Original Research Article

Effect of Dietary Tapioca Levels on Growth Performance and Meat Characteristics of Pigs

ABSTRACT

There is little definitive information available regarding tapioca's effect on the swine performance and meat quality. Thus, this study was performed. Thirty-six cross-bred [(Landrace × Yorkshire) × Duroc] growing-finishing pigs with their average initial BW of 26.5±2.1 kg was used in this study. The animals were fed with control (no addition), treatment 1 (T1 – 10% tapioca) and treatment 2 (T2 – 20% tapioca) for different periods (tapioca as-fed basis). The experimental period lasted for 98d. Carcass characteristics, physicochemical properties, meat composition and sensory test were not significantly different among treatments except for the carcass weight which was increased (p<0.05) in the tapioca diet groups. Swine fed with tapioca-replaced diet has no detrimental effects on growth performance or meat quality. Instead, it significantly increased the carcass weight. Therefore, we conclude that tapioca replacement of 20% can aid as alternative feed ingredient of energy source in improving carcass weight for growing-finishing pigs.

Keywords: Growth performance; pig diet; tapioca.

1. INTRODUCTION

Livestock producers are continually looking for new ingredients to include in diets to fulfill specific consumers' demands. Although conventional grains are the most widely used high energy feed type, unconventional carbohydrates often provide an alternative. Moreover, a concentrated carbohydrate source provided in a diet with high starch composition may improve the growth rate and carcass traits of pigs (Camp et al., 2003). One of these is tapioca, which is a source of starch (62.0%) that has a nutritional value that allows for the replacement of partial concentrate ingredients; this might maximize efficiency for the expected characteristics [1]. Tsudir et al. [2] reported that the tapioca has dry matter (DM), crude protein (CP), ether extract (EE), crude fibre (CF), nitrogen free extract (NFE) and total ash (TA) of 94.20, 3.30, 0.60, 2.70, 91.10 and 2.30 percentages, respectively. Also, the energy content (ME) of tapioca root in pig was somewhat similar as maize [3, 4, 5]. Tapioca has been used as a livestock feed in some of the countries. It has been included at large scale (multi-millions of tons of feed, annually) without causing (health, production, or meat-quality) problems. However, there is little definitive information available regarding its effect on swine meat characteristics. Thus, the amount of tapioca necessary for a sufficient reduction of odorous compounds and swine performance therefore should be determined. Zinn and DePeters [6] previously reported that tapioca pellets can be used to replace up to 30% of dry matter intake in growing to finishing diets without adversely affecting the average daily gains of feedlot cattle. Moreover, a 10-25% inclusion level of tapioca feed ingredient in the swine diet was recommended by Moehn et al. [1]. Using their data as basis, we decided to use tapioca levels of 10 and 20% in the diet. Lower percentages of tapioca (less than 30%) were included in the pig feeding trial due to smaller body size of the pigs than cattle.

The experimental knowledge on efficacy, possible modes of action, and aspects of application of tapioca for swine and poultry are not yet clear. Thus, the effect of tapioca as feed ingredient replacer in the diet formula for growing to finishing pigs as well as the amount of tapioca necessary for growth performance and carcass quality in swine were determined in this study.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Animals, diets and experimental design

A total of 36 male pigs [(Landrace × Yorkshire) × Duroc] with average live weight of 26.53±2.10 kg at the beginning of the experiment and 114.13±3.16 kg at the time of slaughter were used in this experiment. Twelve pigs were used in each treatment and control group which was separated by three pens with four pigs in each pen. The pigs were provided balanced diet at 5.5% of BW/d and supplied fresh water throughout the experiment. The diets were divided into grower (20-50kg), early finisher (50-80kg) and late finisher (80-120kg), and tapioca levels were provided at 10% (T1) and 20% (T2) (Table 1). The composition of the diets and their calculated chemical composition were prepared and supplied during the experimental period in accordance with the National Research Council (NRC) guideline [7]. The animals used in this experiment were cared for in accordance with the guidelines established by National Institute of Animal Science (NIAS), Korea. The research protocol including the procedures for the care and treatment of the animals was reviewed and approved by the Animal Care Committee at the NIAS, Korea.

