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Effect of feeding different levels of *Asparagus racemosus* (Shatavari) and *Withania somnifera* (Ashwagandha) on performance of broilers

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Animal feeding based on aromatic plants parallel to their natural requirements became an interesting research topic particularly after antibiotic supplementation to diets was banned in Europe at the beginning of 2006. Plants are used for medical treatments since the prehistoric time. An experiment was conducted on 240 commercial broiler chicks i.e. day old (Ven Cobb Strain). The chicks were divided into four groups, each of three replicates of 20 chicks each. The chicks were kept in floor pens, water and feed were provided *ad libitum* throughout the experimental period of 42 days. Four experimental diets were prepared, without any supplementation (T_1) control, with supplementation of Aswagandha powder @ 5 kg/t of feed (T_2), with supplementation of Shatavari powder @ 10kg/t of feed (T_3) and with supplementation of Aswagandha and Shatavari @10kg/t of feed (T_4). There was significant ($P<0.05$) effect of supplementation on cumulative body weight of broilers in (T_3) group compared to those in (T_2), (T_4) and control (T_1) groups. Feed intake was significantly ($P<0.05$) higher in (T_1) group than in (T_2), (T_3) and (T_4) groups. The supplementation of Shatavari powder @10kg/t of feed (T_3 group) significantly ($P<0.05$) improved FCR compared to (T_1) group. It was concluded that the effect of addition of Shatavari powder on live weight gain, feed intake and feed conversion ratio was significant ($P<0.05$) compared to control group.

Biography

Ritesh Nikam has completed his MSc (Agri.) in discipline of Animal Husbandry from Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth, Parbhani. Now he is pursuing his PhD (Agri.) from Vasanthrao Naik Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth, Parbhani (Maharashtra).

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