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## Using Paylean<sup>®</sup> with Show Pigs

*By Rosie Nold, Extension Youth Specialist, Animal Science*

### What is Paylean<sup>®</sup>?

Paylean<sup>®</sup> is a trademark name for the feed additive ractopamine. Ractopamine alters how the feed that pigs consume is used for growth. Ractopamine directs more nutrients toward muscle growth and less toward fat synthesis. One of the results is pigs with more muscle mass in the loin and ham, and an increase in percent lean. Additional results are improved feed efficiency and rate of gain, heavier carcasses, and increased dressing percent.

Paylean<sup>®</sup> was approved for use by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in December 1999 as a swine feed ingredient to increase rate of gain, improve feed efficiency and improve carcass leanness. It is approved for use in swine weighing from 150 to 240 pounds and fed a complete ration containing at least 16% crude protein. Through the drug approval process, the FDA determined that Paylean meets stringent human food safety criteria and is safe for pigs when used according to the label.

### Can Paylean<sup>®</sup> Be Used in Show Pigs?

Yes, because this product is approved for use in swine, it can be used with show pigs. However, when using this product in show pigs, all label directions must be followed. Using a feed additive in any way other than identified on the label is known as "off-label" use, and is illegal. All feed additives can only be used exactly as indicated on the label. Specifically, some of the label restrictions that must be followed are:

- Paylean<sup>®</sup> may only be used in swine.
- Paylean<sup>®</sup> may only be fed at the rate of 4.5 to 18 grams per ton of feed.
- Paylean<sup>®</sup> may only be fed to swine between 150 and 240 pounds.
- Paylean<sup>®</sup> must be included in a complete ration containing at least 16% crude protein.
- Paylean<sup>®</sup> premixes cannot be fed undiluted or used as a topdressing.

### What Will Paylean<sup>®</sup> Do?

Numerous research studies in which Paylean<sup>®</sup> was fed at a rate of either 9 or 18 g/ton of feed to pigs from 150 to 240 pounds have shown improved carcass traits, as compared to pigs fed no Paylean<sup>®</sup>. Specifically, some of these improvements include:

- Decreased 10th rib fat depth approximately .1 inch.
- Increased loin eye area approximately .7 square inches.
- Increased dressing percent approximately 1%.
- Increased calculated percent lean approximately 1.3%
- Paylean<sup>®</sup> did not negatively affect meat quality traits.\*

To maximize the carcass improvement response from feeding Paylean<sup>®</sup>, consider feeding it at a rate of 18 g/ton, beginning five to six weeks before the show.

### **Are There Any Concerns With Feeding Paylean<sup>®</sup> to Show Pigs?**

When feeding Paylean<sup>®</sup> to any pigs, the total dietary lysine, the first limiting amino acid for swine, should be increased .30% from normal feeding levels. Because the growth of muscle in pigs fed Paylean<sup>®</sup> is much higher than in other pigs, a feeding program with higher levels of lysine is needed to support the rapid lean growth.

Paylean<sup>®</sup> should only be used in rations containing percentage of crude protein similar to those found in rations for commercial hogs.

Because many show pigs have the genetic base to be leaner and heavier muscled than average hogs, care must be exercised when handling these hogs. Heavier muscled hogs require more time to move. Use of Paylean<sup>®</sup> will further enhance the muscling in these hogs, thus even more care must be taken in handling. Avoid pushing the hogs to move any faster than they want to move and avoid using force to move the hogs. Additional reasons for taking extra care in handling these hogs include weather conditions of extreme heat that are often present during the show season and the possibility of the hogs being stress gene carriers.

Do NOT restrict water intake to pigs fed Paylean<sup>®</sup>. All animals should have plenty of clean water available at all times. Because muscle is about 75% water, the increased muscle deposition in pigs fed Paylean<sup>®</sup> increases their need for water even more.

### **Summary**

Paylean<sup>®</sup> is a safe, relatively inexpensive way for youth producers to improve the carcass characteristics of their show pigs. Additional management may be necessary to adjust rations and appropriately handle show pigs fed Paylean<sup>®</sup>. Paylean<sup>®</sup> should only be used according to label directions.

\* Technical data adapted from Elanco Paylean<sup>®</sup> Technical Summary.

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