



R&D Snapshot

Bitter compounds in diet improve growth efficiency of finisher pigs

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Purpose:

- To investigate whether naturally occurring bitter compounds, known to be bitter to humans, such as caffeine and the plant extracts of rhubarb, brassica, gentian, quassia and Artemisia, when added to diets of finisher pigs can reduce voluntary feed intake

Take home messages:

- Temporary reductions in feed intake were observed when inclusion rates of bitter compounds were fed at levels not toxic to pigs
- Bitter compounds, such as rhubarb, gentian and quassia extracts, improved average daily gain and feed conversion ratio
- Pigs fed bitter compounds produced leaner carcasses than those of pigs fed a standard finisher diet, suggesting that more energy was used for protein deposition rather than for fat deposition
- Further work to evaluate combinations of bitter compounds to reduce voluntary feed intake, whilst also acting as a repartitioning agent, is to be conducted through APRIL.

Additional information:

- For further information or a copy of the final report please contact Dr Rebecca Athorn at rebecca.athorn@australianpork.com.au or on 02 6270 8827.

APL Project 2012/1034.495 – Dietary manipulation of feed intake in pigs by bitter compounds

