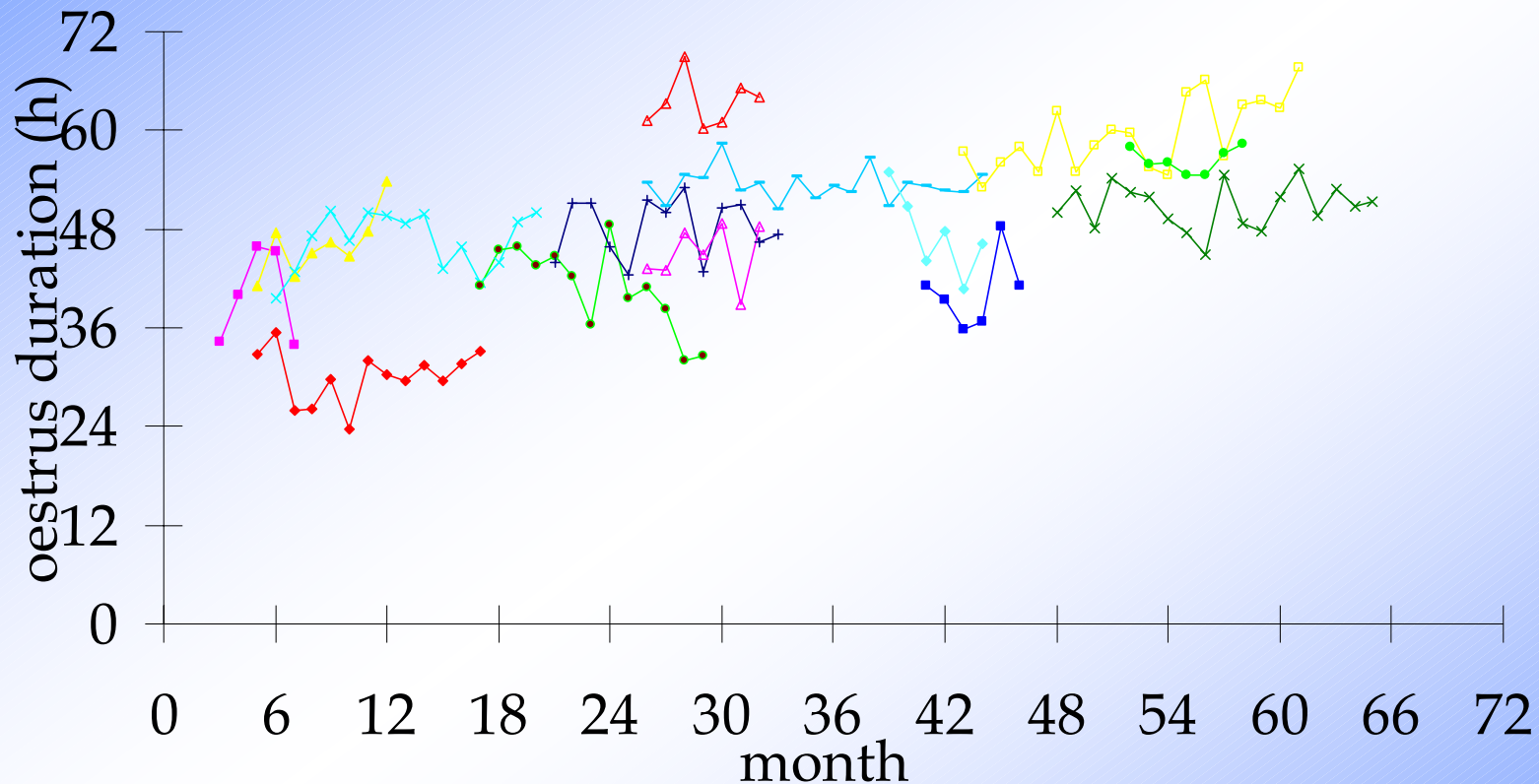
(*Steverink et al., 1999*)

What do we know about oestrus duration?



