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Dried Betel Vine (*Piper betel* Linn) Leaves as Feed Additive in Weaning Pig Diets

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Abstract

This study was conducted to evaluate the effect of using dried betel vine (*Piper betel* Linn) leaves as a feed additive in weaner pig diets. Sixteen weaner pigs, 28 days old, averaging 9.85 kg, were randomly divided into four groups of four animals each. Each group was allocated to one of four dietary treatments in a completely randomized design: 1. Control basal diet, 2. Basal diet supplemented with dried betel vine leaves at 0.5 %, 3. Basal diet supplemented with dried betel vine leaves at 0.75 % and 4. Basal diet supplemented with 1 % probiotic. Feed intake, weight changes and fecal characteristics were recorded over 35 days. Average daily gain (ADG) across treatments were respectively 588, 590, 571 and 548 g day⁻¹. Respective feed conversion ratios (FCR) were 1.66, 1.46, 1.40 and 1.30. There were no significant differences ($p > 0.05$) in ADG across the treatment groups. The pigs on the probiotic dietary supplementation treatment had significantly ($p < 0.05$) better FCR compared to the control group. However, this was not significantly ($p > 0.05$) different from the pigs supplemented with 0.5 and 0.75 % dried betel vine leaves. Faecal score and faecal colour from the pigs on 0.5 and 0.75 % dried betel supplementation were significantly better ($p < 0.05$) than those of the pigs in the control group and probiotic supplemented group. Furthermore, the pigs supplemented with 0.5 and 0.75 % dried betel exhibited less scouring incidence. It can be concluded that dried betel vine leaves can be included as a feed additive in weaner pig diets to decrease incidence of scours and has no detrimental effect to weaner pig growth and feed conversion efficiency.

Keywords: ADG, dried betel vine leaves, FCR, faecal colour, faecal score, probiotic, weaning pig diet