



Valérie COURBOULAY (1), Anne HEMONIC (1), Marie GADONNA (1), Armelle PRUNIER (2)
(1) IFIP, La Motte au Vicomte, 35650 Le Rheu (2) INRA1079, UMR SENAH, F-35590 Saint-Gilles

Different solutions have been investigated in order to reduce pain associated with piglet castration. Four treatments were compared in a first experiment: sham castration (S), castration without analgesia or anaesthesia (V), castration with local anaesthesia (1ml lidocaïne 2% /testis, L) and castration with anti-inflammatory treatment (0.75 ml ketoprofene 1% / piglet, K). Considering that anaesthesia is time consuming, labour demand has been compared between V and L treatments in order to evaluate the cost of this technique.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Experiment 1

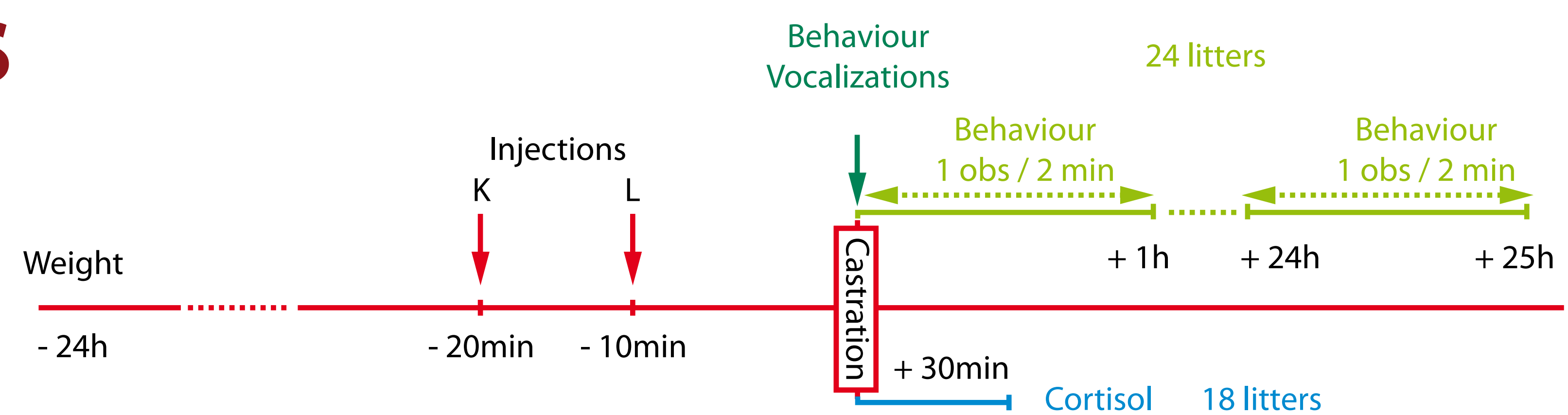
4 males were allocated within litters to 4 treatments
 (48 litters = 48 blocs)

- V: castration without analgesia or anaesthesia
- S: sham castration
- L: castration with local anaesthesia (1ml lidocaïne 2% / testis)
- K: castration with anti-inflammatory treatment (0.75 ml ketoprofene 1% / piglet)

Experiment 2

2 persons
 2*6 litters / person / treatment

L: vaccination (♀+♂) → ♂ placed in a box → lidocaïne injection → (next litter) → (next L) → castration → (next L)
 V: vaccination (♀+♂) → ♂ placed in a box → castration → (next litter)
 TO Ti / piglet



RESULTS

Experiment 1

Behaviour during castration (Table 1)

- call intensity and number of piglets trying to escape during castration were reduced under local anaesthesia.
- no effect of ketoprofene on these parameters.

Cortisol level

- local anaesthesia had no effect on plasma cortisol level whereas AINS induced a reduction of it.

Post castration behaviour (Fig 1)

- on D0, K piglets tended to behave like S ones. Exploring and standing were more frequent in K than in L and V piglets.
- on D1, no difference between treatments concerning non-specific behaviours.

