

THE EFFECT OF THE COMPOSITION OF A DIET ON ITS ORGANIC MATTER DIGESTIBILITY

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Summary. The experiment was aimed at determining the dependence of OM digestibility *in vitro* on diet composition.

22 diets were formed taking into account the real feeding situation of dairy cows on Arminai and Obšutai farms (Vilkaviškis region). The diets comprised 40 % maize (S-1) or permanent grass (S-2) silage, 10-60 % wheat straw and 0-50 % barley meal. The OM digestibility of the diets was tested by 1-stage *m vitro* method [6]. The following conclusions can be drawn from the results obtained:

1. The composition of a diet effects OM digestibility *in vitro*.
2. The OM digestibility is reduced by increasing the proportion of straw in a diet.
3. Barley meal has a positive effect on OM digestibility.
4. To form the optimal diet for cattle the OM digestibility of forage has to be tested.

Keywords: dairy cow, rumen, organic matter (OM) digestibility, diet composition, silage, straw, barley meal.