

# *Meat the Future*

Jenilee Godsey, Youth Agriculture

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## **“More Medium Chain Fatty Acids in Swine Feeds Not Necessarily Better”**

Here is an article I would like to share with you written by Pat Melgares, the Communication and Ag Education Public Information Officer. It provides an insight to previous research done that showed the value of medium chain fatty acids in swine diets.

When Kansas State University swine nutritionists design diets for pigs, they typically think of medium chain fatty acids as ‘good guys.’

Over the past five years, K-State researchers have consistently found that those fatty acids lead to better health and well-being of pigs – just as they do in humans – and have a positive impact on the feed efficiency and growth of pigs.

Now they are reporting that more isn’t necessarily better.

“Our initial studies used rather high concentrations of medium chain fatty acids in swine feed to demonstrate their effectiveness,” said Jason Woodworth, a swine nutritionist with K-State Research and Extension. “As we progressed in the research we found that lower levels of MCFA generated similar benefits.”

That’s good news for swine producers because when nutritionists include smaller amounts of medium chain fatty acids in feed, those diets cost less. Further, Woodworth notes, “these findings will allow more options for feed ingredients that can be used to enhance the overall feed biosecurity in swine operations.”

As the weather gets colder, Woodworth said one virus of particular concern to swine producers is porcine epidemic diarrhea virus, or PEDv, which causes severe diarrhea in pigs and leads to nearly 100% mortality in pre-weaned pigs.

“More and more research is showing the benefits of medium chain fatty acids in reducing or mitigating PEDv risk in feed,” Woodworth said. “With this research, there will likely be new products coming to the market that will be available for producers to consider as part of their entire biosecurity program.”

Woodworth and the K-State swine nutrition group will be talking about their work with medium chain fatty acids during the annual K-State Swine Day, which is taking place in Manhattan on Nov. 21. Registration for that event costs \$25 through Nov.12, \$50 afterwards. Students can attend Swine Day for free if they pre-register.

For information or to pre-register, visit <https://www.asi.k-state.edu/events/swine-day/index.html>.

This is an article written by Pat Melgares with Kansas State University Department of Communication and Ag Education. For more information, contact Jason Woodworth [jwoodworth@ksu.edu](mailto:jwoodworth@ksu.edu).

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