



Carcass value of Black Alpine Pigs (Schwarze Alpenschweine)

EAAP

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One pig, several benefits



- ▶ **Genetic resources preservation**

Indigenous hardy breed, saved from extinction 10y ago

- ▶ **Alpine pastures utilisation**

Adapted to difficult terrain, alpine pastures, limiting the need for feed supplements.

- ▶ **Environmental benefit**

Development of marginal areas and active role in the restoration of mountaineous pastures

- ▶ **Label specifications**

Exclusive production in mountain regions, with summer on alpine pastures recommended.

Background

Breed standards

- ▶ Limited guidelines for fattening
- ▶ Conservation breeding vs. selection for meat

According to the breeding association:

- ▶ Slower growth
- ▶ Shorter back length
- ▶ Longer but stronger limbs & healthy claws

Research Questions

- ▶ Carcass value?
- ▶ Yield of primal cuts?

Methodology & sampling

- ▶ Carcass weight
- ▶ Lean meat yield (MFA 2-point measurement method)
- ▶ Weight of the primal cuts (belly, loin, shoulder, ham) vs. reference population

Population	Black Alpine Pigs (n=12)	Swiss Large White (n=306)
Origin	3 producers (Switzerland)	SUISAG test station, 2009
Age at slaughter	10-12 months (n=5) 24 months (n=7)	158 ± 10 days (~5,2 months)

