



Effect of different feeding levels of *Emblica officinalis* (Amla) on performance of broilers

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ABSTRACT: The trial was conducted for a period of six weeks day old broiler chicks, uniformly distributed into three groups of 20 chicks in each as T₁, T₂ and T₃ groups. The chicks were fed with standard starter mash which contained crude protein 22.01 per cent and metabolizable energy 2748.84 Kcal / kg (calculated value) up to three weeks of age. For next 3 weeks *i.e.* from 4 to 6 weeks of age with finisher mash which contained crude protein 19.11 per cent and metabolizable energy 2834.01 Kcal / kg (calculated value). Group T₁ received standard broiler diet. Group T₂ and T₃ received standard broiler diet supplemented with Amla powder. The experimental birds were reared on deep litter system and rice husk was used as litter material. The supplementation of Amla powder in broiler recorded significant improvement in all studied growth parameters *i.e.* live body weights, weekly gain in body weights and feed conversion ratio was observed in all the supplemented groups over the control group. However, feed consumption in control group was significantly higher than supplemented group. The economic returns of supplemented groups were slightly lower than the unsupplemented group. The net profit per bird was slight lower in the supplemented group followed by unsupplemented group (T₁).

KEY WORDS : Broiler chicks, Amla powder, Performance

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INTRODUCTION

Indian poultry industry has emerged, as an agro-based industry. Broiler production is the dynamic as well as the most rapidly expanding segment of the poultry industry in the country. Poultry today not only acts as income stabilizer but also provides regular and timely income as compared to crop and other livestock farming. The annual broiler production in the country has increased over the years. The broiler industry is growing at the rate of 12-15 per cent per annum during last few years. The popularity of poultry meat is on the rise during the last two decades. It is of the total meat consumed and is the most popular meat from any single livestock species. Indian poultry industry ranks 2nd in egg production and 6th in chicken meat production (Anonymous, 2011).

The economics of poultry industry depends upon the feed. Over a period of time, extensive efforts have been taken to lower down the cost of production by lowering the expenses on feed. Feed additives are one of the important tools used for improving feed conversion ratio, growth rate and disease resistance. The main objective of the producer was to increase feed efficiency, growth rate and disease resistance. Recent trend in broiler production is to offer feed containing the feed additives to improve the feed efficiency and obtain maximum returns in shortest possible time. Various types of feed additives such as antibiotics, enzymes, hormones, prebiotics, probiotics, herbal products etc. are used as growth stimulants in poultry production.

Lots of herbal preparations help the birds to fight stress arising due to various reasons. Adaptogenic herbs like Ashwagandha, Tulsi, Amla, and Ginseng etc. are being used as anti-stress factors for long years in human and animal medicines with proven results (Ranade and Desai, 2005).

In recent years some herbal preparations are widely used as feed additives for enhancing growth, reducing feed cost by improving feed efficiency and for building better immunity. Amla fruit powder as feed additive has been reported to possess

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