Table 1. Diet formulation and nutrient content of the experimental diets for growing-finishing pigs at different stages (as fed-basis)

Live weight (kg)	Grower (20 ~ 50)			Early finisher (50 ~ 80)			Late finisher (80 ~ 120)		
Item/ Diets	Control	Tapioca 10%	Tapioca 20%	Control	Tapioca 10%	Tapioca 20%	Control	Tapioca 10%	Tapioca 20%

Ingredients, %									
Soybean meal	19.07	22.73	25.66	11.99	16.54	19.18	3.94	9.84	12.49
Corn	68.09	50.73	45.91	76.23	54.65	49.98	68.31	56.28	50.19
Palm meal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.50	5.00
Tapioca	-	10.00	20.00	-	10.00	20.00	-	10.00	20.00
Lupine seed	6.48	-	-	6.36	-	-	8.06	-	-
Wheat grain	-	8.03	1.09	2.48	11.00	4.22	10.81	12.85	4.52
Salt	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30
Methionine	-	-	0.02	-	-	-	-	0.03	0.06
Lysine	0.19	0.17	0.13	0.14	0.10	0.07	0.17	0.11	0.11
Limestone	0.84	0.84	0.60	0.82	0.77	0.54	0.86	0.86	0.44
Molasses	2.47	2.96	3.00	0.32	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.68	4.00
Dicalcium phosphate	0.77	0.57	0.81	0.54	0.33	0.57	0.23	0.11	0.52
Soybean oil	1.12	3.00	1.81	-	2.49	1.32	2.50	2.62	1.55
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Nutrient Content*									
DM, %	89.64	89.65	89.64	89.67	89.66	89.68	89.68	89.68	89.69
CP, %	16.16	15.90	16.00	13.80	13.80	13.80	11.50	11.70	11.50
DE, kcal/kg	3,450	3,450	3,450	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400
CF, %	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.30	4.30	4.30
Ca, %	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.45	0.45	0.45
P, %	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.40	0.40	0.40
Lysine, %	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.60	0.60	0.60
Methionine, %	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.23	0.22	0.22	0.19	0.21	0.21

* Calculated values

Vit.-Min. premix provided 3.5g per kg of diet containing 1,600,000 IU of vit. A, 300,000 IU of vit D_3, 800 IU of vit E, 132mg of vit K_3, 1,000mg of vit B_2, 1,200 mg of vit. B_{12}, 2,000mg of niacin, 60mg of folic acid, 35,000mg of choline chloride, 800mg of pantothenic calcium, 9,000mg of Zn, 12,000mg of Mn, 4,000mg of Fe, 500mg of Cu, 6,000mg of I, and 100mg of Co.

The experiment was conducted at a separated building in the Animal Environment Division research farm, NIAS, Suwon, South Korea. The swine house had a fully slatted floor pens and an automatic temperature and humidity controller. The average temperature and relative humidity of the house during the experimental period were 20.0 ± 0.59°C and 60.0 ± 2.8% (mean ± SD), respectively. The study was conducted for 98 d experimental period with 7d dietary adaptation. Growth performance such as body weight, daily gain, feed intake and feed conversion ratio were also measured. In addition, carcass characteristics, physicochemical properties, meat composition, color properties and sensory test of pork *longissimus dorsi* muscle at 14^{th} week of pigs were also determined. Three replicates for each of the parameters were conducted and their averaged data were considered the representative value.

2.2 Measurements for growth performance

The body weights of the pigs were recorded every two weeks from the initial day to the final day of the experiment to calculate the body weight gain (BWG). The feed intake of the pigs was recorded every two weeks by offering a weighed quantity of feed and weighing the residues. The feed conversion ratio (FCR) was expressed as gain (G): feed intake (F) of pigs.

2.3 Meat quality evaluation

When the pigs reached the average live weight of 114.13 ± 3.16 kg, three pigs per pen were randomly selected and transported to a commercial abattoir. They were slaughtered after electrical stunning on the following day and hot carcass weight was measured so that the dressing percentage could be calculated. The dressing percentage for an individual animal was defined as the hot carcass weight divided by the live weight. The carcass and meat quality measurements (obtained from the left side of the carcass) included *longissimus* muscle area, rib eye area, and meat quality grade [8]. Approximately 24 h after slaughter, pH and temperature were determined from the right side of the carcass in the center of the *longissimus* muscle between the 3^{rd} and 4^{th} ribs. A 2.54-cm section of the 9th-rib chop was then removed, and cooking loss and shearing force values were determined as described previously by Kauffman et al. [9] and Bee et al. [10], respectively. The carcasses were stored under a deep freezer (-18°C) for chemical body analyses. Laboratory analyses of the pork samples were conducted two months after sampling. The samples were unfrozen at room temperature (20°C), ground, homogenized, and analyzed in triplicate. The preparation of the carcasses for chemical body analyses was conducted by the method developed by Kotarbińska [11]. Meat moisture and ash contents were determined according to AOAC guidelines [12]. Crude protein content in the samples was obtained via the Kjeldahl method [12]. Crude fats were extracted by the Bligh and Dyer method [13] with a chloroform/methanol mixture. Color measurements were taken using a colorimeter (Minolta CM 3500m, Japan). The color readings including lightness (L), redness (a) and yellowness (b) were taken from a *longissimus* section (from the 8th to 10th ribs). The equipment was standardized using a white color standard.

