



Rye Use from a Feed Consultant's Perspective

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Rye is a cereal, which traditionally had a bad reputation as feed component for pigs. Older Danish trials have shown that daily gain and feed conversion ratio in slaughter pigs was reduced with increasing amounts of rye in the feed. Furthermore there was a risk for an occurrence of ergot which could cause reproduction problems in sows. The modern varieties of Hybrid rye (PollenPlus) are not very receptive to ergot. In 2006 the Danish feed evaluation system was changed, and that meant that the content of energy (Danish feed units) per kg in rye was reduced in relation to wheat, barley and oats. When the older trials were recalculated according to the new system there was no longer this negative impact on feed conversion. Furthermore there is a widespread use of xylanase enzymes in feed for piglets and slaughter pigs, which is believed to increase the digestibility of carbohydrates in rye.

These facts, combined with good growth conditions, high yields and low production costs per feed unit – especially on lighter soils - have increased the interest of using rye in feed for pigs in Denmark.

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