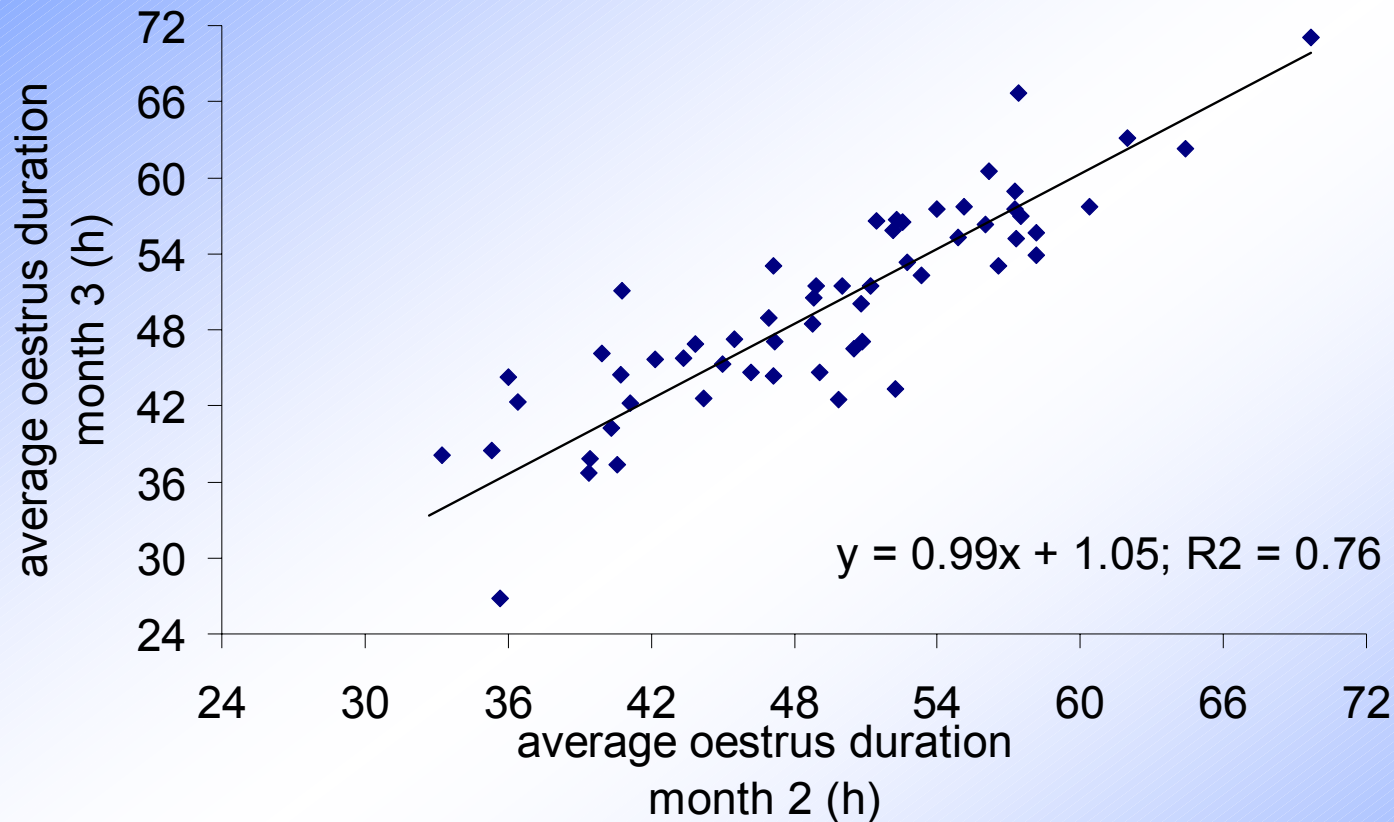
Significant differences in average oestrus duration between farms

