



PORK BRIEFS

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ON SWINE NUTRITION



How Sweet this year's Corn Is

By: Ken Palen

This year in Ontario, most areas are blessed with low toxin, great quality corn. Even though the corn was slightly immature at harvest with generally a lower bushel weight, the pigs love it. Seems like in years where the growing season is a bit short, the corn in the field does not fully



starch out and stay's in a bit of a sugar form resulting in a sweeter taste. Pigs, like a lot of people like this sweet taste especially the younger pigs.

The results of this sweeter corn with lower bushel weight is very hard to measure. Feed intake quite often will jump up initially after harvest, and slow down after a month or two. If the corn was dried at too high of temperature at harvest some corn may end up slightly caramelized or burnt resulting in poorer intake, due to the burnt taste. Determining if immature corn should be grown specifically for pigs to the best of my knowledge is not known. Maybe some good practical research could be done in Ontario especially if two similar barns could be fed the same diets only with the immature versus the mature corn separated by diet. In the meantime let's enjoy the added performance of this year's low toxin, sweeter tasting corn.

Lighter Bushel Weight

The lighter bushel weight corn should be addressed when feeding or mixing by weight. For instance, a U.S. manufactured mixer called a one ton mixer means a 2,000 lb mixer, not a 2,200 lb metric one tonne mixer. Therefore, if you have been getting away with mixing a full 1,000 kg, 2,200 lb batch of feed in that mixer you may find with this year's lighter corn the mixer is too full and blowing air or product back into

cont.>>

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the product loading augers or vents putting humidity (moisture) and dust back into augers, bins, the room, etc. One producer explained to me that he had to reduce his mix to 800 kg (1764 lbs) batches to get a proper mix done right, especially with the lighter bulk density pig starter batches.

Also, scoops, pails, dry sow drop feeders, mixer batch weighing dumpers, proportioner mills, auger flow rates, etc. all should be re-calibrated to ensure that targeted intakes and mixes are achieved when feeding this year's corn. Other feed ingredients can vary as well even soyameal so they should be checked periodically as well.

Feed Grind

By now most everyone will have fine-tuned the grind by changing old, wore out hammer mill screens or reducing/increasing the screen sizes to achieve the targeted grind/micron size of the corn to around 600-800 micron size. This year's corn seems to be exploding more with more variation in the grind.

In summary

How sweet this year's corn is! Well, it is pretty sweet and good quality. Just tweaking it a bit maybe in order to get the maximum benefit. Oh, just heard a crow! I saw a robin a couple of days ago. The tundra swans are back at Grand Bend, Ontario. We better go and start getting ready for spring planting.
Thank you.

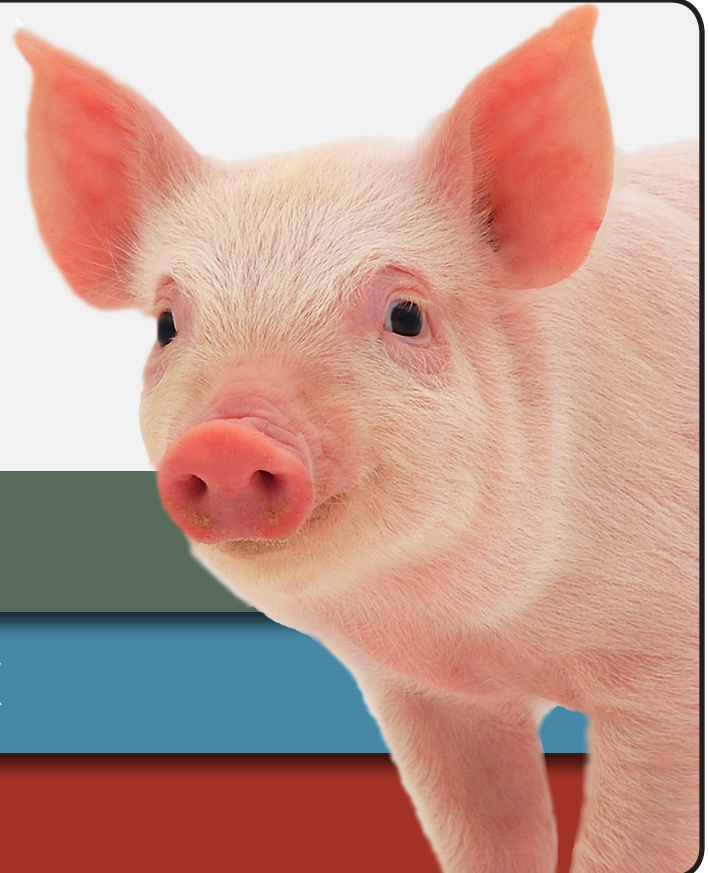
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