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Transcriptional profiling of subcutaneous adipose tissue in Italian Large White pigs divergent for backfat thickness

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**Transcriptional profiling of subcutaneous adipose tissue in Italian Large White pigs divergent for backfat thickness**

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3 1 **Transcriptional profiling of subcutaneous adipose tissue in Italian**  
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6 2 **Large White pigs divergent for backfat thickness**  
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17

## 18 Summary

19 Fat deposition is a widely studied trait in pigs for the implications with animal growth  
20 efficiency, technological and nutritional characteristics of meat products, but the global  
21 framework of the biological and molecular processes regulating fat deposition in pigs is still  
22 incomplete. This paper describes the backfat tissue transcription profile in Italian Large  
23 White pigs and reports genes differentially expressed between fat and lean animals  
24 according to RNA-seq data. The backfat transcription profile was characterized by the  
25 expression of 23,483 genes of which 54.1% were represented by known genes. Of 63,418  
26 expressed transcripts, about 80% were non previously annotated isoforms. By comparing  
27 the expression level of fat vs. lean pigs we detected 86 robust differentially expressed  
28 transcripts, 72 more expressed (e.g. *ACP5*, *BCL2A1*, *CCR1*, *CD163*, *CD1A*, *EGR2*, *ENPP1*,  
29 *GPNMB*, *INHBB*, *LYZ*, *MSR1*, *OLR1*, *PIK3AP1*, *PLIN2*, *SPP1*, *SLC11A1*, *STC1*) and 14 less  
30 expressed (e.g. *ADSSL1*, *CDO1*, *DNAJB1*, *HSPA1A*, *HSPA1B*, *HSPA2*, *HSPB8*, *IGFBP5*, *OLFML3*)  
31 in fat pigs. The main functional categories enriched in differentially expressed genes were  
32 immune system process, response to stimulus, cell activation, and skeletal system  
33 development, for the overexpressed, unfolded protein binding and stress response, for the  
34 under-expressed genes, which include five heat shock proteins. Adipose tissue alterations  
35 and impaired stress response are linked to inflammation and, in turn, to adipose tissue  
36 secretory activity similarly to what is observed in human obesity. Our results open the  
37 opportunity to identify biomarkers of carcass fat traits to improve pig production chain and  
38 to identify genetic factors that regulate the observed differential expression.

39  
40 **Keywords:** backfat, fat deposition, gene expression, differential analysis, pigs

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5 42 **Introduction**

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9 43 Backfat deposition and fat traits are among the most important characters studied in pigs,  
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11 44 due to their strong relation with human nutrition of pig products and for the technological  
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13 45 characteristics of high quality Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) dry-cured hams. The  
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16 46 amount of fat laid on the external part of the pig body (subcutaneous fat or backfat) is of  
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19 47 extreme importance for growth performances, as the lesser is the deposited fat, the better  
20  
21 48 the growth performances. Regarding technological aspects related to the dry-cured high  
22  
23 49 quality products and meat industry, an adequate layer of fat is required for the seasoning  
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26 50 process of PDO products, like dry cured hams (Bosi & Russo, 2004; Čandek-Potokar & Škrlep,  
27  
28 51 2012).

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30 52 During the last decade, pig transcriptomic data have been obtained initially by expressed  
31  
32 53 sequence tag sequencing (Mikawa et al., 2004; Uenishi et al., 2004; Chen et al., 2006;  
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35 54 Gorodkin et al., 2007; Uenishi et al., 2007) and microarrays (Hornshøj et al., 2007; Ferraz et  
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37  
38 55 al., 2008; Moon et al., 2009), which allowed the comparison of gene expression level in  
39  
40 56 several pig tissues. More recently, the RNA-seq approach was used to compare the  
41  
42 57 transcription profile of different pig fat tissues or different pig breeds (Chen et al., 2011; Li  
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44 58 et al., 2012; Corominas et al., 2013; Jiang et al., 2013; Zhou et al., 2013; Sodi et al., 2014;  
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46  
47 59 Toedebush et al., 2014; Wang et al. 2014). The differentially expressed genes (DEG)  
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49 60 reported in these studies are useful to investigate the metabolic pathways activated by or  
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52 61 associated with an increased fat deposition in pig body. However, the large amount of data  
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55 62 produced and the results reported in literature are often hardly comparable because of  
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57 63 differences in the studied breeds; heterogeneous animals' ages; and fat deposition stages.  
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3 64 Moreover, these researches identified several new genes and transcripts not reported in  
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5 65 swine or other species. To date, the global framework of the biological processes regulating  
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7 66 backfat deposition in pigs is still incomplete, and literature is poor of studies carried out on a  
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9 67 homogeneous sample of individuals of the same breed reared on the same environmental  
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11 68 conditions.  
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14 69 The objective of this research was to investigate the transcription profile of Italian Large  
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16 70 White (ILW) pig backfat tissue and to compare the transcriptome of animals reared in the  
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18 71 same herd and farming conditions and showing high (FAT) and low (LEAN) backfat thickness.  
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20 72 Moreover a first functional characterization of DEGs has been obtained to provide new  
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22 73 insights on genes, pathways and processes influencing the divergent aptitude of  
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24 74 subcutaneous adipose tissue deposition in ILW pigs.  
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## 31 **Materials and methods**

### 32 **Samples collection and RNA extraction**

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35 77  
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37 78 We sampled twenty individuals from a purebred population of 949 ILW sib-tested pigs  
38  
39 79 provided by the Italian National Association of Pig Breeders (Associazione Nazionale  
40  
41 80 Allevatori Suini, ANAS, <http://www.anas.it>. Accessed 22 June 2015). All animals used in this  
42  
43 81 study were kept according to Italian and European law for pig production and all procedures  
44  
45 82 described were in compliance with national and European Union regulations for animal care  
46  
47 83 and slaughtering. The animals were reared on the ANAS Sib-Test genetic station from about  
48  
49 84 30 kg live weight to at least 155 kg live weight. For the genetic evaluation of a boar, full sib  
50  
51 85 triplets (two females and one castrated male) were farmed on the genetic station to be  
52  
53 86 performance tested. The formula and amount of the ration was the same for all. It was  
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3 87 based mainly on cereals and soybean, given in excess calculated using the “*quasi ad libitum*”  
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5 88 rule (a ration sufficiently abundant that 60% of pigs were able to ingest the full supplied  
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7  
8 89 food). At the end of tests, animals were transported to a commercial abattoir located about  
9  
10 90 25 km far from the test station according to the Council Rule (EC) No 1/2005 on the  
11  
12 91 protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives  
13  
14 92 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1255/97. At slaughterhouse the pigs  
15  
16 93 were electrical stunned and bled in a lying position in agreement with the Council  
17  
18  
19 94 Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing. All  
20  
21 95 slaughter procedures were monitored by the Veterinary team appointed by the Italian  
22  
23 96 Ministry of Health. Backfat samples were collected after slaughter, from 949 ILW pigs  
24  
25 97 slaughtered at an average hot carcass weight of 118.97 kg ( $\pm 0.29$  SEM) and at an average  
26  
27 98 age of eight months during the years 2011 and 2012 in 27 different slaughtering days. The  
28  
29 99 collected samples were immediately frozen in liquid nitrogen and stored at  $-80^{\circ}\text{C}$  in a deep  
30  
31  
32 100 freezer until RNA extraction. For the RNA-seq analysis we selected the animals according to  
33  
34 101 the estimated breeding value (EBV) for backfat thickness (BFT) calculated by ANAS as  
35  
36 102 described by Russo et al. (2000; 2008). EBVs were determined through a BLUP multiple-trait  
37  
38 103 animal model procedure (Henderson & Quaas, 1976) using the BFT, measured in mm,  
39  
40 104 recorded post mortem in correspondence of the *gluteus medius* muscle. The model included  
41  
42 105 fixed effects of batch in test, sex, age at beginning of test, age of sow, weight at slaughter,  
43  
44 106 age at slaughter, and inbreeding coefficient as well as the random effects of litter, individual  
45  
46 107 permanent environment, and animal. Pigs’ genetic merit for the BFT trait was calculated  
47  
48 108 taking into account the additive relationship matrix. EBVs were expressed as differences  
49  
50 109 from the genetic mean value for the considered trait in the year 1993. Backfat thickness  
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52 110 genetic index may present negative values because the value of the trait is referred to the  
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3 111 fixed genetic base defined by ANAS as mean values of the pigs born in 1993 and considered  
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5 112 as “zero”, so the more negative values indicate lower values of BFT. The animals were  
6  
7 113 selected to compose two groups of 10 pigs showing extreme and divergent characteristics  
8  
9 114 for the BFT EBV with respect to the larger population of the 949 pigs (Table 1). The twenty  
10  
11 115 animals considered for RNA-seq analysis were slaughtered in 12 dates, with 5 dates  
12  
13 116 common to both groups. The animals were selected also according to their pedigree, in  
14  
15 117 order to avoid the presence of full sibs in the considered groups. From now on the two  
16  
17 118 groups will be referred as FAT and LEAN samples.  
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## 120 RNA extraction, library preparation, sequencing

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28 121 Total RNA was extracted with Trizol (Invitrogen) according to the manufacturer’s  
29  
30 122 instruction. RNA extracted samples were quantified using a Nanodrop ND-1000  
31  
32 123 spectrophotometer (Nanodrop Technologies) and the quality of the RNA was assayed using  
33  
34 124 an Agilent 2100 BioAnalyzer (Agilent Technologies). The RNA libraries were prepared from  
35  
36 125 total RNA using the TruSeq RNA sample preparation kit (Illumina) and version 3 of the  
37  
38 126 reagents, following the manufacturer’s suggested protocol. The libraries were tagged and  
39  
40 127 couples of libraries were run on a single lane of an Illumina HiSeq2000. Reads are 100 nt  
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42 128 paired-end represented in FASTQ format.  
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## 130 Architecture of the bioinformatics pipeline

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52  
53 131 A computational pipeline to process the sequencing data for gene/transcript expression  
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55 132 estimation and to perform differential expression analysis between the two sample groups  
56  
57 133 was developed. The pipeline components to achieve expression estimates were assembled  
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3 134 using Scons software (<http://www.scons.org/>. Accessed 22 June 2015), which allows the  
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5 135 parallelization and automation of the pipeline tasks. The pipeline and its following steps are  
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8 136 detailed in the next paragraphs.

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### 11 12 138 RNA-seq data pre-processing and mapping to swine genome

13  
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16 139 Exploratory analyses on the raw reads quality were carried out using the FastQC v0.10.1  
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18 140 software (<http://www.bioinformatics.babraham.ac.uk/projects/fastqc/>. Accessed 22 June  
19  
20 141 2015), which generates an HTML report for each sample read set. Read fragments with  
21  
22  
23 142 quality Phred score lower than 30 were trimmed using the DynamicTrim script of the  
24  
25 143 SolexaQA v2.1 (Cox et al., 2010). The FASTX-Toolkit v0.0.13.2  
26  
27 144 ([http://hannonlab.cshl.edu/fastx\\_toolkit/](http://hannonlab.cshl.edu/fastx_toolkit/). Accessed 22 June 2015) was used for trimming  
28  
29 145 result report. A custom Python script using the HTSeq package (Anders et al., 2015) filtered  
30  
31 146 out the trimmed reads shorter than 50 nucleotides. To maintain a consistent paired-end  
32  
33 147 read set, discarded read mates were also filtered out, despite their length and quality. Each  
34  
35 148 sample paired-end clean read set was mapped to the swine genome (Sscrofa10.2.70) by  
36  
37 149 Tophat v2.0.8 (Kim et al., 2013) using default parameters with transcriptome inference from  
38  
39 150 Ensembl annotation (Tophat2 used Bowtie v2.1.0.0; Langmead & Salzberg, 2012) and  
40  
41 151 SAMtools v0.1.19(Li et al., 2009).

