Better feed conversion by phytogenic products - Reduction of antibiotics?

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Antibiotics have negative side effects, are not well accepted by the consumer and their sub therapeutic use has been prohibited in the EU since 2006. Today, besides other alternatives, phytogenic products (extracts and essential oils from plants) are used to fill the void. Regarding feeding costs, FCR is most important to the highest return on investment.

Two trials are shown to prove the efficacy of this type of product in broiler feeding.

1. To the diets of 1120 sanitarily challenged male chicks either standard antibiotics, phytogenics or a mixture of both were added. FCR improved significantly in all groups compared to the control. After withdrawal of antibiotics, the positive effects persisted in the mixed groups, in the pure antibiotic groups FCR worsened.

2. In another trial with 780 broilers three commercially available products with different composition and contents of phytogenics were compared. DG and mortality did not differ but T2 showed a significantly better FCR than the control group as well as the groups fed with competitive products.

Conclusion: The utilization of phytogenics could lead to a reduction of antibiotics in animal production, but the most important factor for their efficiency is the individual selection and composition of extracts and essential oils.