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Exploring the benefits of adding Regano[®] to the diet of nursery pigs

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Research has shown the oil, regano, from oregano grown around Greece is beneficial to livestock in many ways. Consequently, the product Regano[®] has been developed for use in livestock species, such as pigs. Regano has a high content of phenolic acids and flavonoids, which contribute to its high antioxidant activity. Since the digestive system of young pigs is not fully developed, they have a higher chance of contracting intestinal parasites and a variety of illnesses. Furthermore, studies suggest the oil reduces mortality rates and treatment rates with Regano[®] are lower compared to commercial drugs for scours, a major concern in young pigs. Regano[®] is also being utilized as a natural anthelmintic in various livestock species. Decreasing the incidence of illness often results in increased feed efficiency, which may be measured in pounds of average daily gain. The objective of this study is to determine the benefits of adding Regano[®] to the diet of nursery pigs in order to prevent illness by internal parasites and to increase growth rates by increasing feed efficiency. To test this, weanling pigs were fed a starter ration *ad libitum* that was formulated to meet 100% of their nutrient requirements set by the National Research Council. Pigs were then randomly assigned to two groups, each with an equal number of males and females. The groups either received a water source containing the recommended dosage of Regano[®] (TRT; n=7) or a water source without Regano[®] (CON; n=7) for 49 days. For baseline levels of intestinal parasites, fecal samples were collected on Day 0. Administration of Regano[®] through their drinking source for TRT pigs began following initial collections. Both fecal samples and weights were then collected and recorded on Days 7, 21, 35, and 49 of the trial. Immediately following collection, fecal samples were processed and analyzed under a microscope to determine the presence or absence of intestinal parasites. Furthermore, dosage of Regano[®] was recalculated following each weight collection to ensure proper dosage rate as the pigs grew. Throughout the trial, no intestinal parasites were noted in any of the samples for either group. This is most likely attributed to the fact that the pigs were housed in pens on concrete and not exposed to soil or grass, where most intestinal parasites are picked up by livestock. It should also be noted that in large commercial operations, most pigs are housed indoors on concrete floors that are cleaned daily. However, some producers are moving against this and beginning to allow access to the outdoors, increasing exposure to parasites. Additionally, there was no difference ($P>0.05$) in average weight or average daily gain between groups on Days 0, 7, 21, 35, or 49 of the trial. This could possibly be due to a small sample population. Further research is needed on pigs exposed to parasites through soil and with a larger sample population to fully investigate the potential of Regano[®] as an anthelmintic and to increase feed efficiency in weanling pigs.