

Purina unveils Hog Chow breakthrough

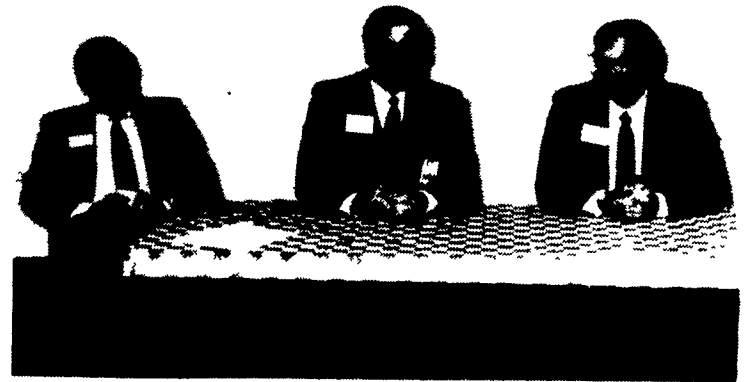
BY JACK HUBLEY

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — In a conference at Checkerboard Square in St. Louis on Wednesday, the Ralston Purina Company announced a new high energy hog chow that Purina researchers claim will set new feed conversion standards for the industry.

Marketed under the brand name High Octane Hog Chow 2.6, the new chow is claimed to yield a pound of weight gain for every 2.6 pounds of feed consumed.

The 3.0 barrier has been blown to a shambles," said Purina's swine research director Dr. Bud Harmon, who noted that breaking the three-pound conversion rate has been a goal that has eluded the country's top hog producers.

Though a complete H.O. 2.6 ration has been available since the



A panel of Purina experts responded to questions from members of the agricultural press at Checkerboard Square on Wednesday. From left are Dr. Bud Harmon, Dr. Ray Washam and division vice president Brock Lutz.

Dr. Bud Harmon, Purina's director of swine research, discusses the merits of his firm's new line of Hog Chows.

spring of the year, recent technological breakthroughs have permitted the company to market the product in concentrate form, thereby permitting producers to use their own grain in formulating feed.

The key to the product's high level of available energy is its 16 percent fat content, more than twice the amount of fat contained in the company's current leading hog feed.

"Previously you'd have to pump a product like this," noted Harmon, adding that H.O. 2.6's one-eighth inch pellet size incorporates well with grains with no separation problems. "Studies have shown that adding fat in the ration won't increase the fat cover on pigs if other nutrients are adjusted accordingly," said the researcher.

The new supplement is a multi-purpose feed for use in the growing and finishing phases, as well as in starting, farrowing and lactating rations.

According to Harmon, H.O. 2.6 yields a nine percent improvement in feed efficiency and a four percent improvement in weight gain during the growing-finishing period, when compared to the most efficient feeds currently on the market.

In experiments during the starter phase at the company's research center, Purina researchers noted a 10 percent increase in weight gain as well as a nine percent improvement in feed efficiency with the firm's H.O. 2.6 FastStart Chow.

"This translates to two days less time in the nursery, or heavier pigs leaving the nursery in the same time period," said Purina's manager of swine technical services, Dr. Ray Washam.

"This new product represents a great step forward in improving the performance of pigs in the nursery," said Washam, who added that only five death losses were recorded among the 957 pigs on test.

According to product manager Dr. Bill Ragland, the cost of H.O. 2.6 products has been running about six percent above that of the firm's current line of hog chows for midwest hog producers.

"But we feel the product stands on its own quite well," said Ragland, citing the feed's improvement in conversion rate and the producer's ability to move more animals through his facility in a shorter period of time.

Harmon said that the company's new line of H.O. 2.6 products is the culmination of years of study at the firm's Gray Summit Research Farm located west of St. Louis. With its five-man team of researchers, and the capacity to individually feed and evaluate nearly 500 pigs, Purina claims to operate the largest swine nutrition research facility in the U.S.

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