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### 47 48 153 Gene/transcript expression evaluation and transcript reconstruction

49  
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52 154 Gene annotation for the reference genome was retrieved from Ensembl (BioMart) using the  
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54 155 biomaRt R package (Durinck et al., 2009). Read alignments were processed by Cufflinks  
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56 156 v2.1.1 (Roberts et al., 2011a; Roberts et al., 2011b; Trapnell et al., 2010) to identify and  
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3 157 discover expressed genes and transcripts, and to quantify their expression. Expression data  
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5 158 were indicated as Fragments Per Kilobase of transcript per Million mapped reads (FPKM).  
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7  
8 159 Cufflinks was applied to each sample alignment; then, we merged the transcript predictions  
9  
10 160 in a non-redundant reference using the Cuffmerge tool from the Cufflinks package. To  
11  
12 161 reduce artefacts deriving from the transcript prediction and normalisation strategies, only  
13  
14 162 predicted transcripts at least 200 nt long and with minimal expression of 100 (Cufflinks  
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16 163 normalised) reads in at least one of the two groups were considered for transcriptome  
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18 164 reconstruction and for the following analyses.  
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## 23 24 166 Gene and transcript differential expression assessment

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28 167 The samples were inspected by principal component analysis to examine their similarities.  
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30 168 The read counts of each gene in the 20 considered samples were transformed with the  
31  
32 169 variance stabilizing transformation function provided by the DESeq2 package (Anders &  
33  
34 170 Huber, 2010) and used to compute the principal components.  
35  
36  
37 171 The genes identified by Cufflinks were assessed for differential expression (DE) between the  
38  
39 172 LEAN and FAT groups, by means of two strategies, namely Cuffdiff2 (v2.1.1 from the  
40  
41 173 Cufflinks package; Trapnell et al., 2012) and DESeq2 v1.2.1 (Anders & Huber, 2010). Instead,  
42  
43 174 transcript DE was assayed only with Cuffdiff2. To represent gene expression, the two  
44  
45 175 methods use similar statistical approaches based on generalized linear model (GLM) of the  
46  
47 176 negative binomial family. Cuffdiff2 extends the model using a beta negative binomial  
48  
49 177 distribution to handle uncertainty of multi-mapped reads. On the contrary, DESeq2  
50  
51 178 considers only uniquely mapped reads (counted by means of the htseq-count script of the  
52  
53 179 HTSeq package (Anders et al., 2015), but facilitate the specification in the statistical model  
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3 180 of additional factors effecting the fit of the GLM. In this study, the statistical model included  
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5 181 sex effect as a potential conditioning factor. Gene and transcript DE test computed P-values  
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7 182 were corrected according to the Benjamini-Hochberg procedure. Differentially expressed  
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10 183 genes and transcripts were considered statistically significant according to false discovery  
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12 184 rate less than or equal to 0.05.  
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### 16 17 186 Transcript characterisation

18  
19  
20 187 Using custom scripts including BEDTools v2.17.0 software (Quinlan & Hall, 2010), we  
21  
22 188 retrieved the nucleotide sequences of the transcripts extracting from the *Sus scrofa* genome  
23  
24 189 the stretches of nucleotides according to the annotation generated by the RNA-seq analysis  
25  
26 190 tools. Transcripts were identified or characterised by sequence similarity using BLASTN and  
27  
28 191 BLAST2 from the NCBI BLASTN suite  
29  
30 192 ([http://blast.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/Blast.cgi?PROGRAM=blastn&PAGE\\_TYPE=BlastSearch&LINK\\_L](http://blast.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/Blast.cgi?PROGRAM=blastn&PAGE_TYPE=BlastSearch&LINK_L)  
31  
32 193 [OC=blasthome](http://blast.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/Blast.cgi?PROGRAM=blastn&PAGE_TYPE=BlastSearch&LINK_L). Accessed 22 June 2015) using Megablast algorithm (Morgulis et al., 2008).  
33  
34 194 To assign a gene name, the sequences IDs obtained with this comparison were used to  
35  
36 195 query the NCBI Gene and the UniGene databases (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/unigene/>.  
37  
38 196 Accessed 22 June 2015). We used two strategies for transcript annotation. DE transcripts  
39  
40 197 and genes were annotated by similarity using nr/nt nucleotide collection. The threshold  
41  
42 198 considered for the identification of our transcripts was identity  $\geq 80\%$  in at least 70% of the  
43  
44 199 sequence length of a transcript present in the database. Transcripts from new genes were  
45  
46 200 characterized using a comparative genomics approach. We compared the new transcripts  
47  
48 201 from intergenic regions with known human transcripts (RefSeq Release 72) by aligning with  
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50 202 BLASTN (NCBI BLAST 2.2.29+). For each transcript the best hit was considered, and then  
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3 203 alignments with E-value greater than 10e-6, identity less than 60%, and length less than 100  
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5 204 nucleotides were discarded.  
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## 10 206 Prediction of coding/non-coding potential

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12  
13 207 The transcript coding potential was predicted by CPC (Coding Potential Calculator; Kong et  
14  
15 208 al., 2007). CPC is a support vector machine-based classifier of transcript protein-coding  
16  
17 209 potential grounding on six features of sequence. Three features assess the extent and  
18  
19 210 quality of the predicted transcript ORF: the Framefinder software identifies the longest ORF  
20  
21 211 in the three forward and in the three reverse frames, then the coverage and the integrity of  
22  
23 212 the predicted ORF are evaluated. Another three features derive from results of BLASTX  
24  
25 213 search against UniProt Reference Clusters. All the features contribute together to a final  
26  
27 214 score, and to the classification of transcripts as coding or non-coding. Only transcripts not  
28  
29 215 including uncalled bases were considered for CPC analysis.  
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## 37 217 Validation by quantitative real time-PCR

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39  
40 218 The validation of selected RNA-seq results was performed using a quantitative real time-PCR  
41  
42 219 (qRT-PCR) approach using 18 out of the 20 samples used for the RNA-seq analysis. Two  
43  
44 220 samples, one in the FAT group and one in the LEAN group, were not considered because the  
45  
46 221 total RNA extracted was used completely for the RNA-seq analysis. QRT-PCR validation was  
47  
48 222 carried out using Rotor-Gene™ 6000 (Qiagen - Corbett Research). After DNase treatment  
49  
50 223 (TURBO DNA-free™, Ambion, Applied Biosystems), 1 µg of total RNA was reverse  
51  
52 224 transcribed using the iScript cDNA Synthesis kit (BIORAD) according to the manufacturers'  
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54  
55 225 instructions.  
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3 226 The samples were first used to analyze four candidate normalizing genes beta-2-  
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5 227 microglobulin (*B2M*), polymerase (RNA) II (DNA directed) polypeptide A, 220kDa (*POLR2A*),  
6  
7 228 hypoxanthine phosphoribosyltransferase 1 (*HPRT1*), tyrosine 3-monooxygenase/tryptophan  
8  
9 229 5-monooxygenase activation protein, zeta (*YWHAZ*). The primer pairs and the PCR  
10  
11 230 conditions used are reported in Supplementary Table 1. The expression levels of these four  
12  
13 231 genes were evaluated using NormFinder and *B2M* and *HPRT1*, the two most stably  
14  
15 232 expressed normalizing genes, were utilized as reference genes. For each gene selected for  
16  
17 233 validation, we designed an external primer pair to obtain the amplicon for the standard  
18  
19 234 curve construction and an internal primer pair for the qRT-PCR on Rotor Gene 6000 (Table  
20  
21 235 S1). Standard curves for each gene were generated from 10-12 serial dilutions (from  $10^9$  to  
22  
23 236 25 molecules/ $\mu$ l) of the PCR amplicons obtained with the external primer pairs and  
24  
25 237 containing the internal primers used in the qRT-PCR analysis. Amplifications were performed  
26  
27 238 in a total volume of 10  $\mu$ l containing using 5  $\mu$ l of the SYBR® Premix Ex Taq™ (Takara Bio  
28  
29 239 Inc.), 0.5  $\mu$ l of each primer and about 100 ng of cDNA. The used Premix Ex Taq™ is optimized  
30  
31 240 for a two-step cycling, and the amplification conditions for the tested genes are reported in  
32  
33 241 Table S1. The PCR efficiency was calculated as  $E=10 \exp(-1/\text{slope})$ , with a range between -  
34  
35 242 2.7 and -4.3, indicating a good PCR efficiency result. All the PCR products were checked on a  
36  
37 243 polyacrylamide gel and the specificity of the amplification was checked by a final melting  
38  
39 244 curve analysis.  
40  
41 245 Threshold cycles obtained for the samples were converted by Rotor Gene 6000 to mRNA  
42  
43 246 molecules/ $\mu$ l using for each gene the relative standard curve (Bustin & Nolan, 2004).  
44  
45 247 Moreover, the average mRNA molecules/ $\mu$ l for each sample was normalized dividing the  
46  
47 248 mRNA molecules of a gene / $\mu$ l by the geometric average of *B2M* and *HPRT1* mRNA  
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49 249 molecules/ $\mu$ l in the given sample, as suggested by Bustin & Nolan, 2004 and Vandesompele  
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3 250 et al., 2002. Differences on the expression level calculated for FAT and LEAN samples were  
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5 251 tested by two-tailed Student's t test. Statistical analyses were performed with SAS version  
6  
7 252 9.3 (SAS 9.3 Help and Documentation, Cary, NC. SAS Institute Inc.) and nominal P-value  
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9  
10 253  $\leq 0.05$  was considered as significance threshold.

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12 254

## 13 14 255 Functional characterization

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18 256 Functional annotation, classification and annotation clustering of selected gene sets were  
19  
20 257 carried out by DAVID Tools 6.7 (Huang et al., 2009) using Biological Processes, Molecular  
21  
22 258 Function gene ontology categories and KEGG pathways. A threshold for significance of  
23  
24  
25 259  $P < 0.01$  and  $P < 0.05$  after Benjamini correction was considered for the selection of the  
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27  
28 260 functional categories respectively in the characterization of most expressed transcripts and  
29  
30 261 for the selection of the functional categories of DEG.

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## 33 34 35 263 **Results**

### 36 37 38 39 264 **Samples**

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42 265 In this study we applied RNA-seq by Illumina technology to the study of gene expression in  
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44 266 backfat tissue of 20 ILW pigs. We considered a large group of 949 sampled animals, with  
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46  
47 267 EBV for BFT ranging from -10.64 mm to 7.28 mm, with mean value and standard deviation  
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49 268 (SD) -1.96 mm and 3.01, respectively. We selected, from the whole collected population,  
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51  
52 269 two groups of 10 unrelated pigs (FAT and LEAN) with extremely divergent EBVs for BFT, with  
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54 270 1:1 sex ratio within each group. The mean values of each of the two selected groups of pigs  
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57 271 are outside the range -7.98 mm / 4.06 mm defined by the mean value of the 949 samples  $\pm 2$

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3 272 standard deviations. Specifically, FAT and LEAN animals were associated to average BFT  
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5 273 values of +5.22 mm ( $\pm 1.30$  SD) and -8.63 mm ( $\pm 1.40$  SD) as indicated in Table 1.  
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## 10 275 Sequencing, reads pre-processing and mapping

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13 276 Pairs of samples were run together, after barcoding, on a single lane of an Illumina HiSeq  
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15 277 2000 apparatus, obtaining a total of 3,917,123,414 raw reads for the 20 considered samples,  
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17 278 with an average of 195,856,171 raw reads per sample (Table S2; GEO accession GSE68007).  
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19 279 After trimming and length filtering the clean reads per sample were on the average  
20  
21 280 113,934,264 (58.04%) and were used for read-to-genome mapping (Figure S1A). Reads that  
22  
23 281 align on a single genome locus (uniquely mapped reads) were on the average the 91.07% of  
24  
25 282 the mapped reads (Table S2). The 72.42% of the uniquely mapped reads (72,219,306.45 on  
26  
27 283 the average aligned to annotated exons, the 19.15% mapped on intergenic regions and the  
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29 284 8.43% mapped on introns of annotated genes. The deep sequencing allowed the  
30  
31 285 identification of genes expressed at low level and relatively rare alternatively spliced  
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33 286 transcripts. We observed splicing events in the 21.19% of the reads on the average,  
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35 287 providing useful information for the reconstruction of alternative transcript isoforms (Figure  
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37 288 S1B).  
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## 47 290 Transcripts and genes expressed in backfat samples

