THE NIGERIAN VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

54TH ANNUAL CONGRESS

KANO 2017

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

THEME

VETERINARY SERVICES AS TOOLS FOR ADVANCING ECONOMIC GROWTH, FOOD AND NATIONAL SECURITY

DATE

6TH -10TH NOVEMBER, 2017

VENUE

Coronation Hall, Government House Kano, Kano State.

A Publication of the Nigerian Veterinary Medical Association (NVMA)

Tuesday C6

GROWTH PERFORMANCE AND CARCASS CHARACTERISTICS OF BROILER CHICKEN FED DIFFERENTLY FERMENTED YELLOW MAIZE

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Two hundred and twenty five day old Hubbard strain broiler chicks were used for the experiment to determine the effect of differently fermented yellow maize on the growth performance and carcass characteristics of the birds. Birds were randomly allocated to five treatments consisting of forty-five birds per treatment with three replicates each with fifteen birds in a completely randomized design (CRD). The yellow maize used was fermented for 0, 24, 48, 72 and 96 hours, sundried and milled with the other feed ingredients. These feed ingredients were used to compound diets for the starter and finisher phases. The treatment were T1, T2, T3, T4 and T5 which represent diets containing maize fermented for 0, 24, 48, 72 and 96 hours respectively. The birds were fed the treatment diets *ad-libtum* for the period of the experiment which lasted for 56 days. Data obtained on growth performance and carcass characteristics were analyzed by one way analysis of variance using SPSS (2016) and Duncan's multiple range test was used to separate the treatment means where differences existed. The growth performance of the birds at the starter and finisher phases were influenced by experimental diets. Birds fed yellow maize diets fermented for 72 and 96 hours performed better with the Control Diet showing the least final body weight gain and daily weight gain. The carcass cuts and dressing percentage were significantly influenced by the treatment but had no effect on the internal organs except the intestine that was significant. It was concluded that feed intake, final and daily weight gain of broiler chickens were enhanced with optimal performance observed in T5. Crude protein and crude fibre digestibility increased with length of fermentation also the diets did not have deleterious effects on the health of the birds.