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Thank you very much from your KRAIBURG research & development

## SOFT SLATTED FLOOR COVERS IMPROVE ANIMAL WELFARE AND PRODUCTION IN BULL FATTENING

**Housing fattening bulls in pens with fully slatted floors is widespread.**

**Advantage:** lower labour and space requirements, efficient manure removal system, clean animals

**Disadvantage:** more slippery, increasingly interrupted lying down movements and altogether fewer lying periods, often lying damage e.g. swollen or inflamed carpal joints, tail-tip injuries / necroses

**Softer lying areas are clearly preferred by the animals.**

### Objective of the study:

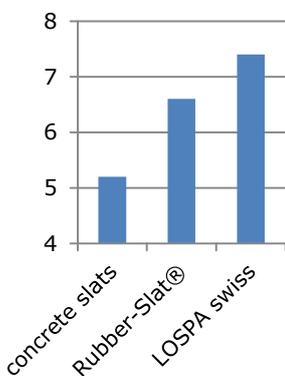
Within the framework of this study the effects of concrete slatted floors and of two different rubber floors (Rubber-Slat®, Fritz Foderstyrning AB and LOSPA swiss, KRAIBURG) on the behaviour, claw and leg disorders, claw growth, animal cleanliness and fattening bull productivity were investigated.

### Procedure:

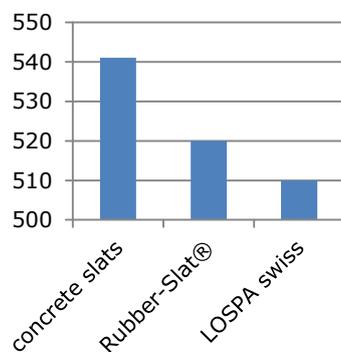
The study was carried out at the Experimental Station Götala of SKARA University (Sweden) from November 2007 until December 2008. In the pre-test phase 80 Swedish-Holstein bull calves (from 100-225 kg) were kept in a non-insulated stable on deep litter. The experiment (225 -650 kg) was carried out in an insulated stable in 16 pens (3.65 m x 2.94 m).

### Results:

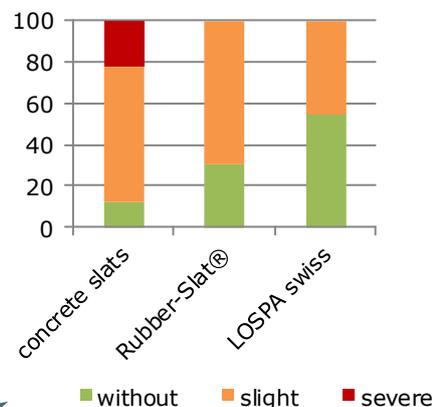
**Lying periods within a 12 hour period (250 kg bulls)**



**Average length of fattening (slaughtering age in days)**



**Claw damages (sole and white line haemorrhages compiled) (in %)**



**LOSPA swiss:** the fewest sole and white-line haemorrhages with a medium severity degree and **no severe diseases at all!**

### Conclusions:

- Fully slatted pens with rubber covers are more animal-friendly**, shown through **fewer interrupted lying down and getting up movements with more frequent lying periods.**
- On LOSPA swiss** the fattened bulls, in comparison to other floor variants, **tend to be mature earlier for slaughter.**
- Joint and claw health improves significantly on LOSPA swiss** compared to concrete slatted floors, whereby the "net claw growth" **does not change.**

**Source:** Graunke et al., 2011: Does rubber flooring improve welfare and production in growing bulls in fully slatted floor pens? Animal Welfare 2011, 20: 173-183 ISSN 0962-7286