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Growth of Mixed and Intact Litters Compared

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Summary

Mixing litters after weaning did not significantly affect rate of gain or efficiency of growing pigs. Weight gains were similar (1.57 or 1.49) for mixed litters and intact litters during a 28-day post-weaning trial.

Procedure

Six litters (60 head) of weaned 30 to 35-day-old pigs were mixed randomly in six pens at weaning. Breed and sex were considered in grouping the pigs. Pigs were weaned and moved from the farrowing to the nursery barn. An additional six litters (56 head) were weaned at 30-35 days of age and were moved to the nursery where each litter was fed as a unit.

Each litter or group of pigs was fed an 18% protein meal ration ad lib from two-hole self-feeders, 28 days. The nursery pens have completely concrete slatted floors with automatic waters.

Results and Discussion

The performance data of intact litters and mixed litters are summarized in table 17. Differences in rate of gain and feed efficiency were not significant. The growth rate varied within treatments from 1.35 lbs/day to 1.65 lbs/day. Feed efficiency varied from 1.61 to 1.85 lbs. of feed per pound of gain.

The average weight of the pigs at the beginning of the trial was approximately 27 lbs. After 28 days on feed they averaged 70 lbs. each.

The data suggest that no benefits are gained by maintaining litters in separate pens during post-weaning age.

Table 17. Post-weaning Growth Performance of Intact and Mixed Litters

	Mixed	Intact
Litters	6	6
Pigs	60	56
Int. wt., lbs/pig	27.6	27.9
Final wt., lbs/pig	71.7	69.6
Feeding days	28	28
Avg. daily gain, lbs.	1.57	1.49
Feed per lb. gain, lbs.	1.73	1.76