HERMETIA ILLUCENS LARVAL MEAL SUPPLEMENTATION: GROWTH PERFORMANCE, FEED AND ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY IN BROILER CHICKENS

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Abstract

The study aimed to evaluate the effect of Hermetia illucens larval meal (HILM) supplementation on growth performance, feed efficiency, and economic efficiency in Ross 308 broiler chickens. The experiment included 80 one-day-old broiler chicks randomly assigned to four groups: a control group and three experimental groups receiving diets supplemented with 2.0%, 3.5%, and 5.0% HILM. Broiler chickens were fed phase-specific diets during the Starter, Grower, Finisher I, and Finisher II periods. HILM supplementation reduced feed consumption compared with the control group. The highest final body weight was recorded in the 3.5% HILM group (3121.88 g), exceeding the control by 216.13 g (7.44%). Feed consumption was 4186.06 g/bird in this group compared with 4313.78 g/bird in the control. Carcass yield reached 74.83%, and conditional economic efficiency was highest at 62.37 lei.

The results demonstrate that dietary inclusion of 3.5% HILM improved growth performance, feed utilization, and economic efficiency of broiler chickens, indicating its potential as an alternative protein source in broiler nutrition.

Key words: *Hermetia illucens; larval meal; broiler chickens; growth performance; feed efficiency*