

Swine growth hormone hikes feed efficiency

UNIVERSITY PARK — A naturally-occurring hormone in swine has been found to increase their growth rate by almost 10 percent and improve feed efficiency by 5 percent, researchers at Penn State say.

The swine "growth hormone" — if developed into a product which could be administered practically — could in the future save the pork industry as much as \$3 billion per year, says T.D. Etherton, assistant professor of animal nutrition at Penn State.

Findings of a study on the hormone's effects will be presented by Etherton and doctoral candidate C.S. Chung at the 75th annual meeting of the American Society of Animal Science, set for July 26-29 at Washington State University in Pullman, Wash.

The study included extracting the hormone from swine, purifying it and then administering it to them for 30 days, Dr. Etherton explains. Results indicated that growth rate was increased 9.5 percent while feed efficiency was

enhanced 5 percent.

The hormone also increased the animals' cartilage growth and did not cause any adverse health problems.

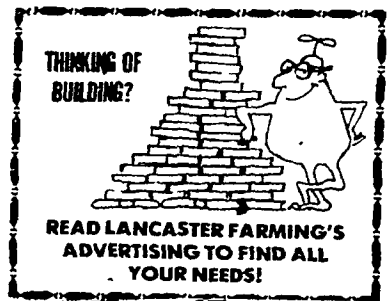
"The ultimate objective of this type of research is trying to get the animal to grow more efficiently and produce less fat," he says.

The pork industry could save between \$1 billion and \$3 billion annually if the hormone was developed for regular use, Dr. Etherton believes, because the animals would consume less feed

to produce the same amount of meat.

"Results of the study suggest that there are ways of manipulating animal growth to produce lean, edible meat more efficiently," he notes. "Further research with this particular hormone will indicate whether this is possible. Research has been constrained thus far because of the availability of the naturally-occurring hormone. With the advent of DNA recombinant technology, however, the potential

exists for the production of sufficient quantities of the swine-growth hormone to be used in future studies."



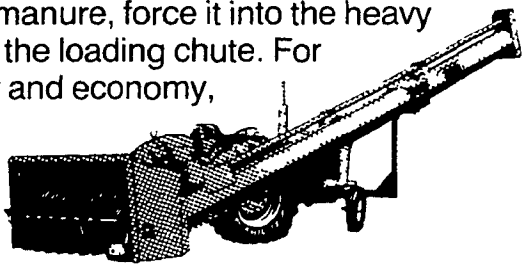
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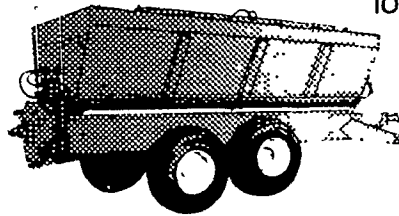
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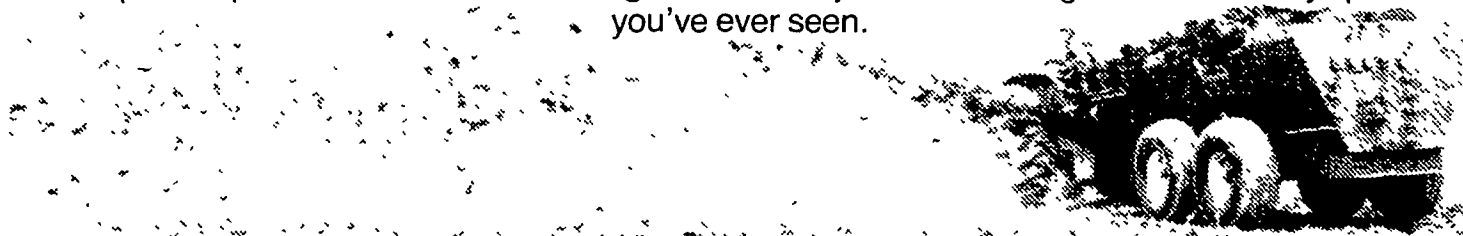
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