Oestrus duration



Oestrus duration similar from month to month

Oestrus duration



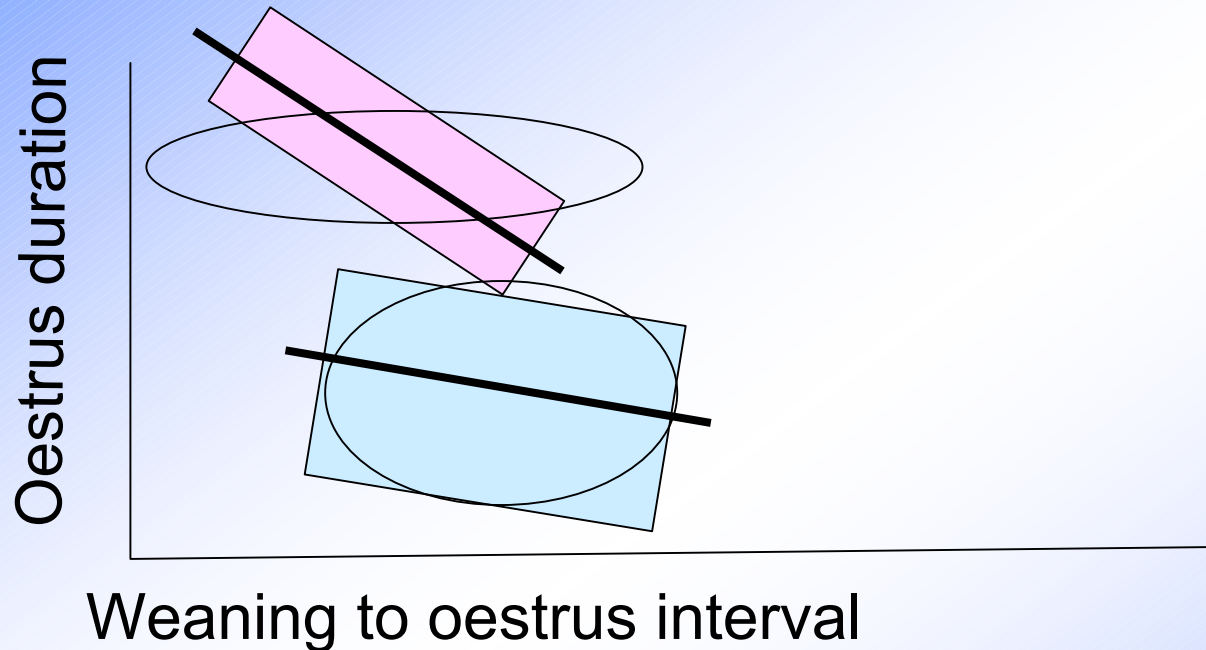
Repeatability of the monthly oestrus duration:
 $r^2 = 76\%$

Conclusion

1. Fertilisation is optimal when insemination takes place between 24 and 0 before ovulation
2. Ovulation takes place at two thirds during oestrus.
3. Oestrus duration (weaning oestrus interval) is highly repeatable

Insemination strategies can be adapted to the specific characteristics at the farm by collecting data on oestrus duration

