

## TOO MUCH PROTEIN IN PIG RATIONS CAN CAUSE POOR GROWTH

**R**ECENTLY in the Highlands, a commercial pig farmer had problems with his weaned pigs which did not appear to be growing as well as they should. The pigs seemed to be well looked after and there did not appear to be any sickness in the herd, but they were still not growing as well as could be expected. It was decided that the feed rations which the farmer used could bear investigation.

Twenty-two of his pigs were divided into four groups. Two groups were kept at his piggery and two groups were brought to the DASF piggery at Goroka. One group in each place was fed on the farmer's rations and the other groups were given DASF rations. The pigs were weighed every week. At the end of the 50-day experiment it was found that the two groups which had received the DASF rations had grown more quickly than those on the farmer's rations. One reason why they grew more quickly was because they ate more of the DASF ration.

Investigation of the farmer's ration showed that he was using 23 per cent protein, while the recommended ration for weaned pigs is 18 per cent protein. It seems that the farmer's ration had too much protein in it. Since then he has reduced his protein to 18 per cent by increasing the amount of crushed sorghum in his mixture, with the result that his pigs are now growing well.

While it is known that protein is essential for growth, it is now apparent that too much protein retards as much as too little.

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