

Tube feeders for weaners

Trial report 893

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A product trial of five brands of tube feeders for weaners revealed no differences in production value based on weaners' FCR and daily gain.

Abstract

The trial comprised five brands of tube feeders with meal feed for weaners:

- MaxiMat Weaner (Skiold A/S)
- FunkiMat (ACO Funki A/S)
- Ergomat XXL with shoulder partition (KJ Klimateknik A/S)
- TUBE-O-MAT VI+ Jumbo (Egebjerg International A/S)
- PicNic Jumbo (Big Dutchman)



From the left: MaxiMat Weaner, FunkiMat, Ergomat XXL with shoulder partition, TUBE-O-MAT VI+ Jumbo and PicNic Jumbo (photos: Skiold A/S, Hanne Midtgaard Rasmussen, KJ Klimateknik A/S, Egebjerg International A/S and Big Dutchman).

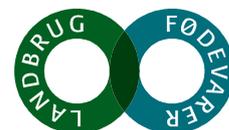
The results revealed no significant differences in production value between the five brands. The production value is calculated on the basis of feed conversion ratio and daily gain of the weaners in the trial.

The functionality of two feeders stood out from the rest: MaxiMat Weaner from Skiold A/S and FunkiMat from ACO Funki A/S both overall scored "good". They fulfilled all basic requirements for tube feeders for weaners, and scored "good" and "very good" in all seven categories with no exception.

Ergomat XXL with shoulder partition overall scored "good", but scored "below average" in ease of cleaning partly as it was difficult to wash the feeder and partly as it was impossible to see whether the tube feeder was empty and clean when preparing the section for a new batch of pigs. In all other categories, Ergomat XXL scored "good" or "very good".

TUBE-O-MAT VI+ Jumbo from Egebjerg International A/S overall scored "below average" for two main reasons. On two of four feeders, it was difficult to reduce feed flow to the desired level, and feed flowed even when the feeder was set to 0. Egebjerg International A/S subsequently explained that this was due to incorrect assembling on their behalf. The durability of the feeder also scored below average: plastic parts broke, bolts came loose and parts of the dosing unit had to be replaced as the pigs were able to tear it. This was subsequently improved by Egebjerg International A/S. The result of these improvements was not included in the evaluation in this trial. In the remaining categories, TUBE-O-MAT VI+ Jumbo scored "good" or "very good".

PicNic Jumbo from Big Dutchman also overall scored "below average" as too often manual labour was required to release feed to the pigs. This was caused by either moisture around the mouth of the feed pipe or by clotting of feed further up the feeder. The feeder also lacked a function for emptying of leftovers before wash, and a great deal of time was spent on cleaning out leftovers during wash. It was difficult to empty wash water out of the trough with a high-pressure cleaner. Big Dutchman subsequently modified the feeder so that it now tilts during wash. However, the



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result of this modification was not included in the evaluation in this trial. In the remaining categories, PicNic Jumbo scored “good” and “very good”.

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