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50 291 The deep sequencing analysis of backfat transcripts performed on two groups of pigs  
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52 292 divergent for fat deposition in this tissue allowed the detection of 63,418 transcripts. Many  
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54 293 of them have not yet been annotated in the porcine genome, thus providing new consistent  
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56 294 resources for pig genome annotation and studies of adipose tissue biology. We identified  
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3 295 the expression of genes on all porcine autosomes, sex chromosomes and mitochondrial  
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5 296 genome. Chromosome 1 has the largest number of expressed genes (8.23%), followed by  
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7 297 chromosomes 6 (7.84%) and 2 (7.25%). Furthermore, a non-negligible part (12.48%) of the  
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9 298 expressed genes is located in genomic scaffolds (Figure S1C), as about the 7.5% of the  
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11 299 genome has no assigned location yet, as described in Ensembl annotation of pig genome  
12  
13 300 (database version 78 at the time of the analysis ;  
14  
15 301 [http://www.ensembl.org/Sus\\_scrofa/Location/Genome](http://www.ensembl.org/Sus_scrofa/Location/Genome). Accessed 22 June 2015). In term of  
16  
17 302 genes, we identified 23,483 expressed pig genes: 12,707 known and 10,776 putative new  
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19 303 genes.  
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21 304 Transcripts were split in different classes according to their matching with the genome  
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23 305 annotations (Figure 1A, Table S3). Transcripts matching exactly the reference annotation are  
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25 306 indicated as “known” transcripts; annotated transcripts’ new isoforms or overlapping with  
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27 307 annotated transcript are indicated as “novel isoforms; and all other transcripts, such as  
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29 308 those expressed from extragenic regions, are referred as “new” transcripts and might  
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31 309 represent putative new genes. The majority of expressed transcripts are novel isoforms  
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33 310 (35,030; the 55.2%) or known transcripts (12,969, representing the 20.5%) that are  
34  
35 311 prevalently annotated as protein coding (12,883; 99.3%). The expressed new transcripts are  
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37 312 15,419 (24.3%).  
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39 313 Transcript lengths range from 200 to 50,610 nt, with median and average values of 3,224  
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41 314 and 3,979. Average size exceeds the 2 kb pig mean transcript size that can be estimated  
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43 315 according to Ensembl pig coding transcript annotation. We observed that the novel isoforms  
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45 316 reconstructed are longer than “known” pig transcripts (Figure 1B).  
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3 317 Sequences longer than 5 kb compose the 25% of the expressed transcripts. Noteworthy, we  
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5 318 detected two transcripts overlapping *ZBTB16* gene and two new transcripts from  
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7 319 chromosome 16 that are longer than 40 kb.  
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10 320 Considering transcripts expression, we observed that new transcripts are less expressed in  
11  
12 321 fat tissue than known transcripts (Figure 1C). Nevertheless, all the three transcript  
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14 322 categories span a considerably large range of expression values.  
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17 323 The majority of the expressed genes (12,138; 52%) present only one transcript isoform  
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19 324 expressed in fat tissue (Figure 1D); the 27.0% and the 18.3% of the genes present two and  
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21 325 three expressed isoforms, respectively, whereas the remaining 12.7% of the genes are  
22  
23 326 associated each one to 4 to 31 different isoforms. We identified 31 isoforms for the gene  
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25 327 *MAP4K4*, for which a complex expression pattern is reported in humans: Ensembl release 79  
26  
27 328 lists 20 *MAP4K4* transcripts generated by at least 3 different promoters, by complex  
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29 329 alternative splicing and by polyadenylation patterns, whereas five protein isoforms are  
30  
31 330 reported in UniProt release 2015\_3.  
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34 331 Looking at isoform types, Figure 1E shows that many genes expressing only one transcript  
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36 332 (first bar from the left) in fat tissue are putative new genes (green portion). Interestingly,  
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38 333 some genes expressing only one transcript in fat tissue are represented only by a novel  
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40 334 isoform (first bar, red shadows). The proportion of novel isoforms (red portion) increases  
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42 335 along with the numbers of expressed transcripts per gene. Moreover, the transcripts classes  
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44 336 showing exonic overlap compared to a reference transcript are found in genes with a  
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46 337 varying number of transcripts and are particularly abundant in genes with up to three  
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48 338 isoforms. The remaining transcript classes are very rare.  
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51 339 Interesting new isoforms derived from known genes regard Perilipin 2 (*PLIN2*; alias *ADFP*,  
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53 340 adipofilin), an important gene for fat metabolism in pigs (Davoli et al., 2010; Gandolfi et al.,  
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3 341 2011) whose expression in humans correlates positively with cytosolic triacylglycerol levels  
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5 342 (Conte et al., 2013). Only one transcript is currently annotated in Ensembl for pig *PLIN2*  
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7 343 (ENSSSCT00000005701), whereas according to our results, *PLIN2* expressed four different  
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9 344 isoforms. The most expressed *PLIN2* transcript (expressed two times more in FAT than in  
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11 345 LEAN pigs) is a non-annotated isoform (TCONS\_00002441 in Table 2; 2441DE in Figure S3)  
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13 346 characterized by the skipping of the fourth exon. The same transcript has also a shorter 3'  
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15 347 sequence with respect to the canonical *PLIN2/ADFP* form, probably due to the use of an  
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17 348 alternative polyadenylation site. Importantly, the skipping of the 83 nt long exon four  
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19 349 introduces downstream a shift in the reading frame and a premature stop codon. Thus, this  
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21 350 transcript encodes a truncated protein (only 80 aa) corresponding to the N-terminal region  
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23 351 and of the Perilipin domain of the *PLIN2* protein annotated isoform (463 aa). The other two  
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25 352 new transcripts differ from the annotated isoform, one for the skipping of exon 2, and the  
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27 353 other for a longer first exon, probably due to alternative TSS usage by different promoters.  
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29 354 The four expressed isoforms are also heterogeneous in the length of the 3' UTR region.  
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39 356 Coding and non-coding transcripts from new genes  
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42 357 We obtained a characterization of intergenic transcripts from new genes first both by  
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44 358 similarity, comparing them against human transcripts, and by predicting their coding  
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46 359 potential. New pig transcripts with an assigned human best hit were 10,020 (65%),  
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48 360 expressed by 7,099 genes (66%), and corresponding to 4633 human Refseq sequences  
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50 361 (3,882 unique gene symbols; Table S4).  
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53 362 We considered 12,702 intergenic transcripts for protein coding potential analysis. For each  
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55 363 transcript, the coding potential of both the forward and the reverse complement sequence  
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3 364 were evaluated. According to CPC results, we classified the 35.8% (4,551) of transcripts as  
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5 365 coding, and the 64.2% (8,151) as non-coding. As done by Zhou et al., (2014), we considered  
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8 366 as proper non-coding only those transcripts classified as non-coding and having a CPC score  
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10 367 lower than -1 for both the forward and the reverse sequence. A portion of the non-coding  
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12 368 transcripts (37.5%) resulted with CPC score < -1 for both the forward and the reverse  
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15 369 complement sequences. We refer to these transcripts as “reliable non-coding” class, which  
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17 370 represented 24% (3,056) of the intergenic transcripts (Figure 2A). We observed that  
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19 371 intergenic coding transcripts are on average longer than intergenic non-coding transcripts  
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21 372 (4,149 and 3,083 nt, respectively), and that the reliable non-coding fraction has a even  
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23 373 shorter average length (2,571 nt; Figure 2B and Table S5). Reportedly, non-coding  
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25 374 transcripts tend to be shorter and to have fewer exons than coding transcripts in  
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27 375 mammalian genomes (Iyer et al., 2015).  
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29 376 Coding transcripts have an average expression in fat tissue higher than the non-coding  
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31 377 transcripts (5.32 and 2.28 FPKM respectively, and 3.23 FPKM for the reliable non-coding  
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33 378 group; Figure 2C). One reliable non-coding transcript is ranked within the 100 most  
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35 379 expressed transcripts detected in backfat tissue; 15 reliable non-coding transcripts are  
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37 380 within the 1,000 most expressed transcripts; and 98 are within the 10% most expressed  
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39 381 transcripts (Table S6). In agreement with previous results showing that coding transcripts  
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41 382 tend to present higher expression than non-coding ones (Cabili et al., 2011; Iyer et al.,  
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43 383 2015), we observe that intergenic transcripts ranking in the 10% most expressed in backfat  
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45 384 tissue are enriched in the coding category (55%) and particularly if compared with the  
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47 385 proportion of the coding category within the set of intergenic transcripts (35.8%; Figure 2D,  
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49 386 green portions).  
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3 388 Function of most expressed transcripts  
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7 389 A global view of the transcription profile of porcine backfat tissue was obtained by  
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9 390 averaging the FPKM values of all 20 analysed samples. The 1411 most expressed transcripts,  
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11 391 accounting together for 75% of expression, were chosen to extract the most expressed  
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13 392 genes (Table S6).  
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16 393 Among these genes, 59 are indicated as reliable non-coding (CPC score <1) and 66 showing a  
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18 394 positive CPC score are indicated as putative coding.  
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21 395 According to DAVID functional annotation and clustering, we characterized the biological  
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23 396 processes (Table S7) associated to the most expressed genes. Ribosomal activity, oxidative  
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25 397 phosphorylation, protein metabolic processes, intracellular protein transport, regulation of  
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27 398 translation initiation, fatty acid metabolism, response to oxidative stress resulted to be the  
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29 399 biological processes more represented in subcutaneous adipose tissue of the analysed  
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32 400 samples.  
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37 402 Gene/transcript differential expression  
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41 403 Unsupervised analysis of gene expression profiles was carried out to inspect similarities  
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43 404 among the samples. Principal component analysis revealed a clear separation of the LEAN  
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45 405 and FAT samples according to the first two most informative components (Figure S4 A),  
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47 406 which, notably, do not separate the samples by sex (Figure S4 B).  
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50 407 Average gene expression values for FAT and LEAN groups were 32.46 and 33.63 FPKM). In  
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52 408 both groups, few highly expressed genes contribute to the majority of the cumulative  
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54 409 expression. For instance, roughly 25% of expressed genes (5,908 and 5,728 in FAT and LEAN,  
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56 410 respectively) constitute 95% of the total detected expression (Figure S2). As expected,  
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3 411 transcript expression distribution is similar to the gene expression distribution being  
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5 412 positively skewed, with mean and median corresponding to 11.84 and 0.64 FPKM,  
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7 413 respectively. Transcripts average expression values are lower than genes expression values  
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9 414 since the latter was computed as the sum of transcripts expression of each gene.  
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11 415 To identify a set of robust DEG and DET the transcription profiles of FAT and LEAN samples  
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13 416 were compared with the integration of two methods applied at gene and at transcript  
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15 417 levels. Cuffdiff2 identified 414 DEGs between FAT and LEAN groups, corresponding to 1,187  
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17 418 transcripts: 266 DEGs are more expressed and 148 DEGs are less expressed in FAT samples.  
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19 419 Fold changes in base two logarithmic scale of DEGs range from 0.46 to 8.95 for the higher  
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21 420 expressed genes, and from -6.19 to -0.47 for the less expressed ones (Table S8). DESeq2  
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23 421 identified 586 DEGs (185 in common with the DEGs identified by Cuffdiff2) corresponding to  
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25 422 1,504 transcripts: 358 genes are up-regulated and 228 genes are less expressed in FAT  
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27 423 samples. DEGs base two logarithmic scale transformed fold changes ( $\text{Log}_2$  FC) range from -  
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29 424 1.13 to -0.20 for the less expressed genes and from 0.21 to 1.18 for the higher expressed  
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31 425 genes (Table S9). Cuffdiff2 differential expression analysis at the transcript-level identified  
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33 426 154 DE transcripts (corresponding to 153 genes): 48 were less expressed and 106 transcripts  
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35 427 were more expressed in FAT samples, with  $\text{Log}_2$  FC ranging from -3.44 to -0.54 and from  
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37 428 0.64 to 3.66, respectively (Table S10). On the whole, 818 genes were DE, or associated to at  
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39 429 least one DE transcript, according to at least one method, were detected (Figure 3A).  
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41 430 The overlapping of the different lists of DEGs and the list of DE transcripts (DET) evidenced a  
42  
43 431 group of 86 DET that are identified by all the approaches, from now on referred as  
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45 432 "common DET" (cDET). These DET belongs to 78 DEG, from now on referred as "common  
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47 433 DEG" (cDEG) since five genes are represented by more than one isoform (Table 2).  
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3 434 The cDET present the same fold change sign of the corresponding cDEG (Figure 3B): 72 DET  
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5 435 were more expressed in FAT (max Cuffdiff2 gene-level  $\text{Log}_2$  FC 2.55 for *DSC2* gene) and 14  
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7 436 DET were less expressed in FAT (minimum  $\text{Log}_2$  FC -3.44 for an intergenic gene located in  
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9 437 GL894890.1 scaffold). Among the 86 cDET, 44 are known transcripts, 16 are novel isoforms  
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11 438 and 26 come from intergenic regions.

