

Feeding gilts in the growth period

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Abstract

Two feeding strategies for Danish LY gilts were investigated in six herds with different housing and feeding systems:

- Feeding strategy 1:** The gilts were given 2.5 FUgp a day (lactation diet) from approx. 100 kg until service at approx. 140 kg.
- Feeding strategy 2:** The gilts were given 3.0 FUgp a day in the same period (gilt diet with low content of protein and amino acids).

In feeding strategy 2, the diet contained 15% less amino acids and 20% more energy in the interval 100-140 kg compared with feeding strategy 1. After service, all gilts were given the lactation diets and gestation diets normally used in the herds. The subsequent reproduction results and culling causes were recorded. The trial demonstrated that it was possible to significantly increase the backfat thickness of the gilts at the time of service with feeding strategy 2, but it had no effect on age at culling, culling cause or the number of piglets born per litter from transfer to departure. The reduction in amino acid content and the increase in energy allocation did not affect the subsequent reproduction or longevity of the gilts.

The trial showed that it was possible to affect the backfat thickness through feeding in the period 100-140 kg, but it did not affect the subsequent reproduction results or culling causes. The trial was conducted with gilts with a backfat thickness of 12-18 mm at the time of service. It is therefore recommended that the gilts have a backfat thickness in this interval at their first service.