

Furthermore, feeding in individual pens led to reduction of the variability of body composition criteria (variation coefficients reduced by 20 p. 100 on an average). Thus, this method allows to increase the accuracy of young males testings at the station, as well as that of the measurements made during the feeding trials, without reducing the feed intake level of the animals.

2. Body composition traits estimated in this trial by means of various methods (measurement of fat thickness, weight of cuts, estimation of specific gravity) confirm the low carcass quality of *ad libitum* fed *Large White* pigs (loin/backfat ratio varying from 1.5 to 2.2). Moreover, the 36 p. 100 reduction of the carcass quality and 15 p. 100 increase of the feed intake (corresponding to 38 kg feed per pig) in the castrated males as compared to the non castrated ones (males or females) emphasize once more the economic loss resulting from castration of pigs from this breed.

Measurement of zootechnic performances in pigs subjected to a pre-fattening period of variable length

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The purpose of this trial was to compare two rearing techniques for bacon pigs :

— classical rearing in one only piggery with restricted feeding ;

— two rearing phases : a growing period with *ad libitum* feeding (pre-fattening) and a finishing period with restricted feeding in another piggery. The length of the pre-fattening periods was 28, 42 or 56 days.

In our experimental conditions, the best technique from both a zootechnic and economic point of view is that based on the association of severe restriction during the finishing period and a long lasting pre-fattening period (42 or 56 days), *i. e.* till a mean weight of 65 kg.

Maize and barley flaking and popping

I. — PROCESSING

II. — FLAKED MAIZE DIGESTION IN THE GROWING PIG

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I. — *Processing*

Steam flaking (130°C, 45 or 55 mn) and grain popping in 280°C heated air during 50 seconds increases long chain soluble carbohydrate formation and intensify α -amylase *in vitro* action upon starch.