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Pork CRC Research Summary

Project Number & Title: 2A-104 - Evaluation of feeding strategies and measurement of feed consumption using the Feedlogic system

Principle Investigator:
Dr Bruce Mullan and Ms Karen Moore

Background:

It is common practice for pigs to be fed approximately 3 diets during the grower-finisher period, but because the requirements of the pig are constantly changing, there are frequent periods where the pig receives excess nutrients. By feeding a greater number of diets in this phase there is a potential to reduce the cost of production as the diets more closely match pig requirements. An alternative approach is to feed the same diet from 20 to 105 kg with the theory being that initially the diet is supplying insufficient nutrients but during the later stages there is compensatory growth and so there is no impact overall on pig performance. Therefore this project aimed to see if blend feeding or feeding a single diet would reduce the cost of production compared to the conventional system, by minimising the over-supply of nutrients without adversely affecting pig growth performance or carcass quality.

Methodology:

A total of 216 female pigs (Large White x Landrace) were allocated to three treatments, with pigs housed in groups of 6 and there being 12 pens (reps.) per treatment. The treatments were:

1. **Conventional:** diets changed when the average LW of pigs in the pen reached 20, 50 or 80kg
2. **Blend:** diets changed weekly to meet the nutrient requirements of the average LW of pigs in the pen
3. **Single:** the same diet fed throughout the experiment

The diets were fed from 22 to 102 kgs liveweight.

Key Findings/Conclusions:

- No difference in growth performance and carcass value between the conventional, blendfeeding and single feeding strategies from 22 to 102 kgs liveweight
- Potential savings in cost of production (through feed cost savings) are approximately 3 cents/kg LW gain for either the blendfeeding or single strategy compared to the conventional strategy
- The single diet strategy might have appeal in certain circumstances

Potential Users of Information (including value assessment):

Nutritionists, consultants and producers.

The savings in feed costs by feeding either the blend feeding or the single diet was approximately 3 cents/kg LW gain. In this project this saved approximately \$2.60 per pig.