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14 439 cDEG are found in all chromosomes except for chromosomes 16 and Y, with up to 11 DE  
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16 440 genes in chromosome 4 and 19 DE genes in scaffolds (Figure 3C). The most expressed  
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18 441 (average FPKM greater than 100) known cDEG, reported in decreasing FPKM order, are  
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20 442 *DNAJB1*, *CTSH*, *CTGF*, *C1QC*, *SPP1* and *CDO1*.

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#### 25 26 27 444 Coding and con-coding intergenic DET

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30 445 We considered the 41 novel isoforms or new transcript cDET for CPC analysis. In 14 of these  
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32 446 transcripts both the forward and reverse sequence is probably non-coding, according to  
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34 447 integrated ORF analyses and to similarity searches, and to CPC score thresholds used before.  
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36 448 Five cDET with CPC score  $< -1$  were scored as “reliable non-coding”. Of the remaining  
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38 449 transcripts, nine presented low coding potential both in the forward and in the reverse  
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40 450 complement sequence but with CPC score ranging from -1 to 0 (“non-coding”), and 27 were  
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42 451 classified as coding transcripts (Table S11).

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#### 47 48 49 453 qRT-PCR confirmation of DE for selected genes

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52 454 To validate the results obtained by RNA-seq, eleven cDEG were chosen according to the  
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54 455 absolute value of the  $\text{Log}_2$  FC between FAT and LEAN pigs, or for their functional role and  
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56 456 involvement in relevant pathways. As reported in Figure 4, the DE of all selected genes has

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3 457 been validated, with high correlation between the fold changes obtained by RNA-seq and by  
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5 458 qRT-PCR data.  
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10 460 DE transcript characterisation

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13 461 We characterized the cDEG in terms of their functional role in adipose tissue. Using DAVID

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16 462 Bioinformatics Resources we first identified the functional categories, enriched in genes

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18 463 differentially regulated between FAT and LEAN groups.

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20 464 The Biological Process categories enriched in higher expressed DEG are response to

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23 465 stimulus, immune system process and cell activation, skeletal system development (Table

24  
25 466 3). DAVID clustering of the few lower expressed genes detected (*ADSSL1*, *CDO1*, *DNAJB1*,

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27 467 *HSPA1A*, *HSPA1B*, *HSPA2*, *HSPB8*, *IGFBP5*, *OLFML3*) allowed to identify the functional

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29 468 categories unfolded protein binding and stress response represented by five heat shock

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31 469 protein genes that are involved in protein stabilization after cellular stress.

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34 470 Apart from the Gene Ontology-based functional characterization of the whole subsets of

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36 471 higher- and lower-expressed genes we considered cDEG function and involvement in

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38 472 specific pathways, according to literature and knowledge bases.

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40 473 Several more expressed genes in FAT animals (*ACP5*, *BCL2A1*, *CD1A*, *EGR2*, *ENPP1*, *GPNMB*,

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42 474 *INHBB*, *LYZ*, *MSR1*, *OLR1*, *PIK3AP1*, *PLIN2*, *SPP1*, *STC1*) are characterized by a metabolic

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44 475 function mainly related to adipocyte growth regulation, while others (*CCR1*, *CD163*,

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46 476 *SLC11A1*) are known to be involved in immune defence of the organism.

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51 478 **Discussion**

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57 479 Transcriptome data highlight the adipose tissue complexity

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3 480 The deep sequencing analysis of pig backfat transcriptome performed allowed finding  
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5 481 thousands of genes and transcripts expressed. In the present study, we applied stringent  
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7 482 cleaning and filtering procedures of the sequencing data and, on average, 90 million reads  
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10 483 per sample were mapped, obtaining a higher sequencing depth compared to previous  
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12 484 studies (Chen et al., 2011; Jiang et al., 2013; Sodhi et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2014).  
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14 485 The adipose tissue is not only metabolically and transcriptionally active, but has been  
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17 486 recognized as an important endocrine organ (Kershaw et al., 2004; Trayhurn et al., 2005).  
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19 487 Adipocytes are a dynamic and highly regulated population of cells (Rosen & MacDougald,  
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21 488 2006; Moreno-Navarrete & Fernández-Real, 2012). Our results agree with these data  
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23 489 supporting the characterization of the adipocytes as highly specialised endocrine cells that  
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25 490 can play key roles in various physiological processes. The multifunctionality and the  
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27 491 complexity of the tissue is witnessed also by the high number of transcripts (more than sixty  
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29 492 thousands) found in the present study, including many new transcripts from previously non-  
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31 493 annotated loci in porcine genome. The majority of the reconstructed sequences are novel  
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33 494 isoforms of already known genes that express more than two different transcripts each.  
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35 495 Similar patterns observed in human cells (Djebali et al., 2012) and the high quality of the  
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37 496 sequenced reads used in our analysis support the idea that this is more attributable to an  
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39 497 incomplete annotation of the transcript isoforms expressed in pig backfat, than to transcript  
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41 498 reconstruction artefacts. The different isoforms derived from the same locus arisen from  
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43 499 our analysis and observed for almost half of the expressed genes, may contribute to  
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45 500 improve the knowledge of the porcine transcriptome, and to refine the current swine  
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47 501 genome annotation. The new *PLIN2* isoforms reported above are an interesting example,  
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49 502 especially if compared to the human genome where at least eight *PLIN2* transcript isoforms  
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51 503 are annotated and only four of them are coding. Remarkably, three human *PLIN2* isoforms  
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3 504 encode N-terminal truncated amino acid chains that are similar to the truncated isoform we  
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5 505 reconstructed in our study, and whose function has not yet been elucidated. Furthermore,  
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8 506 Russell et al. (2008) identified in a *PLIN2* deficient mouse cell line the expression of a *PLIN2*  
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10 507 C-terminal truncated protein that may partially replace the function of the full-length  
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12 508 protein. Additional studies are needed to understand if and how the short transcript we  
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15 509 found differentially expressed could change the gene functions compared to the wild type  
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17 510 long protein.

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## 21 512 Functional characterisation of the adipose tissue expression profile

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25 513 The profile of the subcutaneous adipose tissue transcriptome in pigs was delineated and the  
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28 514 functional analysis of the genes expressed in backfat tissue was performed to know their  
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30 515 metabolic role and to connect them to specific competences of the tissue. We didn't find  
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32 516 particular differences between the functional categories of the genes expressed in the  
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35 517 backfat tissue of FAT and LEAN pigs. More in details among the most expressed genes in the  
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37 518 fat tissue, many are involved in metabolic pathways and biological processes related to  
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39 519 protein metabolism, oxidoreductase activity for ATP production, regulation of lipid synthesis  
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42 520 and degradation.

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## 45 46 522 Genes differentially expressed between LEAN and FAT animals converge and 47 48 523 connect to specific functions

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53 524 The detection of DE genes and transcripts has been obtained by a stringent procedure  
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55 525 grounding on integration of different methods for expression estimation and differential  
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57 526 expression testing, as done in a recent study (Ropka-Molik et al., 2014) focused to muscle

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3 527 tissue gene expression in pigs of different breeds. In the present study, which compares pigs  
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5 528 of the same breed and reared under standard conditions, we detected significant gene  
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7 529 expression variations. The sensitivity of our approach was supported by the successful  
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9 530 validation of all the eleven DEG assayed.

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11 531 We analyzed the biological functions of genes differentially expressed between FAT and  
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13 532 LEAN animals (Figure 5). It is interesting to note that the main differences were found for  
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15 533 functional categories of genes related Inflammation and immunity that resulted more  
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17 534 expressed in FAT pigs. The genes less expressed in FAT animals include some heat shock  
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19 535 protein genes. The biological functions of DEGs show a stronger activation in adipose tissue  
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21 536 of FAT pigs of genes for important processes involved in hypertrophy and adipogenesis, such  
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23 537 as differentiation and maturation. Supposedly, these biological processes could be altered in  
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25 538 adipose tissue of FAT pigs due to dysregulated adipose metabolism and endocrinology  
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27 539 similarly to what was hypothesized in humans (Sethi, 2010). On the whole, there is a  
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29 540 consistent difference concerning the biological functions characterizing the most expressed  
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31 541 genes on backfat tissue and those of the genes differentially expressed between FAT and  
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33 542 LEAN pigs.

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36 544 Some genes higher expressed in FAT animals could modulate backfat  
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38 545 physiological processes

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41 546 Specific DEGs more expressed in FAT pigs participate to biochemical pathways related to  
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43 547 and involved in adipocytes metabolism and adipose tissue physiology. Ectonucleotide  
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45 548 pyrophosphatase/phosphodiesterase 1 (*ENPP1*) encodes a catalytic enzyme involved in  
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47 549 adipocyte maturation (Liang et al., 2007). Pan et al. (2011) showed that the over-expression  
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3 550 of *ENPP1* in a human cell line resulted in adipocyte insulin resistance and demonstrated an  
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5 551 association with fatty liver, hyperlipidemia, and dysglycemia. Accordingly, the study of  
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8 552 Chandalia et al. (2012) underlined an increased *ENPP1* expression in adipose tissue  
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10 553 associated with defective adipocyte maturation leading to pathogenesis of insulin resistance  
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12 554 and its associated complications for glucose and lipid metabolism in absence of obesity. In  
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14 555 addition, Meyre et al. (2005) reported the presence of three *ENPP1* SNPs in human gene  
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16 556 associated with adult obesity and increased risk of glucose intolerance and type 2 diabetes.  
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19 557 Furthermore, also the genes acid phosphatase 5, tartrate resistant (*ACP5*) and lysozyme  
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21 558 (*LYZ*) that in this research have higher transcriptional level in FAT pigs have been reported to  
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23 559 be involved in excessive backfat deposition in pigs and in the development of  
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26 560 atherosclerosis (Padilla et al., 2013).  
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29 561 In the present research, some genes overexpressed in the adipose tissue of FAT pigs, namely  
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31 562 *STC1*, *EGR2*, and *INHBB*, are related to adipocyte differentiation and adipocyte maturation.  
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33 563 *STC1* (Stanniocalcin 1) has been reported in literature to be up-regulated during  
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35 564 adipogenesis and to modulate steroidogenesis. Serlachius & Andersson (2004) related *STC1*  
36  
37 565 up-regulation to the set of survival genes in adipocyte differentiation, which is also  
38  
39 566 associated to overexpression of the anti-apoptotic proteins *BCL2* reported to be involved in  
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41 567 inflammation pathway. *EGR2* (early growth response 2) is a direct target of *mir-224-5p*, a  
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43 568 negative regulator of adipocyte differentiation that is down regulated during the early  
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45 569 process of mouse adipocyte differentiation, and the expression of *EGR2* is increased (Peng  
46  
47 570 et al., 2013). The *INHBB* (Inhibin beta B) gene coding for the activin B subunit is part of the  
48  
49 571 inhibins/activins family of proteins with cytokine and hormone activity. In human and mice,  
50  
51 572 *INHBB* has been associated to the physiological and metabolic modifications during  
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53 573 adipogenesis when it is highly expressed and is the predominant activin in human adipose  
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3 574 tissue (Hoggard et al., 2009). *INHBB* is member of TGF-protein superfamily of secreted  
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5 575 growth factors involved in many biological responses including regulation of apoptosis;  
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8 576 proliferation and differentiation of human adipocytes; tissue remodeling; and inflammatory  
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10 577 immune response (Dani C., 2013). It can be hypothesized that in FAT pigs the pro-adipogenic  
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12 578 *INHBB* gene expression increases as it is involved in the differentiation of preadipocytes into  
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14 579 mature adipocyte, and that *INHBB* is involved in many physiological processes and including  
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16  
17 580 the control of food intake and to energy metabolism through the regulation of hypothalamic  
18  
19 581 and pituitary hormone secretions. Another gene overexpressed in FAT pigs related to  
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21 582 feeding and pituitary secretions is *GPNMB* (glycoprotein transmembrane NMB). *GPNMB* is  
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23 583 one of the receptors activated by bombesin-like endogenous peptide ligands, such as  
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25 584 gastrin-releasing peptide (*GRP*), neuromedin B (*NMB*) and neuromedin C (*GRP18-27*). These  
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27 585 receptors are involved in the regulation of many biological functions including  
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29 586 thermoregulation, feeding, pituitary, gastric and pancreatic secretion. The NMB/NMB-R  
30  
31 587 pathway is involved in the regulation of a wide variety of behaviours, such as spontaneous  
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33 588 activity, feeding, and anxiety-related behaviour (Yamada et al., 2002).  
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36 589 The *OLR1* (Oxidized low density lipoprotein (lectin-like) receptor 1) gene resulted more  
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38 590 expressed in FAT pigs compared to LEAN animals. This gene codes for a LDL receptor that  
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40 591 belongs to the C-type lectin superfamily, one of many target genes, including perilipins, of  
41  
42 592 the PPAR signalling, which is involved specifically in lipid metabolism and fatty acids  
43  
44 593 transport. In this way, *OLR1* is a receptor that mediates the recognition, internalization and  
45  
46 594 degradation of oxidatively modified low-density lipoprotein by vascular endothelial cells.  
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48 595 *OLR1* removes oxidised low-density lipoproteins from the circulation, as part of lipid  
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50 596 metabolism pathways (Mehta et al., 2002).  
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3 598 Genes involved in immunity and inflammation are more expressed in FAT  
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6 599 animals  
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9 600 Some other genes overexpressed in FAT pigs are related to immunity. Inflammatory links  
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11 601 between human obesity and metabolic diseases are well known mechanisms based on the  
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13 602 recruitment of immune cells into adipose tissue (Kabir et al., 2014). The development of a  
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15 603 pre-inflammatory condition in presence of dysregulated excessive adipogenesis is  
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17 604 associated with adipose macrophage infiltration and activation. From our study, we can  
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19 605 hypothesize a similar process in backfat tissue of FAT pigs where we identified the over  
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21 606 expression of the gene macrophage scavenger receptor 1 (*MSR1*), a membrane glycoprotein  
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23 607 that in humans is involved in the pathologic deposition of cholesterol in arterial walls during  
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25 608 atherogenesis (Haasken et al., 2013). Additionally, the overexpression of secreted  
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27 609 phosphoprotein 1 (*SPP1*) in FAT pigs can suggest the hypothesis that this gene is acting as a  
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29 610 proinflammatory cytokine that promotes monocyte chemotaxis and cell motility and might  
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31 611 link, in pigs like in mice, fat accumulation to the development of insulin resistance by  
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33 612 sustaining inflammation and the accumulation of macrophages in adipose tissue (Nomiya  
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35 613 et al. 2007). Interestingly, a porcine *SPP1* gene polymorphism was associated to backfat  
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37 614 thickness in the Landrace × Jeju (Korea) Black pig F2 population (Han et al., 2012). *SPP1*  
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39 615 might play a key role in the pathway that leads to type I immunity enhancing interferon-  
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41 616 gamma and interleukin-12 production and suppressing interleukin-10 (Ashkar et al., 2000).  
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43 617 Therefore, these data allow hypothesizing *SPP1* as a gene associated, in pigs like to in human,  
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45 618 to the link between obesity, adipose tissue inflammation, and insulin resistance. In addition,  
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47 619 phosphoinositide-3-kinase adaptor protein 1 (*PIK3AP1*), higher expressed in FAT pigs, is a  
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49 620 positive regulator of phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase (*PI3K*) signalling. *PI3K* signalling pathway  
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3 621 has a key role in the insulin-dependent regulation of adipocyte metabolism (glucose and  
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5 622 lipid metabolism). Besides, *PI3K* participate in obesity-associated inflammatory cell  
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8 623 recruitment (neutrophils and macrophages), as well as in the CNS-dependent neurohumoral  
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10 624 regulation of food intake/energy expenditure (McCurdy & Clemm, 2013; Beretta et al.,  
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12 625 2015).