Example of 2 farms



- long oestrus duration
- negative relation OD and WOI
- low variation

- short oestrus duration
- no relation OD and WOI
- high variation

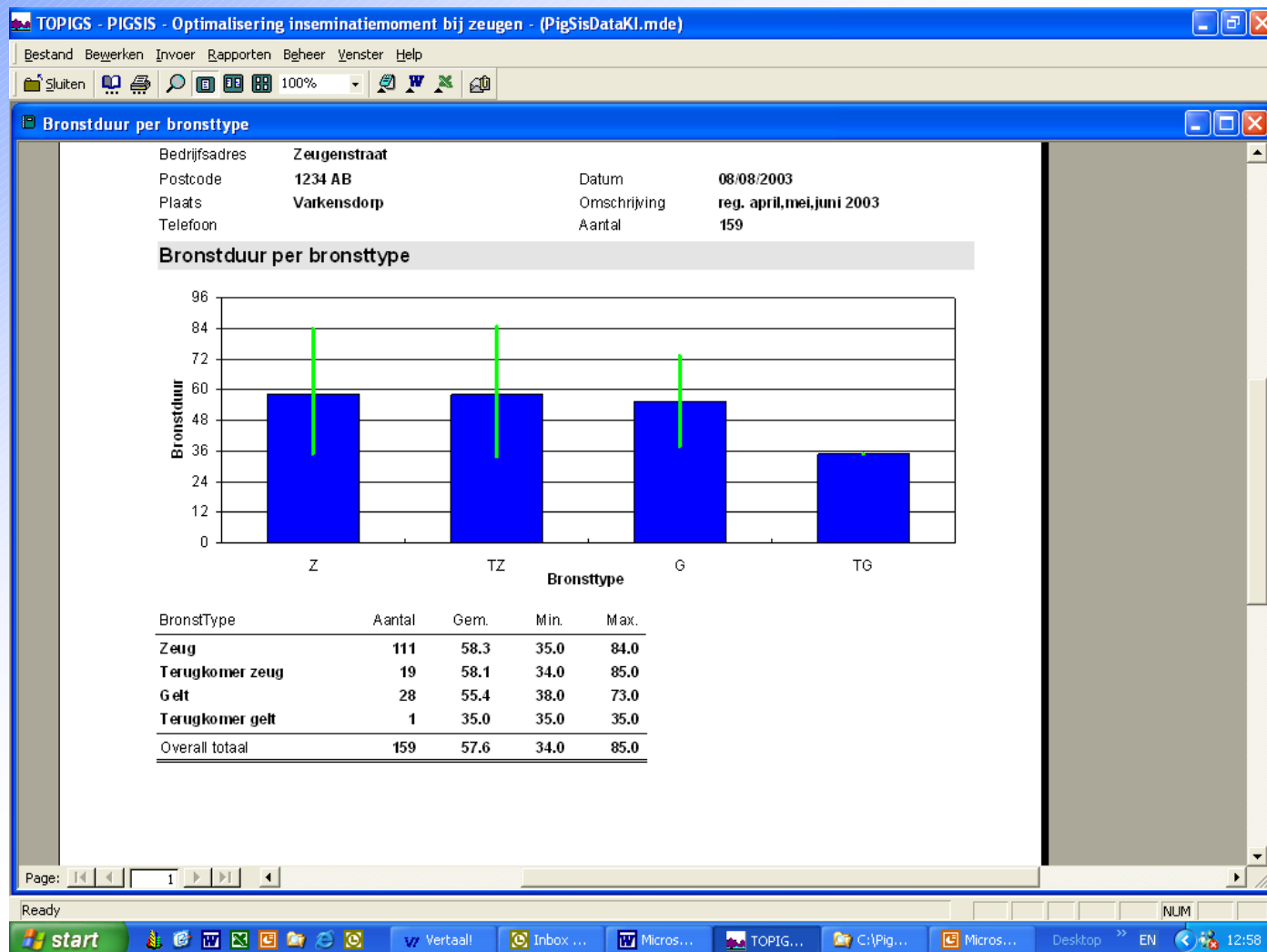
PIGSIS

With this information a management program has been developed:

