

Research on the use of dehydrated whole maize plant in the feed of growing rabbits

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Pelleted feeds containing 0 p. 100 or 20 p. 100 or 40 p. 100 dried whole-crop maize at the wax stage were given to growing rabbits.

A rearing trial was carried out in 52 rabbits weaned at 28 days of age and slaughtered at 84. The average daily gain was quite similar in the three groups, while the voluntary intake was increased and the feed efficiency was reduced with dried maize at 40 p. 100.

The digestibility coefficients of nutrients and fibrous components of polysaccharides in the three diets during three periods between 41 and the 70th days of age were tested.

The digestibility coefficients increased during the trial, but significantly until 60 days of age.

Utilization of dehydrated whole maize plant for rabbits

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Four trials were made to study dehydrated whole maize plant as crude fibre source in the diets of fattening rabbits.

Mature maize was incorporated into the diet at three levels: 30, 50 and 70 p. 100. Furthermore (except in one trial) two stages of harvest were compared, hard dough stage versus mature at the level of 50 p. 100 of the diet.

Crude protein and crude fibre contents of the feeds were 15 — 16 p. 100 and 14 — 15 p. 100. Neither the level of maize in the diet nor its stage of harvest affected the average daily gain.

A high proportion of maize at the latest harvest slightly reduced the feed consumption and accordingly the efficiency was improved.

Carcass yield was not modified.

Utilization of dehydrated beet pulp for growing rabbits

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Two trials were made to study the use of dehydrated sugar beet pulp in fattening rabbits (incorporation levels : 0 — 10 — 20 — 30 p. 100).

In the experimental conditions, and particularly with formulas including 16 p. 100 of Weende cellulose, no effect of high pulp levels on mortality was noticed.

Parallel to that, we observed a marked improvement of the feed efficiency that can be attributed to the good energy value of the sugar beet pulp for rabbits.

The authors prefer to restrict the incorporation level of pulp to 15 p. 100, as long as the conditions of use, and particularly the rabbit needs for different kinds of fibre (hemicellulose, true cellulose and lignin) are not determined.

Comparing lucerne meal, safflower meal, beet pulp and grape pomace as roughage sources

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New Zealand White rabbits were fed diets based on lucerne, safflower meal, grape pomace and beet pulp. Though not significant, feeding safflower meal and lucerne produced a higher level of lactation as measured by three week fryer weights than did feeding grape pomace or beet pulp. In addition, safflower meal and lucerne feeding resulted in significantly greater ($P < 0.5$) eight week fryer weights. Young rabbits, when given simultaneous choice of the four diets, consumed significantly ($P < 0.1$) more of the safflower ration. Preference for lucerne was significantly ($P < 0.1$) greater than for grape pomace or beet pulp. Rabbits weaned at five weeks were similar in weight by eight weeks to those weaned at eight weeks.

Effect of sodium hydroxide treatment of orange pulp digestibility

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Digestibility coefficients of seven diets containing 0.30, 60 and 100 p. 100 citrus pulp treated or not with calcium hydroxide were determined in New Zealand adult male rabbits. The results showed high standard errors, and there were significant differences between control diet (0 p. 100) and pure pulp (100 p. 100). Citrus pulp had a highly digestible fibre fraction but the quality of its protein was poor. The calcium hydroxide treatment did not affect the digestibility figures.

Diets containing 60 p. 100 orange pulp were little palatable and treated pulp was more palatable than the untreated one.

Lucerne utilization by rabbits

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Four experiments were conducted with weanling New Zealand White rabbits. In experiment 1, treatments were: 0, 10, 20, 30 and 40 p. 100 lucerne in a yellow maize soybean meal diet. Average daily gains were lower ($P < 0.5$) for the 0 p. 100 lucerne diet than for the others. In experiment 2, extraction of lucerne with ethanol did not remove its growth-promoting effect,