2.4 Sensory evaluation

For the sensory evaluation, meat samples were cooked in an electric grill with double pans (Nova EMG-533, 1,400 W, Evergreen, Korea) to an internal temperature of 75°C. The meat samples (2 × 4 × 1.5 cm) were placed into randomly coded white dishes and served with drinking water. Fifty panel members from the NIAS did sensory evaluation on the meat quality. A 5-point hedonic scale ranging from 1 (dislike very much) to 5 (like very much) was used to evaluate product attributes (juiciness, tenderness and flavor) in accordance with the guidelines established by Arambawela et al. [14].

2.5 Statistical analysis

In the current study, all data were subjected to one-way ANOVA procedures for a completely randomized design using the general linear model (GLM) procedures (SAS Inst. Inc., Cary, NC) [15]. The growth performance, carcass traits, and pork quality data were compared and significant differences among means of treatment and control groups were assessed using Duncan's multiple range (comparison) tests. Variability in the data was expressed as the pooled mean values and standard error (SE) or standard error of the mean (SEM) via the MEANS procedure. The threshold for significance was $p<0.05$ for all measured variables.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Growth performance

Several grain sources for swine are available in the market. In spite of that, livestock producers are mostly concern in choosing carbohydrate-source products are the energy value and cost of the grains. Tapioca is one of these alternative carbohydrate-sources which are more economical. Having somewhat similar energy content (ME) of tapioca root and maize [3, 4, 5] explains unaffected digestible energy (DE) with 3,450 kcal/kg and 3,400 kcal/kg in grower and finisher feed formulation as well as other parameters available when we replaced with tapioca in the feed (Table 1).

The effects of the experimental dietary treatments on the growth performance, including weight gain, feed intake and feed conversion ratio of the pigs are provided in Table 2. The animals remained healthy throughout the duration of the experimental periods and no differences in feed and water intakes were observed between the control and the tapioca-replaced groups. Growth performance was not significantly affected by the treatments. This indicates that replacing corn with tapioca will not affect the growth performance but rather will help the livestock producer in reducing feed cost.

Table 2. Effects of dietary tapioca on the growth performance of pigs[1]

Parameters	Control	Tapioca		SEM[4]
		10%	20%	
Body weight, kg				
IBW[2]	26.5	26.3	26.8	2.10
FBW[3]	112.5	115.0	116.9	3.16
Average Daily Gain, kg	0.84	0.87	0.88	0.02
Average Feed Intake, kg/d	2.61	2.73	2.74	0.54
Average Daily Water Intake, L/pig/d[5]	5.48	5.53	5.59	5.53
Average Feed conversion ratio	3.11	3.14	3.11	0.09

Values presented as Mean; [1] Individual pig was the experimental unit (n = 12); [2] IBW - initial body weight; [3]FBW - final body weight; [4] SEM – standard error mean; [5] Average daily water intakes during the entire experiment including adaptation and collection periods.

Although it was not statistically significant, treatments receiving diets with 20% and 10% tapioca content tended to show a higher growth performance as compared to control. It showed decreasing trend in final body weight (116.9, 115.0 and 112.5 kg), average daily gain (0.88, 0.87 and 0.84 kg), and average feed intake (2.74, 2.73, and 2.61 kg/d) from T2 followed by T1 and then control. However, in the study reported by Tsudir et al. [2], significantly higher ADG was observed in 50% level of tapioca replacement in feed. The result of our study was different with the result obtained by Tsudir et al. [2] due to higher tapioca level was replaced. On the other hand, there was an increase in the intake of feed during the whole experimental period when the grain was replaced with tapioca at different levels which was comparable to the result obtained by Tsudir et al. [2]. This indicates that the diet containing tapioca has a good palatability which made it readily accepted by the pigs and thus increases in feed intake.

