NATURAL PROBIOTIC ALTERNATIVES FOR SUSTAINABLE BROILER PRODUCTION

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Abstract

The present study aims to investigate the influence of administering natural probiotics (kefir, whey, and yogurt) on growth performance, feed intake, and health status in Ross 308 broiler chickens reared under a semi-intensive system. The experiment was conducted over six weeks on four groups of broilers, all receiving the same standard feed, with the only difference being the type of drinking water provided: plain water for the control group and water supplemented with different probiotics for the experimental groups. Monitoring of body weight, feed intake, feed conversion ratio, and health status highlighted the positive effects of probiotics, particularly yogurt and kefir, on growth performance and feed conversion efficiency, without negatively affecting the birds' health or survival rate. The results emphasize the value of natural lactic probiotics as an economical, safe, and sustainable solution that can enhance productivity and reduce dependence on synthetic growth promoters in broiler chicken production.

Key words: *natural probiotics, broiler chickens, semi-intensive rearing, growth performance, feed conversion ratio*