

THE EFFICIENCY OF A NEW WHOLE MILK SUBSTITUTE

Petras Bendikas¹, Virginijus Uchockis¹, Liudas Jonaitis²

¹*Lietuvos veterinarijos akademijos gyvulininkystės institutas, R. Žebenkos g. 12, LT-82317 Baisogala
Institute of Animal Science of Lithuanian Veterinary Academy, R. Žebenkos g. 12, LT-82317 Baisogala, Lithuania
tel. (8 ~ 422) 65383; faks. (8~422) 65 886; el. paštas: LGI@lgi.lt*

²*Joniškio žemės ūkio mokykla, Upytės g. 67, LT-84152 Joniškis
Joniškis School of Agriculture, Lithuania; tel./faks. (8~ 426) 61 345, el. paštas: LZUM@takas.lt*

Summary. In 2002 a new whole milk substitute „Veršelis“, based on the Dutch technology, was put into production in Lithuania. The aim of our study was to investigate the effect of the milk substitute in the diets of calves. Sixteen Lithuanian Black/White breed calves were randomly divided into 2 groups (control and experimental), of 8 animals in each. The control diet used in the experiment was based on whole milk, and the experimental diet on whole milk substitute with feed starter or grass. The results indicated that dry whole milk substitute „Veršelis“ produced by joint-stock company „LITAMILK“ met all the zootechnical requirements for milk substitutes. The substitute in combination with the compound feed-starter and other grass feeds was beneficial to the growth of calves and had no negative influence on their health. The calves in control group fed limited amount of whole milk, starter and hay *ad libitum* gained daily 879 g of live weight, while the calves in experimental group fed whole milk substitute and the other feeds *ad libitum* gained daily 951 g ($p < 0.05$). The cost price per tonne of live weight gain was 20.5% lower in experimental calves compared to the control group.

Keywords: diet, whole milk substitute, calves, growth.