Letter to the Editor

Reply to “Letter to the Editor”

1. Our investigations covered the whole range of methionine supplement from deficiency to excess, for the following reasons:
   1.1. There have been few direct comparisons of the effect of DL-Met or DL-MHA supplements on the N-balance of chickens and piglets.
   1.2. It is not clear that these supplements are equally efficient in diets where methionine is the only limiting factor.
2. The unexpected positive response in animals on the low supplement diets, and the small increase in response to higher supplementation, may be explained by the high proportion of *Vicia faba* beans in the diets, resulting in relatively low ME-contents and an already more balanced DL-Met:ME and DL-MHA:ME ratio at the lower supplementation levels. However, both the control diet and at least the lowest level of supplementation were clearly deficient in methionine for both chickens and piglets.
3. The N-retention response should be related to the amount of supplement consumed and not to its concentration in the feed, especially in chickens fed ad lib. It is agreed that the experimental design requires regression analysis, and the equations chosen were those with the best fit.
4. Our hypothesis was that Alimet® contained 88%, and not 74% methionine equivalents as recommended by Degussa, which was confirmed by non-significant differences in N-retention between animals fed DL-Met- or DL-MHA, and therefore, we concluded that both were equally effective supplements. However, in pigs, DL-MHA-supplementation caused significantly lower urine-N-excretion than supplementation with DL-Met.

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