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WET VS. DRY AD LIBITUM FEEDING OF GROWING-FINISHING SWINE

R. H. Hines and D. A. Nichols

Summary

Two hundred and twenty-four growing-finishing pigs were used to evaluate wet vs. dry ad libitum feeding utilizing the Pride of the Farm Maxima® feeder. Growth rate, average daily feed intake, and feed/gain were the same for those pigs fed with feeders having water nozzles in the trough (wet) or (Finishing, Wet vs. Dry) without the nozzles in the trough of the feeder (dry).

(Key words: Finishing, Wet vs. Dry.)

Introduction

During the past few years, KSU Swine Day publications have reported feeding trials utilizing various feeders for ad libitum, wet or dry feeding of finishing pigs. Some of the reports have indicated an improvement in feed utilization for the hogs fed wet. This study continues our interest in wet vs. dry feeding of finishing hogs using the Maxima Pride of the Farm feeder.

Procedure

Two hundred and twenty-four finishing pigs were allotted by sex, weight, and litter to two treatments: a) dry feeder, using a Maxima® Pride feeder or b) wet feeder using the Maxima Pride feeder equipped with 2 drinking nozzles radiating upward from the oval trough of the feeder. In treatment B, the nozzles located in the trough of the feeder were the water source for the pigs; whereas, in treatment A the pigs were required to drink from two nipple waterers located approximately 5' from the feeder. In treatment B, the feed was moistened in the trough of the feeder by water dripping from the pigs' mouth as they drank.

Pigs were housed (28 pigs/pen) in a modified open fronted finishing barn. Pens were 12' x 15' with 50% concrete slats and 50% solid concrete. Space allowance per pig was 6.4 sq. ft. A milo-soybean meal fortified diet, with a calculated analysis of 15.9% crude protein, .75% calcium, and .65% phosphorus, was used in the trial for all pigs.

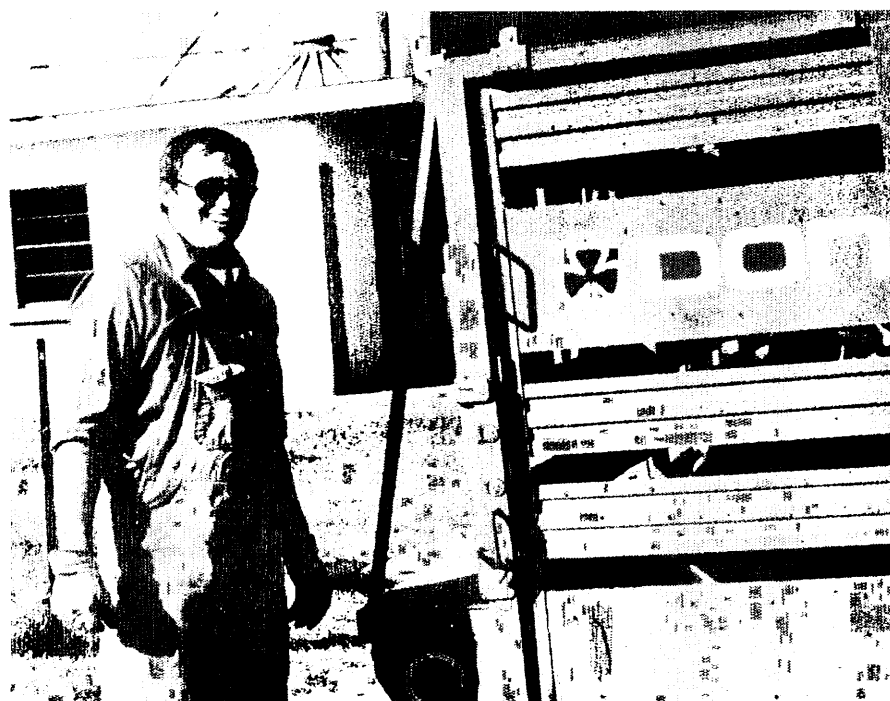
Results and Discussion

Table 1 presents the performance data of finishing pigs fed diets utilizing the Maxima Pride of the Farm wet or dry feeder. Pigs were put on test at an average of 64 lb with the trial terminated 84 days later at an average weight of 198 lb. The trial was conducted between May 24 and August 16, 1988 when there were many days and nights of hot temperatures, requiring many hours of sprinkling the hogs to reduce heat stress. Feed efficiency of the pigs was the same for both treatments, since the pigs ate the same amount of feed per day and grew at the same rate. Earlier trials had resulted in a 5% improvement in feed efficiency and 2-4% improvement in rate of gain when pigs were wet fed. This was not true in this trial, which may have been altered by the extreme heat during the trial and the reduced square footage per pig. Feeders were effective in practically eliminating feed wastage by the pig.

Table 1. Performance of Finishing Pigs Fed with Wet or Dry Feeders^a

Item	Maxima® Pride of the Farm Feeder	
	Wet	Dry
Initial Weight, lb	64.3	63.4
Final Weight, lb	198.6	198.1
Average daily gain, lb	1.60	1.60
Average daily feed intake, lb	5.29	5.28
Feed/gain	3.31	3.30

^aAverage of 4 pens per treatment, 28 pigs per pen, 84-day trial.



Steve Hargrave, swine herdsman, is responsible for day-to-day operation of the K-State Swine Research and Teaching Center.