

Triticale, an excellent feed grain for weaned pigs

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Two hundred and eighty eight crossbred piglets were used in a 28 d growth performance and digestibility trial to determine the effect of the dietary replacement of either CPS or HRS wheat with Western Canadian triticale varieties (AC Ultima, Pronghorn, Bobcat and Pika) in nursery diets for weanling pigs.

Weaned pigs (28 d of age) were randomly allocated to pens based on BW gain (d -7 to d 0), sex and litter of origin. Pigs were fed the test diets ad libitum. Individual pigs were weighed weekly. Fecal grab samples were collected on d 25 to 27 of the study.

For the first three weeks and the overall trial, ADFI and ADG were similar ($P > 0.05$) among dietary treatments. For the last week of study, pigs offered the wheat diets consumed more feed ($P < 0.05$) than those fed the triticale diets. However, pigs fed the triticale diets had better ($P < 0.05$) overall feed efficiency than those fed wheat diets. Nutrient digestibility was improved ($P < 0.05$) in pigs fed CPS compared to HRS wheat. Digestibility of protein, Ca and P was greater ($P < 0.05$) in pigs fed triticale diets compared to those fed wheat diets.

Implications:

The results of this study indicate that any of the four triticale varieties may substitute CPS or HRS wheat in late nursery diets without adverse effect on pig performance. Feeding triticale to weaned pigs may also lower feed cost due to improved nutrient digestibility and retention. Improved feed conversion efficiency combined with higher grain yield of triticale compared to wheat implies more pork produced per unit of land.