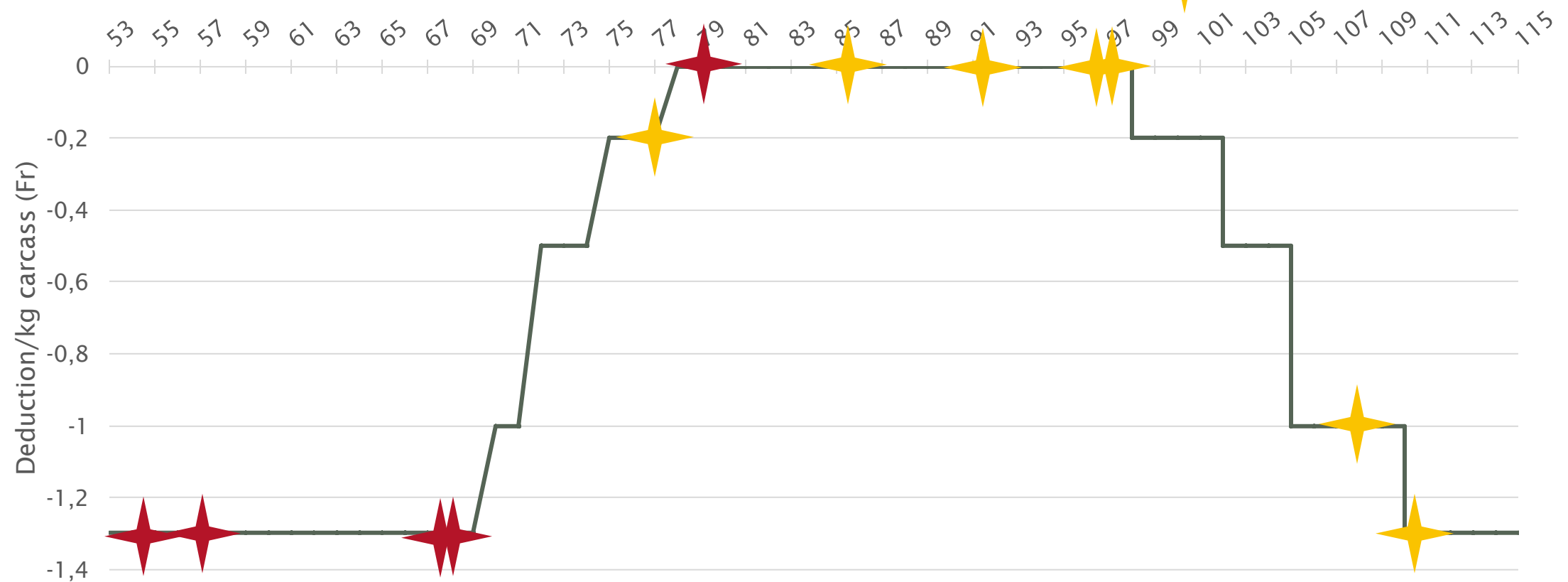
MFA 2-points measurement method

$$\text{MFA} = 59.88941 - 0.51068 \text{ a} + 0.08982 \text{ b}$$

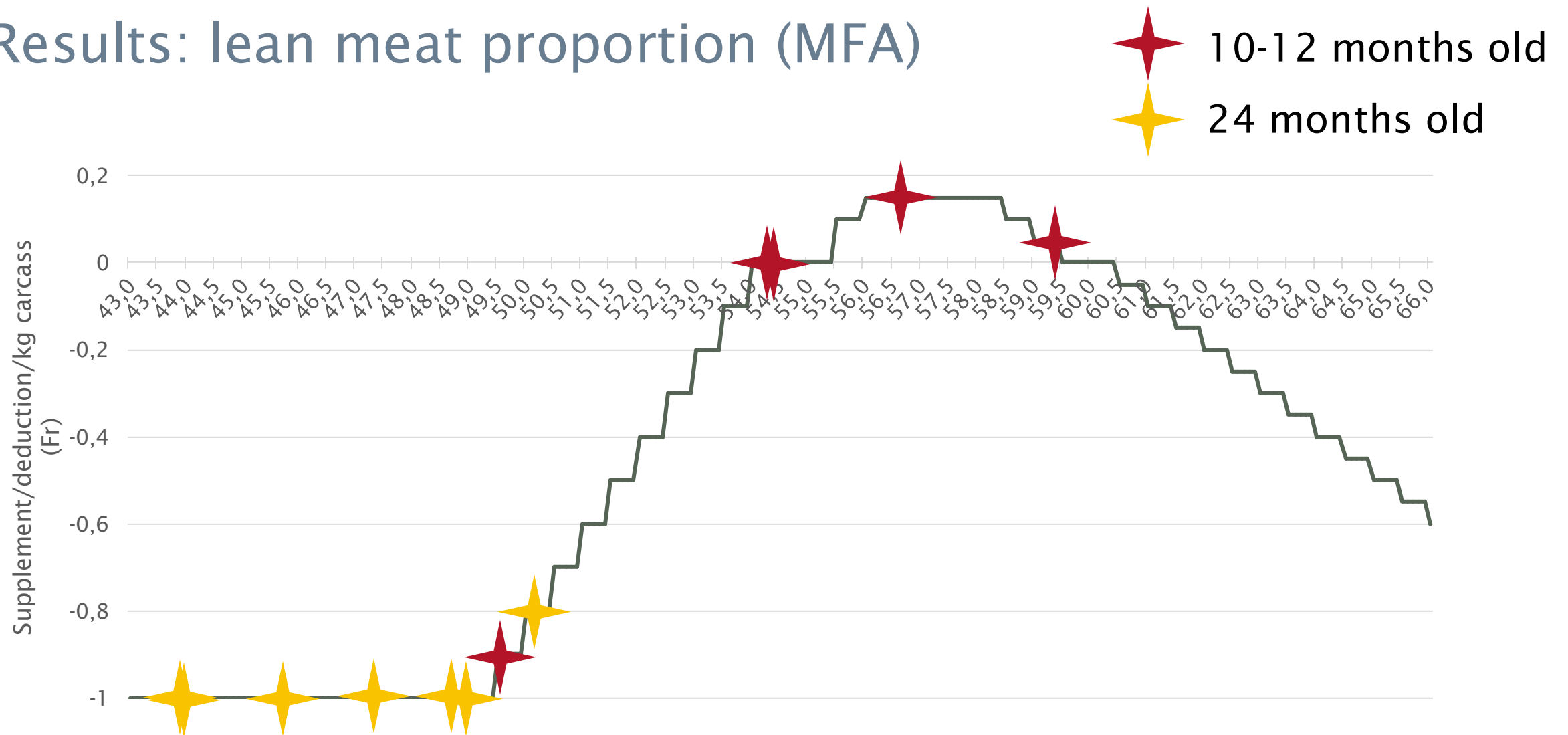


Results: carcass weight (kg)

★ 10-12 months old
★ 24 months old



Results: lean meat proportion (MFA)



