

## CARCASS TRAITS OF CROSSBRED RABBIT BUCKS FED DIETS SUPPLEMENTED WITH PUMPKIN STEM WASTE

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### ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to evaluate the effect of supplementing diets with varying levels of pumpkin stem waste (PSW) on carcass traits as well as performance of rabbits. Twenty four crossbred (Dutch x Chinchilla) rabbit bucks aged 6 to 7 weeks were divided into four treatment groups of six (6) bucks each with two bucks per replicate. The bucks were randomly allotted to four dietary treatments arranged as follows; T<sub>1</sub> (basal diet only); T<sub>2</sub> (basal diet + 5% PSW); T<sub>3</sub> (basal diet + 10% PSW); T<sub>4</sub> (basal diet + 15% PSW). Each diet was fed to a group of the six rabbit bucks. At the end of 56 days, 8 bucks were slaughtered (2 per treatment). Results obtained indicate that bucks fed diets T<sub>2</sub>, T<sub>3</sub> and T<sub>4</sub> increased in feed intake significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) compared to those fed the control diet while daily weight gain, feed conversion ratio and cost per weight gain indicated no significant differences ( $P > 0.05$ ). However, carcass traits particularly abdominal fat and liver weights indicate significant reduction ( $P < 0.05$ ) as dietary pumpkin stem increased. These results suggest that supplementing rabbit diets with pumpkin stem waste could increase feed intake as well as improve meat quality due to fat reduction.

**Keywords:** Pumpkin stem, Supplement, Carcass, Rabbit, Performance.