3.2 Carcass characteristics and meat quality

Indices of carcass quality including carcass characteristics, physicochemical properties, and meat composition are shown in Table 3. The carcass characteristics, (rib eye area, dressing percentage, and meat quality grade), physical properties (shear force, cooking loss, pH, temperature and water holding capacity (WHC)), and meat composition (moisture, fat, protein and ash) were insignificant except for the carcass weight (p<0.05). Moreover, carcass weight had decreasing trend from highest to lowest of tapioca supplementation (p<0.05) with 88.75, 8.17 and 85.08 in T2, T1 and control, respectively. The reason for the increase in carcass weight is unclear. However, Schumacher et al. [16] stated that carbohydrates (sucrose) improved carcass weights. Although they employed different carbohydrate ingredients on that study, our results on tapioca replacement were generally consistent with theirs. Even though it was not significant, the increased feed intake and final body weight might be the reason for the significantly increased in carcass weight of tapioca-replaced treatments.

Table 3. Effects of dietary tapioca on carcass characteristics, physicochemical properties, and meat composition of pork *longissimus dorsi* muscle at 14th week of pigs

Parameters	Control	Tapioca		SEM[1]
		10%	20%	
Carcass characteristics				
Rib eye area, cm^2	49.62	50.34	49.53	1.57
Carcass weight, kg	85.08^b	88.17^a	88.75^a	1.54
Dressing percentage, 24-h	73.11	73.95	73.98	0.11
Meat quality grade	1.17	1.17	1.08	0.10
Physicochemical properties of the sirloin				
Shearing force, kg/0.5inch^2	3.89	4.00	3.84	0.08
Oven dry or cooking loss, %	33.44	33.21	32.88	0.40
pH, 24-h	5.58	5.60	5.58	0.02
Temperature, °C, 24-h	3.99	4.01	4.04	0.03
Water holding- capacity, %	53.91	53.27	53.59	0.41
Meat composition, %				
Moisture	72.72	73.22	72.77	0.33
Fat	3.37	3.34	3.38	0.40
Protein	22.32	22.53	22.29	0.15
Ash	0.96	0.99	0.98	0.01

Values are presented as Mean; Means in the same row with different superscripts are significantly different (p<0.05); [1]SEM – standard error mean.

Comparable results were also obtained in physicochemical properties of sirloin and meat composition of tapioca-replaced and non-replaced treatments (Table 3). The result was in concordance with Wang et al. [17] research wherein meat quality was also not affected by the treatments. The results might be due to comparable CP and DE content of the feed formulations. As Goerl et al. [18] and Witte et al. [19] stated that formulating diets based on CP and energy had no effects on physicochemical properties of muscle such as pH and WBC. Thus, tapioca-supplementation did not significantly affect the physicochemical properties and meat composition.

Table 4. Effects of dietary tapioca on color properties and sensory test of pork *longissimus dorsi* muscle at 14th week of pigs

Parameters		Control	Tapioca		SEM[1]
			10%	20%	
Color properties in the sirloin					
	L	55.17	55.39	55.10	0.76
CIE	a	7.93	7.71	8.24	0.26
	b	2.70	2.88	3.01	0.31
	L	48.08	48.30	48.03	0.77
Hunter	a	6.70	6.52	6.97	0.23
	b	2.17	2.32	2.43	0.25
Sensory test of pork					
Juiciness		4.53	4.53	4.53	0.15
Tenderness		4.51	4.67	4.53	0.18
Flavor		4.78	4.68	4.68	0.11

CIE= International Commission on Illumination; L= lightness; a= Redness; b= Yellowness; [1]SEM – standard error mean.

The color properties (L=lightness, a=redness and b=yellowness) and sensory test (juiciness, tenderness, flavor) of pork *longissimus dorsi* muscle at 14th week of pigs were shown in Table 4. Results were unaffected by diet differentiation (p<0.05) which had the same result reported by Goerl et al. [18] and Witte et al. [19] wherein the color properties and sensory properties were also not affected by their dietary treatment. The results of the present study were also in concordant with the results of Beech et al. [20] and Fernandez et al. [21] wherein no effect was detected on pork quality by carbohydrate-sugar added treatment. This indicates that the pork quality as well as the color properties and sensory evaluation were not affected by the diet. This might be due to tapioca is a type of starch which has no strange smell or high fat levels.

McKean [22] stated that the desired effect of the tapioca was to improve weight gain and feed efficiency by improving gut digestion and reducing pathogenic organism loads. Although the tapioca-replaced diet employed in the present study had little effect on growth performance and meat quality, our principal objective was to reduce malodorous compounds and maintain the growth performance and meat quality at least similar to control levels, without any adverse affect after using tapioca. Fortunately, we measured better carcass weight, which was superior in the tapioca group than in the control group.

4. CONCLUSION

The uses of 20% tapioca as feed ingredient replacer improved carcass weight of pigs. Thus, tapioca can be an alternative feed ingredient in growing-finishing pigs without any detrimental effects on growth performance and meat quality.

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