Fig1 : Main treatment effects on pain-related behaviour after castration

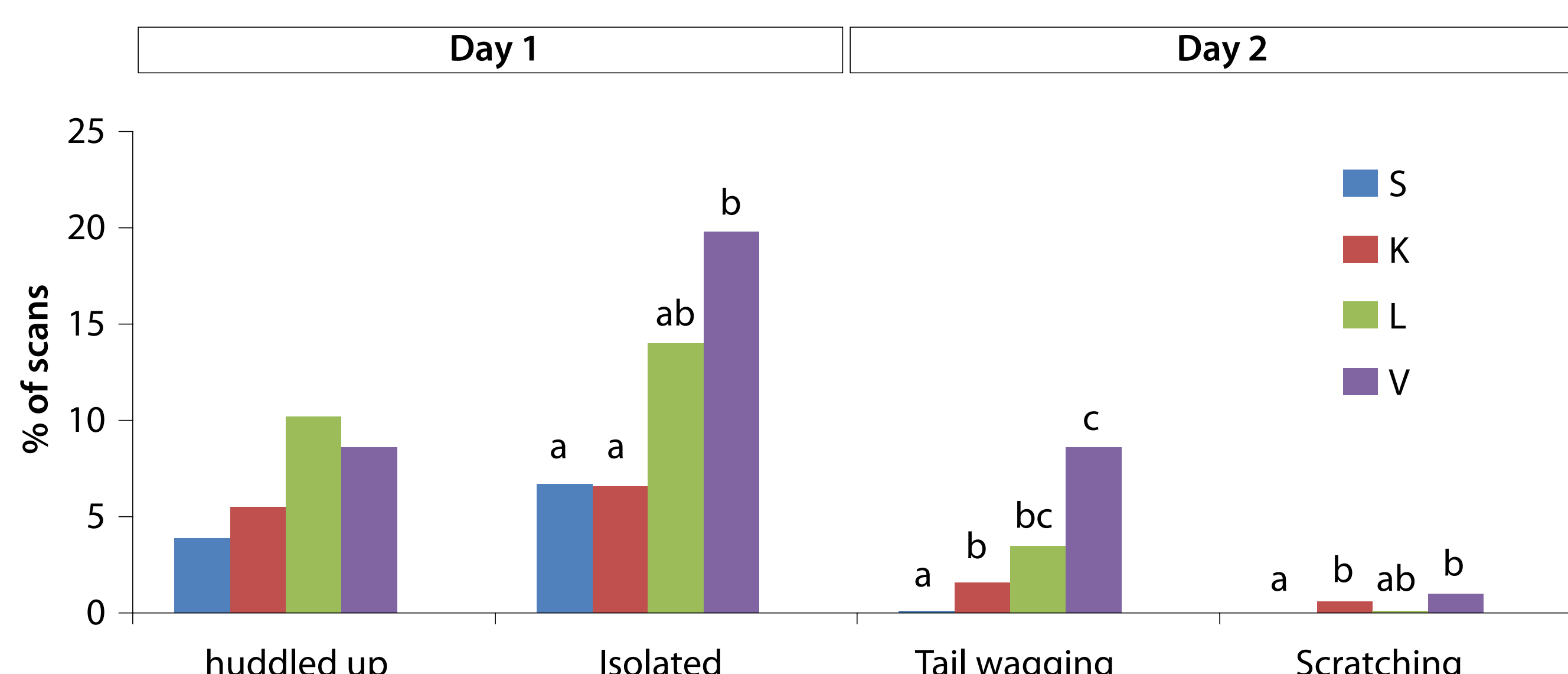


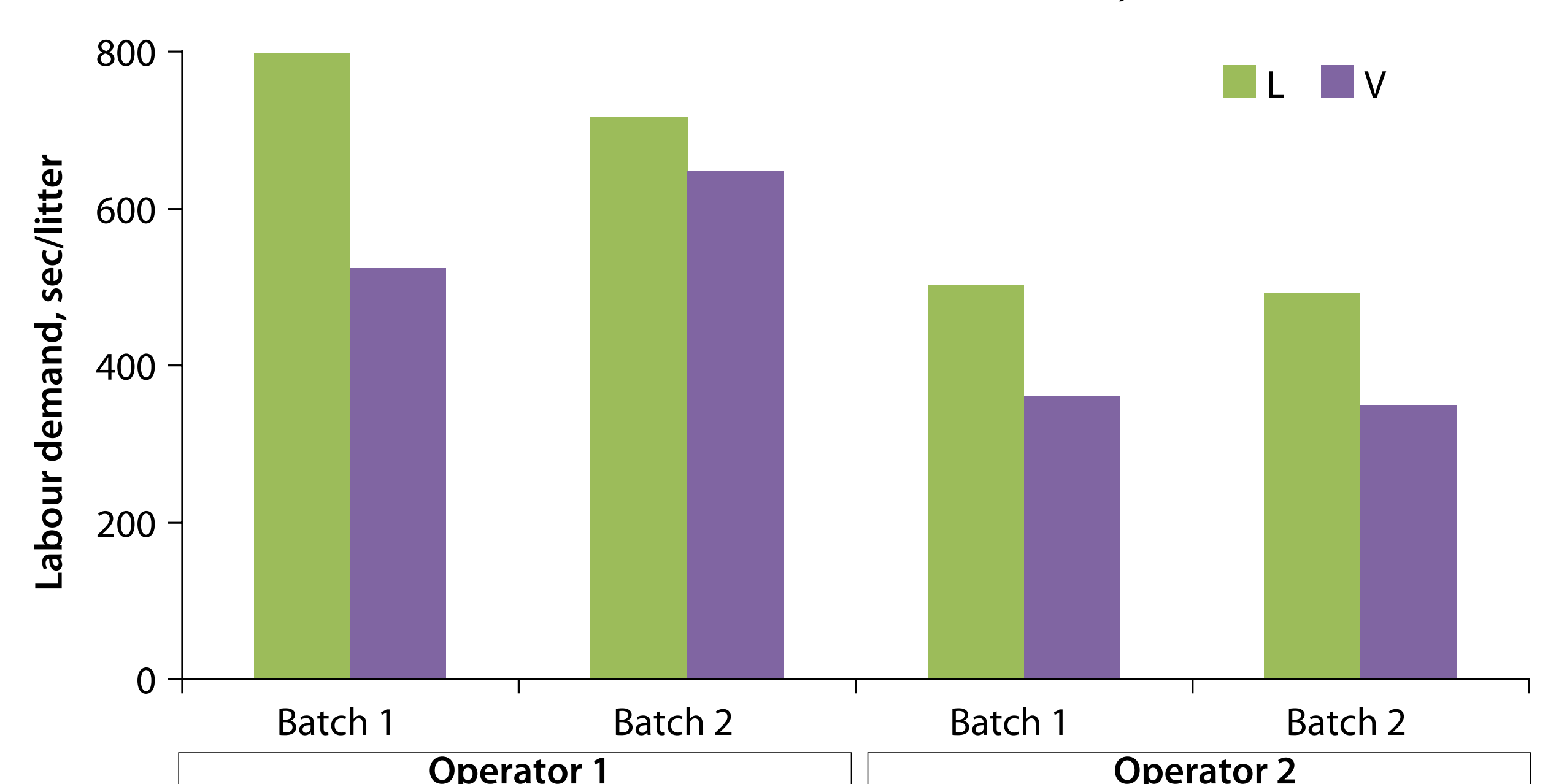
Table 1 : Treatment effects on behaviour, vocalization, castration duration and cortisol level (mean ± SEM)

	K	L	S	V	Stat.
Body movements ⁽¹⁾ , % piglets	79 ^a	38 ^b	8 ^c	96 ^a	P<10 ⁻⁴
Vocalizations ⁽²⁾ , dB	113 ^a ± 4	103 ^b ± 11	99 ^b ± 16	113 ^a ± 4	P<10 ⁻⁴
Castration duration ⁽²⁾ , sec	22 ^{ab} ± 5	19 ^c ± 6	20 ^{bc} ± 2	24 ^a ± 6	P<10 ⁻²
Cortisol ⁽²⁾ , ng/ml	128 ^b ± 48	177 ^c ± 64	67 ^a ± 58	197 ^c ± 58	P<10 ⁻⁴

(1) : Chi Square test ; (2) : ANOVA

Experiment 2

Labour demand for V and L methods, sec/litter



- Treatment, batch of animals and operator had significant effects on labour demand.
- Mean anaesthesia and castration duration per piglet were 30 ± 8 sec and 36 ± 10 sec respectively.
- Local anaesthesia increased labour demand from 11 to 52%.

Conclusion

Piglets feel pain during and after castration. Ketoprofene had a limited impact during castration but reduced post-operative pain. The main effect of local anaesthesia concerned pain during castration. The cost of this method was estimated at about 0.348 € in this experiment. Some L piglets presented convulsions: further studies should determine more precisely the amount of lidocaïne that should be injected to obtain the maximal pain reduction without negative side-effects.