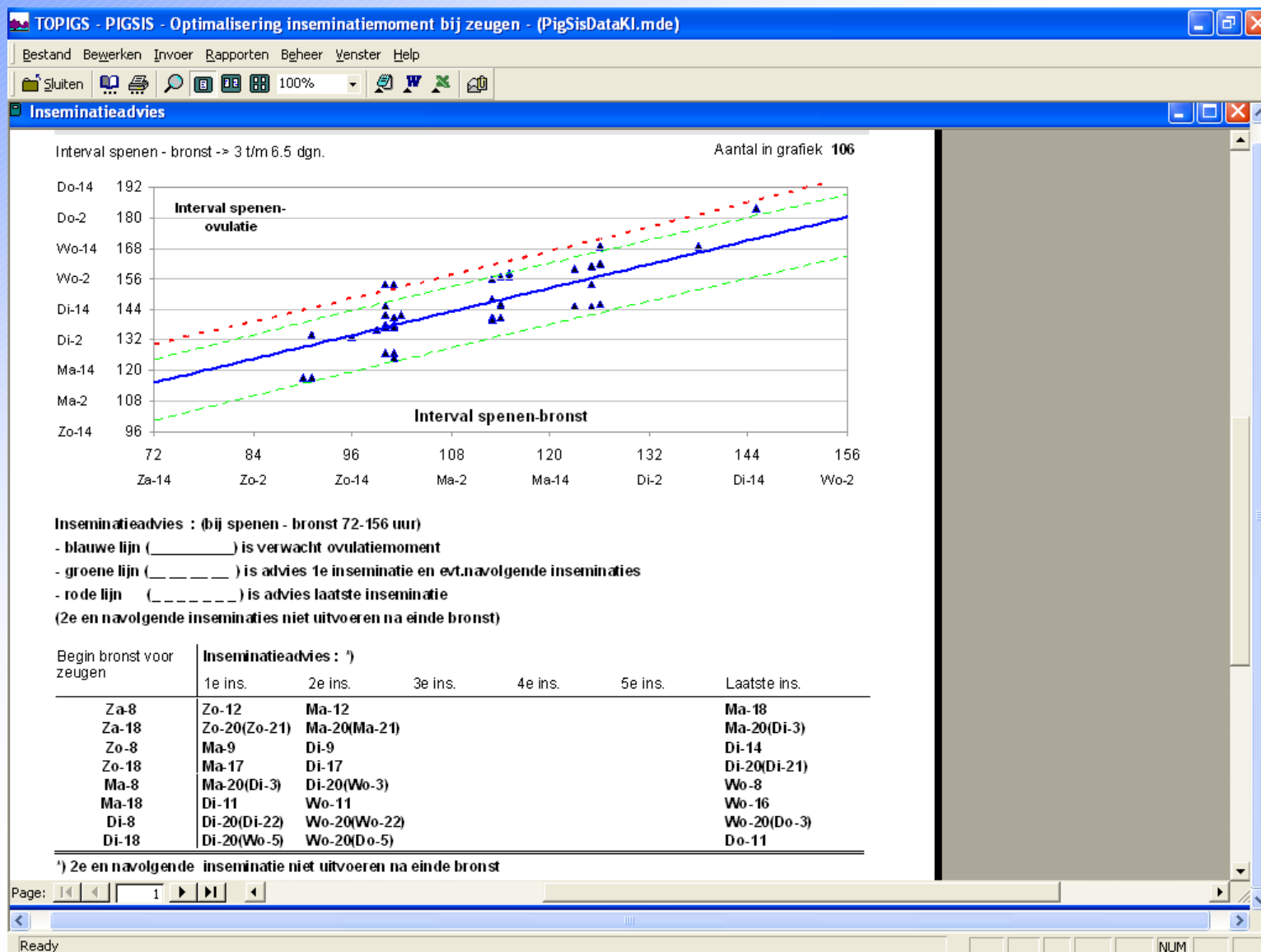
- Evaluation of the insemination strategy.
- Collect data of the onset *and end* of oestrus
- PIGSIS will predict the ovulation moment
- PIGSIS will give the predicted insemination timing.

10 to 20 figures to illustrate the proposed insemination strategy of the individual farm

PIGSIS average oestrus duration



PIGSIS



PIGSIS

- Some fertility problems can be related to insemination strategy
- PIGSIS can help to evaluate the used insemination strategy
- PIGSIS can simulate the best insemination strategy based on farm characteristics

Why didn't nature make a visible alarm clock at ovulation!!

