Reproduction in Mong Cai gilts fed of taro leaf silage and water spinach

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A mixture of taro leaf silage and water spinach can be used in the diet of Mong Cai gilts in pregnancy and lactation without affecting reproduction

Abstract

Nine Mong Cai gilts, with average initial body weight of 35 kg, were allocated to 3 households in Phuert village, Namor district, Oudomxay province. In each household, the 3 pigs were allocated to 3 treatments according to a Completely Randomized design. The households were the replicates. The treatments were: T20: Mixture of rice bran and maize meal supplemented with mixture of water spinach and Taro leaf silage (50:50 DM basis) at 20 % of the diet DM; T40 and T60 similar to T20 but with 40 and 60% of Taro leaf silage. The gilts were mated at third oestrus by natural mating with the same local Lao boar. The feeding level was 4% of live weight (DM basis) until pregnancy was confirmed, after which it was restricted to 1.5% of live weight. In the lactation period the gilts were fed increasing amounts up to five days after farrowing and from then onwards feeds were offered
ad libitum.

The two vegetative sources had less than half the crude fiber present in the rice bran and twice the concentration of crude protein; live weight at farrowing and rate of live weight gain during pregnancy declined as the proportion of the mixture of taro leaf silage and water spinach increased. All sows retuned to estrus within 7 days after weaning, with no differences among treatments. There were no differences among treatments in the numbers of piglets born and weaned and in mortality. The highest litter live weight at weaning was with the diet T40 with no differences between the diets with the least and highest levels of forage.

It is concluded that a mixture of taro leaf silage and water spinach can be used in the diet of Mong Cai gilts in pregnancy and lactation without affecting reproduction criteria, measured as numbers of live piglets born and weaned, and the interval from weaning to estrus.

Key words:
Estrus, feed intake, growth rate, litter size, litter weight, mortality, on-farm trial

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