GROWTH PERFORMANCE AND CARCASS CHARACTERISTICS OF RABBITS (Oryctolagus cunniculus) FED KOLANUT (Cola acuminata) HUSK MEAL

Jiya, E. Z., B. A. Ayanwale, J. G. Aboyeji and M. F. Olorunleke

Department of Animal Production, School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology, Federal University of Technology Minna, Niger State, Nigeria.

Abstract

An eight week experiment was conducted using thirty six rabbits (mixed breeds) with the sex ratio of 1:1(male; female) to investigate the growth performance and carcass characteristics of rabbits fed different levels of kolanut husk meal (KHM). The rabbits were randomly allotted to three dietary treatment groups containing 0., 10 and 20% of KHM. There were three replicates per treatment and four rabbits per replicate in a complete randomized design. Data were collected on body weight, body weight gain, feed intake, feed conversion ratio, nutrient digestibility, and meat quality and carcass characteristics. There were no significant difference (p>0.05) in the body weight, weight gain, feed intake and feed conversion ratio. Also there were no significant (P>0.05) differences observed in the values of crude protein, dry matter and crude fibre digestibility of the rabbits except for ether extract which showed significant difference (P<0.05). Cooking yield, cooking loss, water holding capacity shoulder and hind limb weight were not significantly (P>0.05) different. Significant differences (p<0.05) were observed in dressing weight, loin weight, ribs weight, heart and intestinal weight. It was concluded from the result obtained that KHM can be included in the diets of rabbits up to 20% level without having any deleterious effect on the growth performance. However, inclusion of kolanut husk meal improves the carcass characteristics of rabbits.

Keywords: Kolanut husk, Growth performance, Carcass characteristics.

Corresponding Author: ez_jiya@yahoo.com.

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