Results: carcass financial value

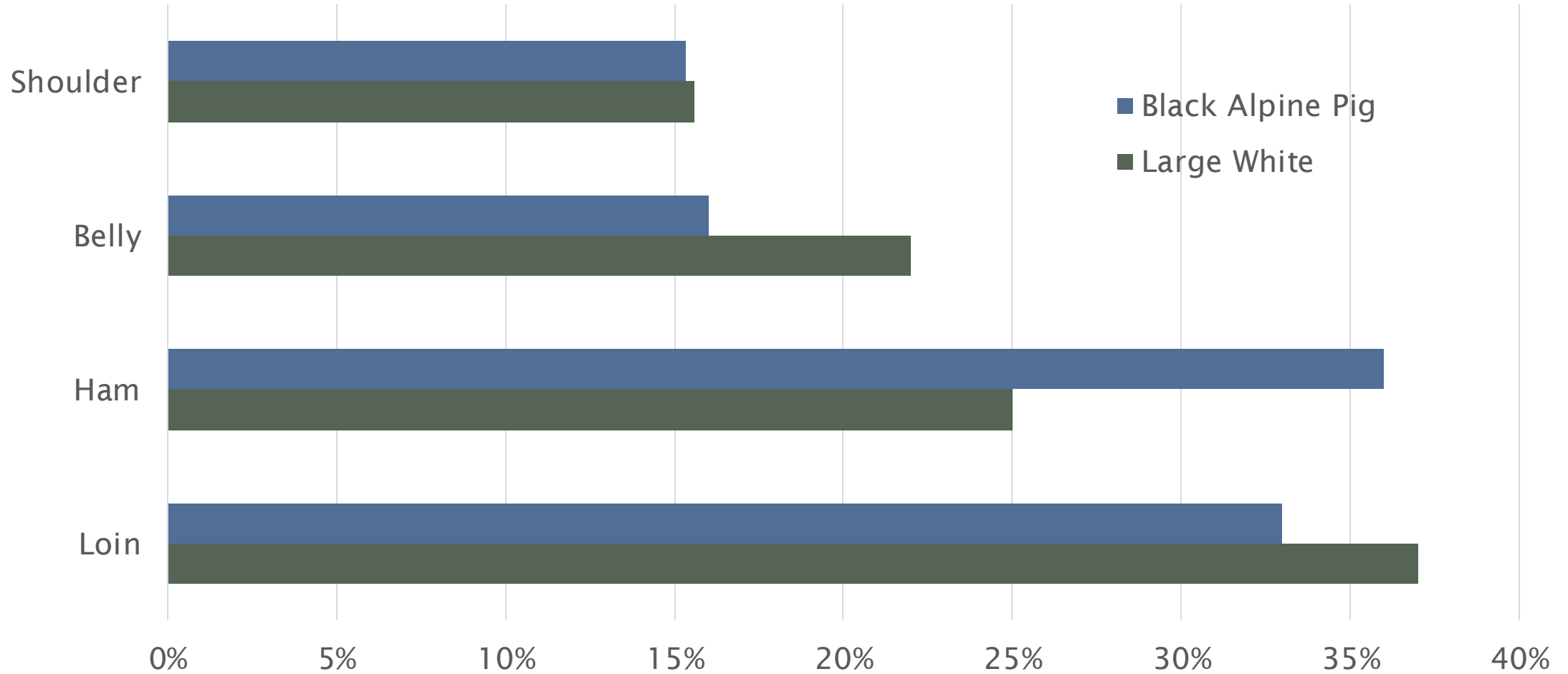
10-12 months old

24 months old

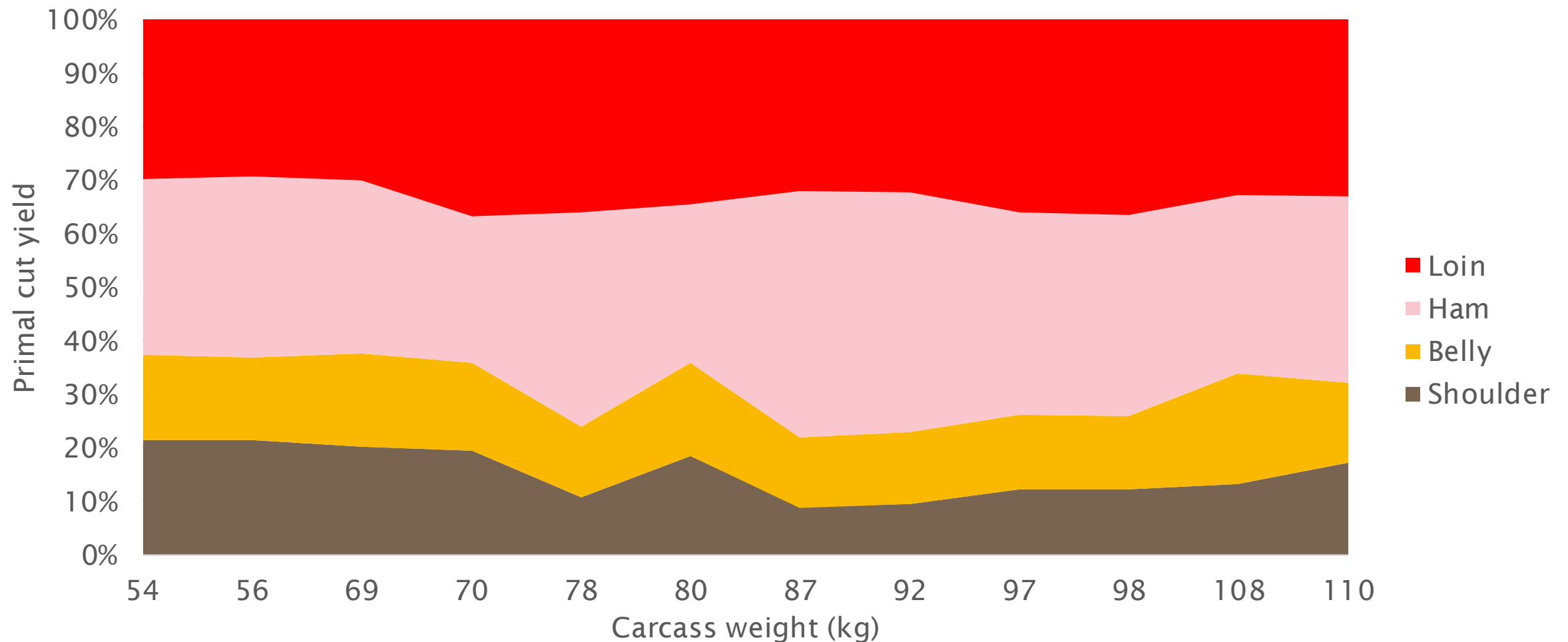
Week price: 2.5 Fr/kg

Pig nr	Carcass Weight	Deductions	Final price
1	79.9	-71.9	127.8
2	69.8	-90.7	83.8
3	53.9	-70.1	64.7
4	56.4	-64.9	76.1
5	68.7	-85.9	85.9
6	107.95	-215.9	54.0
7	97.30	-97.3	146.0
8	86.50	-86.5	129.8
9	110.10	-253.2	22.0
10	77.50	-77.5	116.3
11	92.15	-92.2	138.2
12	97.95	-98.0	146.9
Total	998.15	-1304.0	1191.4

Results: Primal cuts yield



Primal cut yield vs. carcass weight of Black Alpine Pigs



Discussion

- ▶ **Good lean yield only with lighter carcasses**

An artifact due to the combination of minor fat + minor muscle thickness.

- ▶ **Interesting primal cut yield**

Loin yield almost similar, ham yield better

- ▶ **Inadapted to standard payment scheme**

Especially with price pressure at the moment (2.5 Fr/kg!), specific market necessary

- ▶ **Inconsistent carcasses**

Inconsistent carcass weight and lean yield weakness on the market, but inherent to genetic diversity and may be improved with narrower fattening guidelines



Perspectives

Narrower label guidelines

- ▶ For consistent weight and lean yield
- ▶ Also for fair pricing

Meat and fat quality

- ▶ Meat described as darker than standard pork, linked to the age at slaughter.
- ▶ Problems with rancidity and soft fat. Result of lean animals + grass-based diet. Partly solved with heavier animals.



Thank you...

- ▶ Breeders & butchers
- ▶ Patrimont (Hape Grünenfelder) for support
- ▶ Elodie Mayoraz for part of the data collection