Abstract

There is an interest in diets with alternative ingredients for improving productive performance of animals. Therefore, an experiment was conducted to evaluate the effect of a seaweed (Macrocystis pyrifera) addition to wheat-based diets for lactating sows on milk production and composition, litter weight gain, and weaning-first postweaning estrus interval. Thirty-two multiparous sows (Landrace×Duroc×Yorkshire) were fed four diets with eight replications. The treatments were: T1) wheat-soybean meal base diet; T2) T1+1.5% seaweed; T3) T1+3.0% seaweed; and T4) T1+4.5% seaweed. Litters were standardized to eight piglets, and milk production was calculated at 6, 13, 20, and 27 d of lactation; milk protein percentage was determined at 13 and 27 d. Seaweed addition did not affect (p>0.05) the analyzed variables. There was an increment (p≤0.05) in the productive variables as lactation advanced. The peak of milk production was observed between the third and fourth week of lactation. Litter weight gain and feed intake were highest in the fourth week. The results suggest that seaweed may be added to lactating sow diets since does not affect productive and reproductive performance of sows and their litters.

Keywords

Seaweed, sows, lactation, piglets.