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14 626 Other genes found in the present research and related to inflammatory condition of the  
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17 627 adipose tissue in FAT pigs are particularly interesting to mention. CD163, member of the  
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19 628 scavenger receptor cysteine-rich superfamily (Guo et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2014); solute  
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21 629 carrier family 11 (proton-coupled divalent metal ion transporter), member 1 (*SLC11A1*), a  
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23 630 gene involved in the resistance to *Salmonella* infection (Kommadath et al., 2014) as well as  
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25 631 the chemokine (C-C motif) receptor 1 (*CCR1*), that was previously found overexpressed in  
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27 632 obese pigs (Kogelman et al., 2014); BCL2-related protein A1 (*BCL2A1*), a gene found to be  
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29 633 overexpressed in pigs with an high obesity index and that is related to immunity,  
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31 634 inflammatory pathway, and osteoclast differentiation (Kogelman et al., 2014); CD1a  
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33 635 molecule (*CD1A*, indicated as *PCD1A* on the cited paper), a surface antigen involved in  
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35 636 immunity was found to be overexpressed in obese pigs by Kogelman et al. (2014). The same  
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37 637 Authors highlighted a strong connection between fat deposition on the body (obesity),  
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39 638 immunity and bone development. They also indicated that *CCR1* gene is a strong candidate  
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41 639 regulator of immune response as it is a receptor of pro-inflammatory chemokines in adipose  
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43 640 tissue playing a pivotal role in obesity-associated diseases (Kabir et al. 2014; Lumeng &  
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45 641 Saltiel, 2011).

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55 643 Heat shock response , protein folding and repair are impaired in FAT animals  
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3 644 Considering the 14 genes less expressed in FAT animals, direct relationships with lipid  
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5 645 metabolism are not apparent. However, the “unfolded protein binding” function is enriched  
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7 646 among these genes, which include five functionally linked heat shock proteins (*DNAJB1*,  
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10 647 *HSPA1A*, *HSPA1B*, *HSPA2* and *HSPB8*). Heat shock proteins are involved in stabilization of  
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12 648 existing proteins against aggregation, mediating the folding of newly translated proteins in  
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14 649 the cytosol and in organelles, and also in the ubiquitin-proteasome pathway. *DNAJB1*, a  
15  
16 650 member of the Hsp40 family, is a molecular chaperon involved in protein folding and  
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18 651 protein complex assembly. *DNAJB1*, a member of the Hsp40 family, promotes protein  
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20 652 folding and prevent misfolded protein aggregation, as *HSPB8*, a member of the Hsp20  
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22 653 family, does (Vicario et al., 2014). *DNAJB1* also stimulates the ATPase activity of protein of  
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24 654 the Hsp70 family to which other genes less expressed in FAT pigs (*HSPA1A*, *HSPA1B*, and  
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26 655 *HSPA2*) belong, indicating a possible functional link between these four genes. Our results  
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28 656 suggest a general impairment of the protein folding and repair in the fattest animals, in  
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30 657 accordance to previous observations of studies carried out on human obesity. Obesity is a  
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32 658 pathological human condition in which a chronically positive energy balance induces in  
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34 659 adipocytes, the cells in charge to store the excess of energy in fat depots, a persistent stress  
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36 660 activating in turn defence processes as autophagy or apoptosis.  
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38 661 As reviewed by Newsholme & de Bittencourt (2014), if the heat shock response, a key  
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40 662 component of the physiological response to resolve inflammation, is hampered in adipose  
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42 663 tissue, the adipocyte metabolic stress triggers fat cell senescence with reduction of the heat  
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44 664 shock proteins activity. In this condition, the advance of inflammasome mediated secretory  
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46 665 activity from adipose to other tissues promotes cellular senescence in many other cells of  
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48 666 the organism, aggravating obesity-dependent chronic inflammation. This mechanism could  
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50 667 have been activated also in the FAT pigs of our experiment (Figure 5) due to a genetic  
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3 668 aptitude of the fattest animals toward a higher fat deposition and adiposity similar to  
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5 669 obesity. Indeed, a decrease in the synthesis of the mRNAs of the heat shock proteins and an  
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8 670 increase of the expression of many genes related to an inflammatory status and to immune  
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10 671 response is a characteristic of the fattest pigs. Increase of the expression of *INHBB* and *SPP1*  
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12 672 denotes for instance the augmented production of cytokines and the higher expression of  
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15 673 *ENPP1* and *PIK3AP1* may indicate a status of insulin resistance, one of the typical signals  
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17 674 connected with obesity.  
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22 676 Pig backfat deposition and impaired stress response may activate inflammation  
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25 677 Our results agree with recent studies showing that several immune system and anti-  
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28 678 inflammatory processes are activated and play a critical role in the response to fat  
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30 679 accumulation in porcine backfat tissue (Sodhi et al., 2014) and in visceral fat tissue  
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32 680 (Toedebusch et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2014). Wang et al. (2014) and Zhou et al. (2013) used  
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35 681 three female Landrace pigs to identify DEG between subcutaneous, visceral and  
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37 682 intramuscular fat indicating that visceral and intramuscular adipose tissues were mainly  
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39 683 associated with inflammatory features of the tissue and immune response. Our data suggest  
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42 684 that also in backfat a predominant role of immunity processes is related to an increased  
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44 685 adipose tissue deposition.

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46 686 The results obtained seem to sustain the hypothesis that the high fat accumulation in  
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49 687 adipose tissue of pigs can determine the development of an inflammatory process  
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51 688 producing a cascade of defence and adaptive reactions in the tissue, such as activation of  
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54 689 immune system and mesenchymal cells differentiation in adipocytes.  
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3 690 A deeper knowledge of the metabolic processes involved in fat deposition can be very  
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5 691 important to develop the use the pig as model species to study obesity and related  
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7 692 disorders for humans because of similar anatomy and physiology (Spurlock & Gabler, 2008;  
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9 693 Litten-Brown et al., 2010; Varga et al., 2010) and considering the above described  
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11 694 similarities between pigs and humans.  
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14 695 In order to fully elucidate the complex gene network regulating backfat deposition on pigs,  
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16 696 it will be important to extend the basic knowledge by further coding and non-coding  
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18 697 transcriptome characterization. Additional information would probably come from studying  
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20 698 interactions between the differentially expressed long RNAs identified in the present paper  
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22 699 and the regulatory microRNAs expressed in porcine adipose tissue identified on some of the  
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24 700 same animals (Gaffo et al., 2014).  
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27 701 The results of the present work unlock the opportunity that some of the identified  
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29 702 differentially expressed genes might be used as biomarkers (Ibáñez-Escriche et al., 2014) to  
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31 703 improve carcass fat traits in to look for SNPs regulating their expression to be included in  
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33 704 selection schemes to make more sustainable the pig production chain.  
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3 961 **Supporting information**  
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6 962 Additional supporting information may be found in the online version of this article.  
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10 963 **Supplementary Tables are included in the file:**

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12 964 **TranscriptomeILW\_SupplementaryTables.xlsx**  
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19 966 **Table S1 - Primers and PCR condition used for the validation.**

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21 967 EXT: primer pairs used for the amplification of a larger PCR product  
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23 968 INT: primer pairs used for the creation of the standard curve and for the qRT-PCR analysis  
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27 969 **Table S2 - Number of reads for each sample**

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29 970 For each sample is indicated the total raw reads sequenced, total clean reads after the  
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31 971 trimming and length filters and total reads mapped to the reference genome. Reported  
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33 972 values refer to reads as they were single end (total clean paired reads are half the value in  
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35 973 the table). Respective percentages are shown in the last three columns.  
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39 974 **Table S3 - Types of transcripts expressed in backfat tissue, according to the considered**

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41 975 **genome annotations.**

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43 976 Transcripts, associated to eight Cufflinks class codes (see  
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45 977 [http://cufflinks.cbcb.umd.edu/manual.html#class\\_codes](http://cufflinks.cbcb.umd.edu/manual.html#class_codes)), were classified into three major  
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47 978 informative groups.  
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51 979 **Table S4 – Intergenic transcript annotations.**  
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3 980 **Table S5 - Transcript coding potential predicted by Coding Potential Calculator (CPC) for**  
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5 981 **intergenic transcripts.**

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8 982 Reliable noncoding: CPC score  $<-1$

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10 983 Noncoding: CPC score  $-1 \Rightarrow / \leq 0$

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12 984 Coding: CPC score  $>0$

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16 985 **Table S6 - Most expressed transcripts (top 75%) detected in porcine backfat.**

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22 987 **Table S7 - David functional annotation clustering of the most expressed genes.**

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24 988 The 10 most relevant clusters are reported

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30 990 **Table S8 - List of differentially expressed genes detected by Cuffdiff2.**

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36 992 **Table S9 - List of differentially expressed genes detected by DeSeq2.**

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42 994 **Table S10 - List of differentially expressed transcripts detected by Cuffdiff2.**

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48 996 **Table S11 - Transcript coding potential predicted by Coding Potential Calculator (CPC) for**  
49 **the differentially expressed transcripts.**

