THE EFFECT OF THE PROBIOTICS ON THE GROWTH RATE AND HEALTH OF WEANED PIGS

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In 2007, a trial involving German Landrace and Norwegian Landrace crossbred pigs was conducted at the Institute of Animal Science, Lithuanian Veterinary Academy to investigate the effects of the probiotics *(Bacillus* licheniformis (DSM 5749) – 1.6×10^9 CFU/g and *Bacillus subtilis* (DSM 5750) – 1.6×10^9 CFU/g) on health, growth rate and feed intake of weaner pigs. The results from the trial indicated that the pigs showed improved clinical condition (no diarrhoea or other illnesses) when fed diet supplemented with 0.06 % probiotic. Further, 0.04 % probiotic supplementation of the diet resulted in higher growth rate of the weaners from 28 to 60 days of age and their average daily weight gain was on 5.9 % (P=0.430) higher. There was a tendency towards higher growth rate of weaners from day 60 to 91 and during the whole treatment with 0.06 % probiotic supplementation of the diets. Then the daily gain of the pigs were higher respectively by 7.2% (P=0.251) and 5.5 % (P=0.360). Besides feed consumption was on 1.7-3.0 % lower per kg gain when the diets were supplemented with 0.04 % probiotic while 0.06 % supplementation of the diets resulted in 4.4 % lower feed consumption per kg gain only from 60 to 91 days of age. The study indicated that there was no statistically significant influence on the daily feed intake with 0.04–0.06 % probiotic supplementation of the diets.

Keywords: probiotics, health, growth rate, feed consumption, pigs.