THE EFFECT OF “BONVITAL“, A PROBIOTIC PRODUCT CONTAINING ENTEROCOCCUS FAECIUM ON THE FATTENING PERFORMANCE, CARCASS CHARACTERISTICS AND MEAT QUALITY OF PIGS UNDER PRODUCTION CONDITIONS

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Summary. Two performance trials with fattening pigs was conducted on Lithuanian agricultural farms. The objective of the study was to determine the effect of a probiotic product containing Enterococcus faecium (trade name “Bonvital”) on the fattening performance and carcass characteristics of pigs as well as on meat quality under production conditions. Each trial comprised two groups, a control group (I) and an experimental group (II). Animals of group II were fed a diet supplemented with the probiotic product Bonvital (Enterococcus faecium DSM 7134, 0.3x10⁹ CFU/kg feed). Group I animals received the same diet, but without the addition of the probiotic. Diet composition matched the nutrient requirements of high-performance pigs.

Both trials went according to the plan. There were no health problems. Nevertheless, the performance levels achieved in both trials differed distinctly (trial 1: average daily gain - 688 g, 3.49 kg feed/kg gain, trial 2: average daily gain - 870 g, 2.4 kg feed/kg gain, in control groups). A performance enhancing effect of Bonvital was observed in both trials, leading to an increase in daily gains (3% in trial 1 and 1.5% in trial 2) and an improvement in the feed conversion ratio (3% in trial 2). The above effect was statistically significant (p<0.05) and numerical (p>0.05). There were small differences between control and experimental animals with respect to carcass characteristics and meat quality.

Keywords: probiotic, fattening pigs, growth, feed conversion, carcass quality characteristics, meat quality.