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53 998 Reliable noncoding: CPC score  $<-1$

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55 999 Noncoding: CPC score  $-1 \Rightarrow / \leq 0$

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58 1000 Coding: CPC score  $>0$

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7 1002 **Figure S1 - Read processing and alignment results.**  
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10 1003 **File: TranscriptomeLW\_FigureS1.jpg**  
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12 1004 (A) The boxplots show the distribution of the reads considered in different steps and filters  
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14 1005 of the computational analysis pipeline, in the 20 considered samples. From left to right we  
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16 1006 show the number of raw reads sequenced, of clean reads resulted from the filtering steps,  
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18 1007 of reads successfully mapped to the reference genome, and of reads with unique alignment  
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20 1008 in the genome. (B) From the left, the bars show the average amounts, in the 20 considered  
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22 1009 samples, of reads spliced, aligned to an exon, to an intron, to intergenic regions (according  
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24 1010 to the *Sus scrofa* 10.2 genome annotation), or spanning exon-intron borders. Different  
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26 1011 colors indicate the proportion of read aligning to chromosomes (blue), genome scaffolds  
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28 1012 (red) or mitochondrial genome (yellow). (C) Number of expressed genes detected in  
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30 1013 different chromosomes, in mitochondrial genome (Mt) or in genome scaffolds (S).  
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37 1014 **Figure S2 – Gene expression distribution in FAT and LEAN groups.**  
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40 1015 **File: TranscriptomeLW\_FigureS2.jpg**  
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42 1016 Cumulative gene expression is shown for the two groups. The figure represents the number  
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44 1017 of genes (horizontal axis) required to reach different percentages (vertical axis) of the  
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46 1018 overall gene expression. The inner panel focus on the cumulative expression curves for 50%  
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48 1019 and 75% of the expression.  
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3 1020 **Figure S3 – Alignment of the four detected isoforms of *PLIN2* gene (red box) with the**  
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5 1021 **porcine and vertebrates transcripts present in Ensembl.**

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9 1022 **File: TranscriptomeLW\_FigureS3.jpg**

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13 1024 **Figure S4 – Principal component analysis (PCA) based on gene expression profiles.**

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17 1025 **File: TranscriptomeLW\_FigureS4.jpg**

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19 1026 The figure presents sample separation according to the two principal components,  
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21 1027 explaining most of the gene expression variation in the data. Samples are represented by  
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23 1028 dots, with green and orange colours indicating LEAN and FAT samples, respectively in Panel  
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25 1029 A) and red and blue indicating females and castrated males in Panel B). The PCA shows a  
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27 1030 clear separation of LEAN and FAT samples, with no separation of samples by sex.  
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3 1032 **Figure captions**  
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7 1033 **Figure 1 – Transcripts and isoforms classification.**  
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10 1034 **TranscriptomeLLW\_Figure1.jpg**  
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13 1035 (A) Expressed transcript were classified, according to current gene annotations, into 8 types,  
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15 1036 reported with different colors (see legend) and grouped in three categories: K (known)  
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17 1037 collects transcripts found in reference annotation (yellow); I (isoform) collects alternative  
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19 1038 forms of transcripts (red shades); N collects new transcripts from not-annotated loci (green  
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21 1039 shades). The pie chart shows the number of transcripts detected, for each type, and their  
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23 1040 mutual proportions. Three transcript types of the N group have few elements (43 intronic; 5  
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25 1041 possible polymerase run-on fragments; 3 transcript intron overlap a reference intron on the  
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27 1042 opposite strand) and are barely visible in the chart. (B) Transcript length distributions in the  
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29 1043 three categories. (C) Transcript expression level distribution for the three categories. (D)  
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31 1044 Number of genes (vertical axis) with their number of transcript isoforms detected  
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33 1045 (horizontal axis). Genes with only one transcript isoforms detected are the most frequent;  
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35 1046 however, genes with up to 31 different isoforms were detected. (E) The proportion of each  
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37 1047 transcript type for the transcript isoforms grouped as in (D). Genes with only one isoform  
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39 1048 (first bar) are mainly intergenic genes (green part). For genes having more than one isoform  
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41 1049 expressed, the proportion of novel isoforms detected increases along with the number of  
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43 1050 different isoforms for a gene (red part).  
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3 1052 **Figure 2 - Coding potential of new intergenic transcripts.**  
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6 1053 **TranscriptomeILW\_Figure2.jpg**  
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9 1054 According to CPC scores, calculated both for the forward and for the reverse complement  
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11 1055 sequence, the intergenic transcripts were classified as “coding”, “non-coding” and “reliable  
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13 1056 non-coding”. (A) The pie chart shows numbers and proportions of intergenic transcripts  
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15 1057 falling in each category and provides the color code for the figure panels. (B) and (C) show  
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17 1058 respectively the distribution of lengths and of expression levels of intergenic transcripts,  
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19 1059 binned in the three categories. (D) Percentages of transcripts per category are compared,  
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21 1060 considering all the intergenic transcripts and the subset of the intergenic transcripts ranked  
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23 1061 within the 10% most expressed transcripts considering the whole transcriptome.  
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32 1063 **Figure 3 – Differentially expressed genes and transcripts identified.**  
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35 1064 **TranscriptomeILW\_Figure3.jpg**  
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38 1065 (A) Intersection of genes resulting differentially expressed (DE) according to DESeq2 and  
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40 1066 Cuffdiff2 analysis, and genes with at least one transcript resulting DE according to the  
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42 1067 transcript-level Cuffdiff2 analysis. We focused on the transcripts belonging to the 85 genes  
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44 1068 commonly identified by all the methods. (B) Proportions of the new and known DETs  
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46 1069 resulting higher- and lower-expressed in FAT vs. LEAN samples. (C) Number of DE genes  
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48 1070 mapping to chromosomes or to genome scaffolds (S).  
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7 1072 **Figure 4 - qRT-PCR validation of eleven genes differentially expressed according to RNA-**

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9 1073 **seq data.**

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12 1074 **TranscriptomeILW\_Figure4.jpg**

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14 1075 (A)  $\text{Log}_2$  FC values obtained from RNA-seq, according to Cuffdiff2 estimates, (black bars)

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16 1076 and from qRT-PCR data (grey bars), for the eleven tested genes; (B) scatterplot showing the

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18 1077 good correlation between the  $\text{Log}_2$  FC values calculated with the two experimental

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21 1078 methods.  
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28 1080 **Figure 5 – Genes differentially expressed between FAT and LEAN animals impact on**

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30 1081 **specific and connected biological processes.**

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33 1082 **TranscriptomeILW\_Figure5.jpg**

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35 1083 Genes differentially expressed in FAT vs. LEAN pigs converge to specific functions that are

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37 1084 more activated or impaired in FAT pigs. Genes and functions upregulated and

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39 1085 downregulated in FAT pigs are shown in red and green shades, respectively. Several genes

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41 1086 more expressed in FAT pigs are linked to fat deposition and lipid metabolism, to adipocyte

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43 1087 differentiation and maturation or to signaling pathways regulating them; FAT pigs show as

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45 1088 well increased expression of genes involved in inflammation and immunity and increased

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47 1089 expression of genes involved in the control of complex behavior, also by inflammation-

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49 1090 mediated secretory activity of adipocytes. Metabolic alterations induce chronic stress in the

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51 1091 adipose tissue. FAT pigs shows under-expression of several genes involved in stress

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53 1092 response by unfolded protein binding and misfolded protein aggregation prevention. The  
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1093 impairment of these functions might in turn augment inflammation and the consequent

1094 secretory activity and possibly induce senescence.

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1096 **Tables**

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1098 **Table 1** - Genetic indexes and phenotypes for BFT and hot carcass weight of the pigs

1099 selected for the transcriptome analysis.

1100

Group	Sample ID	Sex	Day of slaughter	Slaughter weight (kg) (*)	BFT phenotype (mm)	BFT EBV		
						Mean	SD	
FAT	477	M	6	120	43	7.36	5.22	1.3
	476	F	6	119	37	7.17		
	474	M	2	113	38	6.03		
	482	F	9		42	5.75		
	478	F	7	118	33	5.05		
	516	F	3	115	36	4.88		
	479	M	8		41	4.76		
	483	F	10	119	38	4.41		
	489	M	18	108	35	3.54		
	484	M	15	128	35	3.27		
LEAN	490	M	19	113	24	-6.46	-8.63	1.4
	473	F	2	132	23	-7.54		
	487	M	18	110	23	-7.61		
	517	M	4	117	20	-7.71		
	485	F	17	126	20	-7.82		
	475	M	5	119	20	-8.03		
	481	M	9		22	-9.91		
	486	F	17	123	19	-10.27		
	488	F	18	128	19	-10.37		
480	F	9		16	-10.59			

1101 EBV: estimated breeding value

1102 BFT: backfat thickness.

1103 (\*) slaughter weight: the hot carcass slaughter weight is reported. For four animals the

1104 weight is not available due to a problem of the automatic recording system at the

1105 slaughterhouse.

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**Table 2** - List of the DE genes and transcripts.

Cufflinks transcript ID	Cufflinks gene ID	Gene locus	Gene symbol	Cuffdiff2 gene log2 FC FAT vs. LEAN	Transcript group	Coding potential
TCONS_00102010	XLOC_040987	JH118612.1:113132-140205	<i>DSC2</i>	2.55	Known	-
TCONS_00061823	XLOC_023331	4:78928264-78930654	-	2.46	New	NON CODING
TCONS_00033774	XLOC_013001	15:140797584-140847461	<i>NYAP2</i>	2.38	New	CODING
TCONS_00061359	XLOC_023211	4:35670339-35685878	<i>DCSTAMP</i>	2.23	Novel isoform	CODING
TCONS_00095554	XLOC_036823	GL893451.1:11131-27485	<i>CRLF2</i>	2.21	Known	-
TCONS_00093244	XLOC_035190	9:50996895-51001264	-	2.17	New	NON CODING
TCONS_00087029	XLOC_032796	8:140307937-140315415	<i>SPP1</i>	2.09	Known	-
TCONS_00003007	XLOC_000806	1:283547172-283552108	-	2.07	New	CODING
TCONS_00095549	XLOC_036822	GL893451.1:7060-10625	-	2.03	New	NON CODING
TCONS_00067029	XLOC_025404	5:36179189-36186325	<i>LYZ</i>	2.03	Known	-
TCONS_00042581	XLOC_016514	18:6731368-6733669	<i>GIMAP2</i>	1.98	Known	-
TCONS_00061600	XLOC_023265	4:55660234-55715444	<i>ATP6V0D2</i>	1.96	Novel isoform	CODING
TCONS_00039556	XLOC_015432	17:53815353-53827092	<i>MMP9</i>	1.92	Known	-
TCONS_00039900	XLOC_015518	17:4110395-4192029	<i>MSR1</i>	1.92	Known	-
TCONS_00061643	XLOC_023283	4:62172539-62226917	<i>STMN2</i>	1.85	Known	-
TCONS_00034645	XLOC_013236	15:62409564-62414328	-	1.84	New	RELIABLE NON CODING
TCONS_00091509	XLOC_034399	9:63158999-63198155	<i>ST14</i>	1.79	Novel isoform	CODING
TCONS_00098750	XLOC_038994	GL895411.1:0-1073	<i>INHBB</i>	1.65	New	CODING
TCONS_00022322	XLOC_008474	13:32323641-32330286	<i>CCR1</i>	1.63	Known	-
TCONS_00044383	XLOC_017319	2:11807281-11850646	<i>MPEG1</i>	1.63	Known	-
TCONS_00075056	XLOC_028007	6:70039585-70099223	<i>PADI2</i>	1.6	Known	-

