

INTRODUCTION

In its second Five-Year Plan the Government of Trinidad and Tobago stresses the need for the development of the agricultural sector of the economy in an effort to reduce imports of food, achieve a greater degree of self sufficiency and to alleviate the balance of payments problem.

Of a total consumption of approximately 11 million lbs. of pork products, Trinidad produces only about two million lbs. Any increase in the productive efficiency of agriculture can make a significant contribution towards the economic development of the nation.

Recent interest in pig production has been stimulated partly by the Government's actions and partly by the needs of the farmers to diversify production and undertake new forms of agriculture. Pig production in Trinidad is expanding rapidly and, following in the footsteps of the poultry industry, will reach self sufficiency within the next few years. With pig production on the verge of a minor revolution, the need for research and investigation is of paramount importance.

Part I of the Report investigates the theoretical aspects of feeding efficiency in pig production, and illustrates its economic importance. Factors affecting feeding efficiency are also discussed and ways in which these can be influenced are suggested. Particular reference is made to the reduction of food costs by the use of locally produced feed ingredients.

Part II investigates the actual feeding efficiency under both commercial and experimental conditions. The data illustrates the impact of food conversion ratios and ration costs on the margins over food cost and the consequent profitability of pork production.

Suggestions for reducing production costs and improving efficiency are also discussed. It is hoped that the information and discussions will be of use to the commercial farmer in improving economic efficiency, and to the research worker in stimulating research and outlining the possible direction of future investigations. It is also hoped that this study will encourage the feed manufacturers to investigate the use of locally produced feed ingredients, so that the future prosperity of the industry will no longer be burdened by high cost feeds.