

Alfalfa as a Feed Supplement for Finishing Hogs

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We carried out a hog feeding trial to determine whether adding ground alfalfa to the grower and finisher ration would be

Ron Rosman showing off his farrowing setup at a PFI Field day.



economical as well as result in leaner hogs. The ration used for the hog feeding trial was:

50-90 lb. pigs	100 lbs. alfalfa/ton
90-150 lb. pigs	150 lbs./ton
150-finish	200 lbs./ton

The ration used for the conventional trial was the typical Wayne Feeds ration that we use. Seventytwo head were weighed on April 14, 1996, for each trial. The average weight for the hay ration group was 67 lbs. The average weight for the conventional group was 69 pounds. 69 head were sold from each group.

Based on the results (Table 9), we made the following observations:

- 1) The hay ration hogs took longer to get to market by an average of 6 days more than the conventionalgroup.
- 2) The hay ration hogs were leaner.
- 3) The economics on the two comparisons were nearly identical, down to the penny.

The hay ration cost less but the hogs consumed more feed and took longer to go to market. The feed efficiency for both groups could be improved. Feed waste was a negative factor for both groups, indicating the need for better feeder adjustments. The good news is that, even putting a cost on the pig at the start of the trial, both groups made a good profit.

TABLE 9. ROSMANN HOG RATION COMPARISON

	CONVENTIONAL RATION	ALFALFA HAY IN RATION
# PIGS IN/OUT	72/69	72/69
AVG. WEIGHT IN/OUT	69/244	67/238
PURCHASE COST	\$3,974.40	\$3,859.20
TOTAL LBS FEED CONSUMED	717	755
FEED COST/HEAD	\$56.77	\$57.18
FEED COST/100 LB GAIN	\$32.43	\$33.44
LB FEED/LB GAIN	4.10	4.41
AVG. DAILY GAIN	1.50	1.41
AVG. BACK FAT	1.16"	1.04"
AVG. PERCENT LEAN	47.2%	48.7%
TOTAL COST/PIG	\$125.66	\$124.76
TOTAL NET PROFIT	\$1,433.72	\$1,440.49