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5	TCONS_00095875	XLOC_037025	GL893645.1:0-307	-	1.57	New
6						RELIABLE NON CODING
7	TCONS_00084869	XLOC_032187	8:71288921-71302169	<i>AMBN</i>	1.56	Known
8	TCONS_00033691	XLOC_012975	15:133452328-133456736	<i>SLC11A1</i>	1.56	Known
9						-
10	TCONS_00089513	XLOC_033895	9:90266412-90348498	<i>SCIN</i>	1.55	Known
11						-
12	TCONS_00042660	XLOC_016535	18:8306789-8313120	-	1.52	New
13						CODING
14	TCONS_00059834	XLOC_022860	4:99905518-99915176	<i>CD1A</i>	1.52	Novel isoform
15						CODING
16	TCONS_00059837	XLOC_022860	4:99905518-99915176	<i>CD1A</i>	1.52	Known
17						-
18	TCONS_00093519	XLOC_035465	9:101443296-101443885	<i>GPNMB</i>	1.46	New
19						NON CODING
20	TCONS_00098157	XLOC_038614	GL894967.1:126-517	<i>GPNMB</i>	1.42	New
21						CODING
22	TCONS_00018804	XLOC_007247	12:23439824-23441829	-	1.4	New
23						CODING
24	TCONS_00103084	XLOC_041497	X:37303173-37393818	<i>CYBB</i>	1.38	Known
25						-
26	TCONS_00065337	XLOC_024931	5:52504178-52625145	<i>BCAT1</i>	1.37	Novel isoform
27						CODING
28	TCONS_00098113	XLOC_038589	GL894923.1:47-563	<i>GPNMB</i>	1.36	New
29						CODING
30	TCONS_00002441	XLOC_000664	1:227333991-227356844	<i>PLIN2</i>	1.32	Novel isoform
31						CODING
32	TCONS_00044392	XLOC_017322	2:12191483-12243400	<i>LPXN</i>	1.31	Known
33						-
34	TCONS_00084565	XLOC_032101	8:33970571-33982450	<i>UCHL1</i>	1.27	Novel isoform
35						CODING
36	TCONS_00067389	XLOC_025495	5:64579162-64590512	<i>OLR1</i>	1.26	Known
37						-
38	TCONS_00059747	XLOC_022835	4:97720982-97736619	<i>CD48</i>	1.25	Known
39						-
40	TCONS_00028769	XLOC_011055	14:143745489-143752509	<i>GMFG</i>	1.23	Known
41						-
42	TCONS_00029056	XLOC_011139	14:8804077-8816800	<i>STC1</i>	1.23	Novel isoform
43						CODING
44	TCONS_00098643	XLOC_038938	GL895339.1:13269-61205	<i>COTL1</i>	1.15	Known
45						-
46	TCONS_00100592	XLOC_040068	GL896326.1:1999-3913	<i>ACP5</i>	1.13	Known
47						-
48	TCONS_00096837	XLOC_037668	GL894123.1:0-400	<i>CD163</i>	1.13	New
49						CODING
50	TCONS_00097297	XLOC_037990	GL894401.1:0-471	<i>CD163</i>	1.13	New
51						CODING
52	TCONS_00005002	XLOC_001331	1:125897935-125953413	<i>AQP9</i>	1.09	Known
53						-
54	TCONS_00096863	XLOC_037686	GL894145.1:0-401	<i>CD163</i>	1.09	New
55						CODING
56	TCONS_00071337	XLOC_027094	6:74616232-74621248	<i>C1QC</i>	1.08	Known
57						-

TCONS_00012469	XLOC_005058	11:21534980-21685851	<i>LCP1</i>	1.07	Novel isoform	CODING
TCONS_00079920	XLOC_030238	7:94900207-94906867	<i>AKAP5, LOC100153460</i>	1.06	Novel isoform	CODING
TCONS_00041537	XLOC_016257	18:6613761-6621027	<i>GIMAP4</i>	1.06	Known	-
TCONS_00097908	XLOC_038444	GL894747.1:3047-10617	<i>HMOX1</i>	1.06	Novel isoform	CODING
TCONS_00030401	XLOC_011444	14:71516962-71521335	<i>EGR2</i>	1.05	Known	-
TCONS_00030878	XLOC_011579	14:117265093-117349965	<i>BLNK</i>	1.04	Known	-
TCONS_00056578	XLOC_021190	3:77408776-77439119	<i>PLEK</i>	1.04	Known	-
TCONS_00071335	XLOC_027093	6:74609911-74612993	<i>C1QA</i>	1.02	Known	-
TCONS_00081915	XLOC_030757	7:54395230-54406136	<i>BCL2A1</i>	1.01	Known	-
TCONS_00041554	XLOC_016261	18:6872940-6875292	<i>GIMAP1</i>	1	Known	-
TCONS_00085005	XLOC_032236	8:79743274-79751980	<i>SFRP2</i>	0.99	Known	-
TCONS_00098919	XLOC_039115	GL895590.1:0-1327	<i>GPNMB</i>	0.91	New	NON CODING
TCONS_00068526	XLOC_026077	5:52625315-52630242	<i>BCAT1</i>	0.89	New	RELIABLE NON CODING
TCONS_00062055	XLOC_023401	4:97099149-97103132	<i>FCER1G</i>	0.87	Known	-
TCONS_00009719	XLOC_003695	10:48841010-48961015	<i>MRC1</i>	0.86	Novel isoform	CODING
TCONS_00030894	XLOC_011584	14:117670639-117938624	<i>PIK3AP1</i>	0.85	Known	-
TCONS_00017526	XLOC_006800	12:36561025-36604089	<i>CLTC</i>	0.8	Novel isoform	CODING
TCONS_00062959	XLOC_023614	4:119674090-119703427	<i>CD53</i>	0.78	Known	-
TCONS_00081898	XLOC_030753	7:53623061-53644262	<i>CTSH</i>	0.78	Known	-
TCONS_00060570	XLOC_023035	4:119013307-119039899	<i>ADORA3</i>	0.74	Known	-
TCONS_00052401	XLOC_020144	3:11035819-11055510	<i>LAT2</i>	0.71	Known	-
TCONS_00004118	XLOC_001095	1:35133812-35137388	<i>CTGF</i>	0.68	Known	-
TCONS_00045043	XLOC_017499	2:59214054-59218018	<i>IFI30</i>	0.65	Known	-
TCONS_00004124	XLOC_001096	1:35240242-35281384	<i>ENPP1</i>	0.62	Known	-
TCONS_00062884	XLOC_023592	4:116704501-116707235	<i>OLFML3</i>	-0.54	Known	-
TCONS_00035484	XLOC_013426	15:131680309-131684630	<i>IGFBP5</i>	-0.65	Known	-



TCONS_00101718	XLOC_040809	JH118426.1:306724-312138	-	-0.77	New	RELIABLE NON CODING
TCONS_00063805	XLOC_024145	4:77261119-77264781	-	-0.77	New	NON CODING
TCONS_00050164	XLOC_018733	2:124815021-124828122	<i>CDO1</i>	-0.9	Novel isoform	CODING
TCONS_00101559	XLOC_040715	GL896532.1:212-2567	<i>ADSSL1</i>	-1.02	New	NON CODING
TCONS_00079927	XLOC_030240	7:94987617-94990126	<i>HSPA2</i>	-1.1	Known	-
TCONS_00083805	XLOC_031620	7:66542203-66555641	-	-1.18	New	CODING
TCONS_00041725	XLOC_016313	18:15292592-15295178	-	-1.61	New	CODING
TCONS_00048853	XLOC_018425	2:65175406-65180520	<i>DNAJB1</i>	-1.66	Novel isoform	CODING
TCONS_00029533	XLOC_011248	14:35688332-35701411	<i>HSPB8</i>	-1.81	Known	-
TCONS_00094194	XLOC_036009	GL892492.1:0-3540	<i>HSPA1B</i>	-2.32	New	NON CODING
TCONS_00101505	XLOC_040677	GL896522.1:9039-10877	<i>HSPA1A</i>	-2.57	New	RELIABLE NON CODING
TCONS_00098059	XLOC_038555	GL894890.1:5-696	<i>HSP70</i>	-3.44	New	NON CODING

**Table 3** - David functional annotation clustering obtained considering the significant Biological Processes GO terms (Benjamini adjusted P-values <0.05) of genes more expressed in FAT than in LEAN animals.

Annotation Cluster 1		Enrichment Score: 7.0	
Term	Count	Genes	
GO:0006954~inflammatory response	12	<i>C1QA, SLC11A1, CYBB, ADORA3, OLR1, HMOX1, CCR1, LYZ, C1QC, BLNK, CD163, SPP1</i>	
GO:0006952~defense response	15	<i>ADORA3, OLR1, CCR1, LYZ, COTL1, C1QC, CD163, INHBB, CD48, C1QA, SLC11A1, CYBB, HMOX1, SPP1, BLNK</i>	
GO:0009611~response to wounding	14	<i>ADORA3, PLEK, OLR1, CCR1, LYZ, C1QC, CD163, C1QA, SLC11A1, CYBB, CTGF, HMOX1, SPP1, BLNK</i>	
GO:0009605~response to external stimulus	17	<i>ADORA3, PLEK, OLR1, CCR1, LYZ, C1QC, CD163, INHBB, C1QA, SLC11A1, CYBB, CTGF, SFRP2, HMOX1, STC1, SPP1, BLNK</i>	
GO:0050896~response to stimulus	29	<i>ADORA3, AQP9, ENPP1, CCR1, UCHL1, ACP5, C1QC, CD48, SLC11A1, PLIN2, CTGF, HMOX1, FCER1G, BLNK, SPP1, EGR2, OLR1, PLEK, LYZ, CD1A, COTL1, CD163, INHBB, C1QA, CYBB, LAT2, SFRP2, STC1, LCP1</i>	
GO:0006950~response to stress	19	<i>ADORA3, AQP9, PLEK, OLR1, CCR1, UCHL1, LYZ, COTL1, C1QC, CD163, INHBB, CD48, C1QA, SLC11A1, CYBB, CTGF, HMOX1, SPP1, BLNK</i>	
Annotation Cluster 2		Enrichment Score: 2.7	
Term	Count	Genes	
GO:0001775~cell activation	7	<i>CD48, SLC11A1, LAT2, PLEK, LCP1, BLNK, GIMAP1</i>	
GO:0002274~myeloid leukocyte activation	4	<i>CD48, SLC11A1, LAT2, GIMAP1</i>	
GO:0046649~lymphocyte activation	6	<i>CD48, SLC11A1, LAT2, LCP1, BLNK, GIMAP1</i>	
Annotation Cluster 3		Enrichment Score: 2.4	

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5	Term	Count	Genes
6	GO:0048583~regulation of response to stimulus	10	<i>C1QA, SLC11A1, LAT2, PLEK, ENPP1, HMOX1, FCER1G, C1QC, SPP1, GIMAP1</i>
7	GO:0050776~regulation of immune response	7	<i>C1QA, SLC11A1, LAT2, HMOX1, FCER1G, C1QC, GIMAP1</i>
8	GO:0050778~positive regulation of immune response	6	<i>C1QA, SLC11A1, LAT2, FCER1G, C1QC, GIMAP1</i>
9	GO:0002443~leukocyte mediated immunity	5	<i>C1QA, SLC11A1, LAT2, FCER1G, C1QC</i>
10	GO:0002682~regulation of immune system process	8	<i>C1QA, SLC11A1, LAT2, HMOX1, SCIN, FCER1G, C1QC, GIMAP1</i>
11	Annotation Cluster 4	Enrichment Score: 2.0	
12	Term	Count	Genes
13	GO:0060348~bone development	6	<i>AMBN, CTGF, ACP5, STC1, GPNMB, SPP1</i>
14	GO:0031214~biomineral formation	4	<i>AMBN, ENPP1, GPNMB, SPP1</i>
15	GO:0001503~ossification	5	<i>AMBN, CTGF, STC1, GPNMB, SPP1</i>
16	GO:0001501~skeletal system development	7	<i>AMBN, CTGF, MMP9, ACP5, STC1, GPNMB, SPP1</i>
17	Annotation Cluster 5	Enrichment Score: 1.6	
18	Term	Count	Genes
19	GO:0001775~cell activation	7	<i>CD48, SLC11A1, LAT2, PLEK, LCP1, BLNK, GIMAP1</i>
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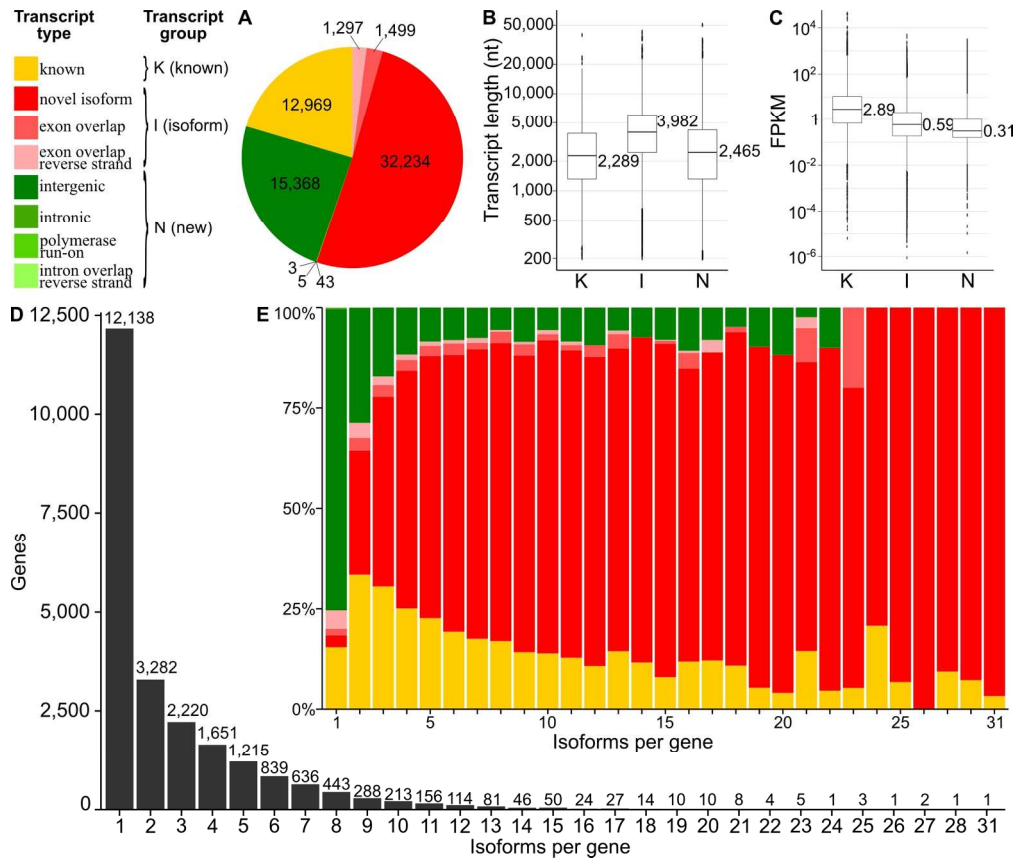


