

The performance of calves fed starter feeds containing distillers grains.

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The value of dried distillers grains with solubles (DDGS) as an ingredient in calf starter feed was evaluated in two trials using Holstein bull calves that averaged 5 days of age (+/- 3 d) with a mean BW of 43.9 kg (Trial 1) or 41.6 kg (Trial 2). For each trial 106 calves were randomly assigned to treatments and weighed on d 1, 35, and 56 (Trial 1) or 60 (Trial 2). Each calf received 284 g commercial milk replacer twice daily from d 1 to 28 and once daily from d 29 to 35. Starter feeds were offered ad libitum beginning d 1. All starters were fortified with the same vitamin/mineral premix and formulated to contain 18% CP. The texturized control starter (CON) in both trials was composed of steam-flaked corn, oats, roasted soybeans, molasses, and a pellet containing soybean meal (SBM), fish meal, blood meal, corn gluten meal, and premix. Trial 1 compared CON with 3 pelleted starters composed of ground-corn, SBM, molasses, premix and DDGS. Treatments containing DDGS were: DG10 (10% DDGS), DG10L (10% DDGS + 0.1% L-lysine HCl), and DG20L (20% DDGS + 0.1% L-lysine HCl). From d 1 to 35 ADG was 475 g and did not differ among treatments ($P>0.20$). From d 35 to 56 ADG was 825, 765, 726, and 689 g for calves on treatments CON, DG20L, DG10L, and DG10, respectively. The CON supported more weight gain ($P<0.05$) than either DG10L or DG10. DG20L was not different ($P>0.05$) from either the CON or the DG10L and DG10 treatments. Trial 2 compared CON to a whole-corn/SBM/DDGS starter with 20% DDGS (DG) and a whole-corn/SBM starter (SB). All starters were formulated to 18% CP. The ADG from d 1 to 35 was 438, 427, and 343 g and from d 1 to 60 was 600, 565 and 501 g for CON, DG and SB treatments, respectively. The CON and DG treatments supported similar ADG. The SB treatment supported less ($P<0.05$) ADG than CON and DG treatments at d 35 and less ($P<0.05$) ADG than CON at d 60. In these trials starters with 20% DDGS supported ADG similar to a traditional texturized calf starter.

Key Words: Distillers Grains, Starter Feed, Calves