 

**Summary**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of the additive Epona (oxygen activated chalk) on the feed intake, growth, health and slaughter results of finishing pigs. In addition, this study aimed to provide insight in the amount of ammonia emission.

The test group (Epona group) was compared to the control group during two rounds, in which the animals were fed with the standard finishing feed used by the Swine Innovation Centre (VIC) Sterksel. The composition of the test and control feed were equal in all respects, with the exception of replacing 200 g chalk per 1000 kg feed with 200 g of the oxygen activated chalk Epona in the test feed, as opposed to the control feed. The study was done with 576 finishing pigs (Tempo x (York x Dutch Landrace)), which were kept in pens of 12 animals each, from the start of the finishing phase until the delivery to slaughter.

**The study’s main conclusions are:**

 There is no significant difference in the growth of the animals from the start of the finishing phase until the delivery to slaughter (977 g/day vs. 964 g/day; p=0.25), between the control group and the Epona group.

 The animals in the control group have a higher feed intake from the start of the finishing phase until the delivery to slaughter than the animals in the Epona group (2.33 kg/animal/day vs. 2.24 kg/animal/day; p=0.006).

** The animals in the Epona group have a significantly lower feed conversion rate than the animals in the control group (2.32 vs. 2.38; p=0.002).**

 There is no significant difference in slaughter results slaughter weight (95.5 kg vs. 95.1 kg; p=0.60), meat percentage (59.7% vs. 59.8%; p=0.42), muscle thickness (65.0 mm vs. 64.4 mm; p=0.41) and back fat thickness (13.0 mm vs. 12.8 mm; p=0.42) between the control group and the Epona group.

 The amount of veterinary treated animals does not differ significantly between the control group and the Epona group (39 vs. 43; p=0.47). There were relatively more animals treated for lung problems in the control group than in the Epona group (7 vs. 1; p=0,14), but less for being pale or thin (1 vs. 5; p=0,14). These differences are not significant.

 The amount of culled animals during this study does not differ significantly between the control group and the Epona group (9 vs. 12; p=0.50).

Wageningen Livestock Research Agrivital International BV

Postbus 338 Koninginnelaan 35

6700 AH Wageningen 5328Ch Rossum

The Netherlands

Info@agrivital.nl