Figure 1

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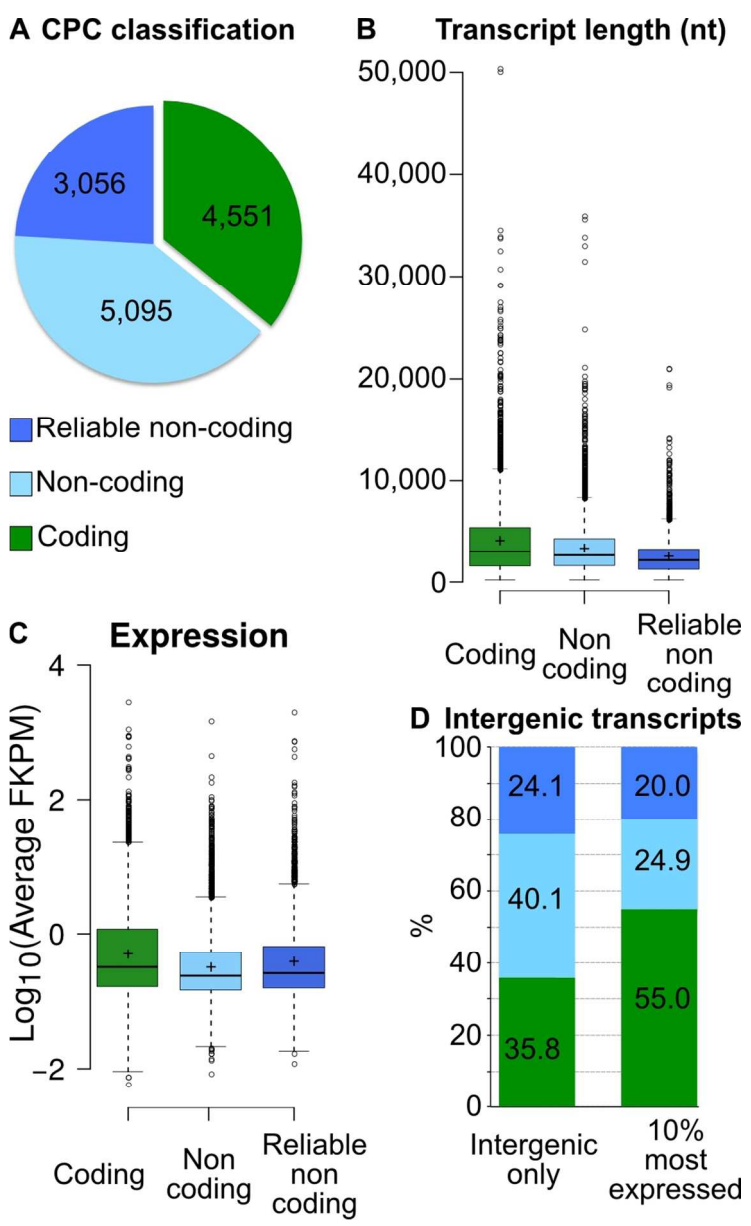


Figure 2

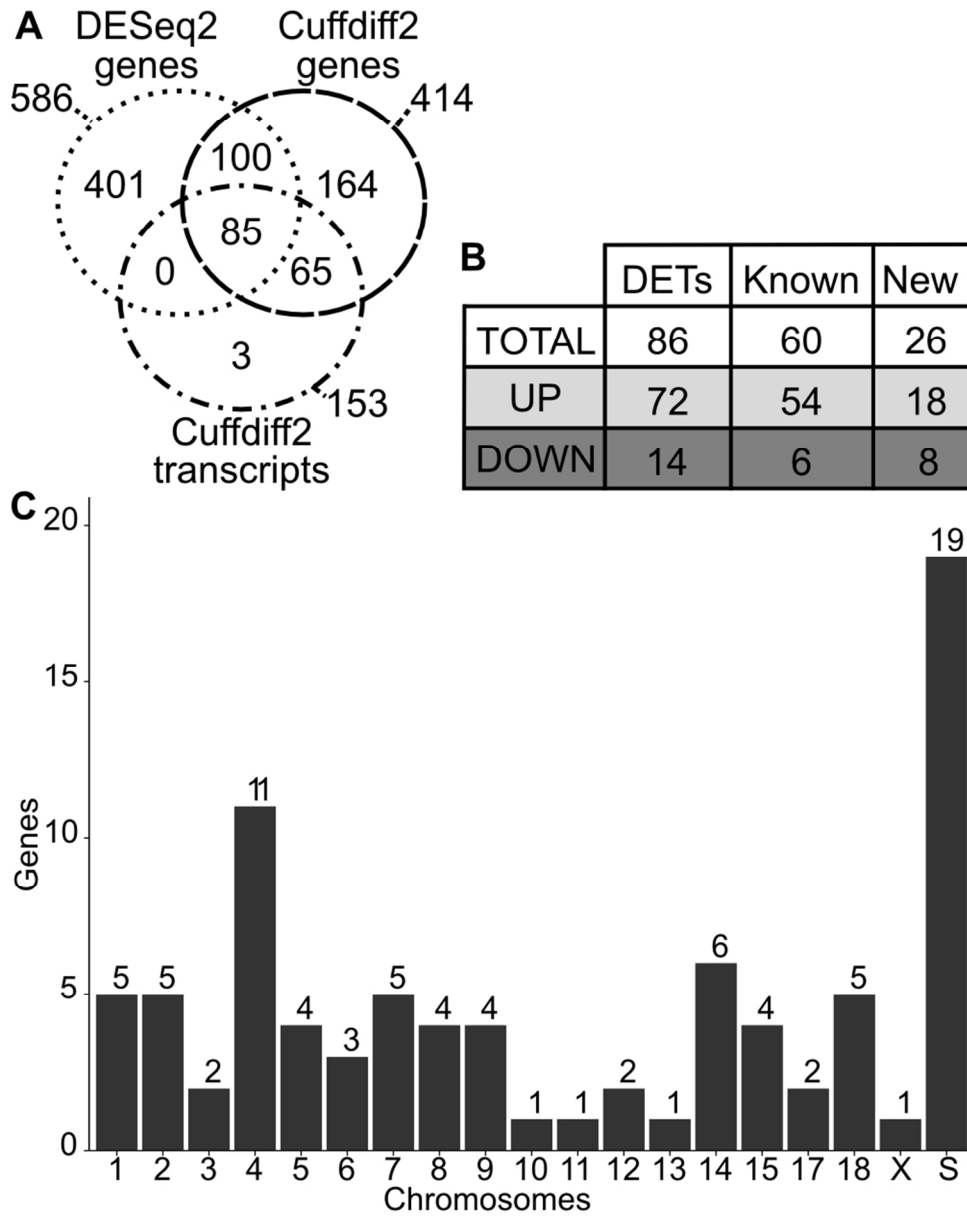


Figure 3  
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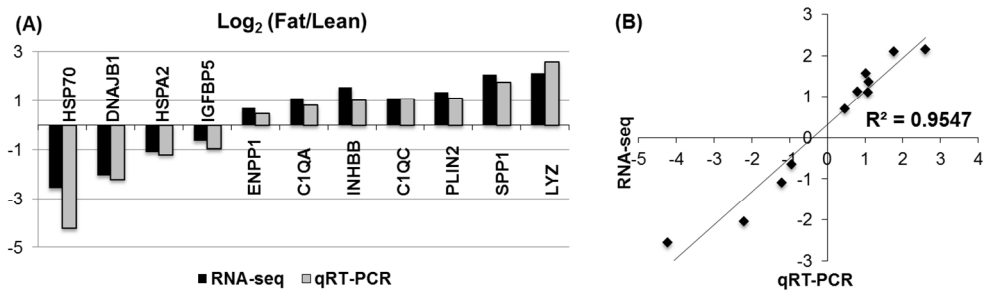


Figure 4  
242x73mm (150 x 150 DPI)

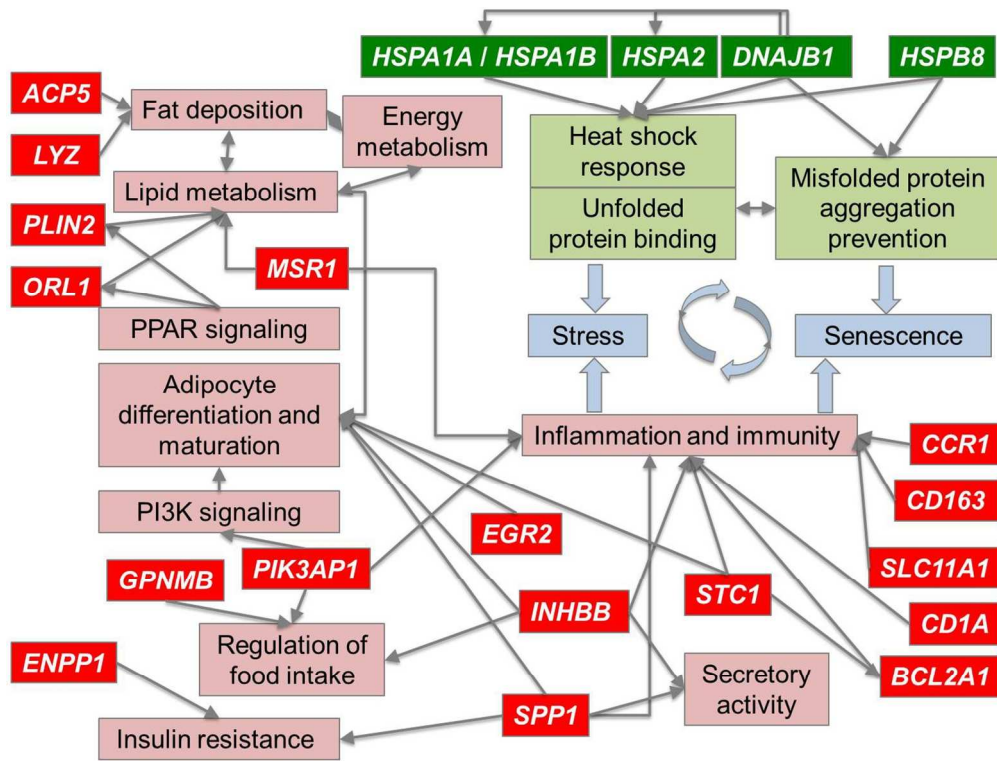


Figure 5  
249x190mm (150 x 150 DPI)

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