

Designing Farm Specific Diets

Art Lange¹, Russell Giebelhaus² and Jim Gowans³

¹Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Box 519, Vegreville, AB T9C 1R6, ²JCR Farm, c/o 5217-45 Ave, Vegreville AB, ³Gowans Feed Consulting, RR # 3, Red Deer, AB
Email: art.lange@agric.gov.ab.ca

The purpose of this work was to test the premise that designing farm-specific diets for grower-finisher pigs (20-110 kg) could save \$3-5 per pig and not impair performance. A secondary purpose was to test the practicality of using new feed-weigh hoppers which can be used with an automatic feeding system. These hoppers make it fairly easy to calculate the daily feed intake of the pigs on a farm so diets specific to it can be designed.

The results showed (according to *PorkMa\$ter* computer program) that we were able to save \$5 in feed cost per pig by using the feed-weigh hoppers to measure feed intake and subsequently design farm-specific diets. The new diets met previous pig performance.

Implications:

The cost of doing this project was about \$1000 (\$500 in reusable equipment and \$500 for fees and labour) which is well within the means of most farms. The benefit for JCR Farm (which finishes 3000 pigs at this location per year) will be a \$15,000 saving in feed costs. The benefit of the independent consultant far outweighs his costs. The consultant reformulated the diets and also tendered the custom designed premix thereby reducing its cost from \$1100/tonne to \$700/ tonne.

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