

## EVALUATION OF THE ENERGETIC VALUE OF FORAGE FOR DAIRY COWS BY MEANS OF HOHENHEIM'S TEST

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**Summary.** The productivity of cows and the cost of milk are mostly determined by the energy value of the feeds used. In turn, the net energy of lactation (NEL) of feeds depends on its chemical composition and digestibility of the organic matter. In EU countries NEL amount in feeds is most frequently determined by the Hohenheim's evaluation test (HET). The method enables us to determine quickly and exactly the digestibility of organic matter *in vitro* and the energy value of the fodder fed to ruminants.

The results obtained allow us to choose the feeds which are better assimilated, to evaluate precisely the NEL of feeds as well as to balance the ration of dairy cattle.

In Lithuania the HET method is just being introduced, therefore the obtained results are of interest both to cattle - breeding specialists and practitioners.

**Keywords:** feeds, energy, cows, net energy of lactation, rations.