



# MAXIMISING THE COST EFFECTIVENESS OF RACTOPAMINE

**Disclaimer: APL does not condemn or condone the use of ractopamine. The decision to use ractopamine is ultimately a commercial decision for the producer and will be dependent on the markets they supply their pigs into. Some markets both domestically and internationally do not allow use of ractopamine.**

## Project Participants

ACE Livestock Consulting, Australian Pork Farms Group

## Problem

Genetic selection in commercial pigs has resulted in a marked decrease in the backfat levels of market pigs. This has prompted interest in raising the energy density of grower/finisher diets to exploit greater growth potential. Paylean (ractopamine) is known to improve protein deposition and improve the meatiness of carcasses. A clearer definition of the optimal commercial application of Paylean in finishing pigs needs to be determined.

## Project

These studies assessed the optimal application and dosage of Paylean, which can help improve the economic gains for Australian pig producers who choose to use the feed additive.

## Value for Producers

Adding Paylean to a high energy base finisher pig diet can increase carcass weight and improve feed conversion efficiency in finisher pigs, improving the economic gains pig producers can obtain from the market.

The increase in carcass weight gain offsets the cost of the additive; under 'normal' circumstances, producers could obtain between a \$5.10 to \$6.85 per pig profit or a 7 to 9c per kg carcass profit.



## Recommendations

The optimal dose of Paylean may be between 5ppm and 7.5ppm in a high energy base finisher diet.

The greatest carcass weight improvement is found after 3 to 4 weeks of exposure, despite a spike in growth rate during the first week of application. The response to Paylean can be variable due to health or other interfering factors.

More research is required before more definite recommendations can be made.

## More Information

- For a copy of the report, contact Rachael Bryant at [rachael.bryant@australianpork.com.au](mailto:rachael.bryant@australianpork.com.au)
- For technical information, contact Rebecca Athorn at [rebecca.athorn@australianpork.com.au](mailto:rebecca.athorn@australianpork.com.au)