

QUAILS IN THE FINAL STAGE FED WITH WAFER BISCUIT RESIDUE

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Food costs account for about 70% of poultry production costs, mainly from corn and soybeans, since these are the main ingredients used in monogastric diets. In view of the decrease in these costs, the search for alternative foods has been increasing, among them we can mention the residue of wafer type biscuit - product prepared with wheat flour, starch, chemical ferment, butter or fat, milk and presented in the form of pressed sheets. This residue from the surplus production of the industries can be characterized as an alternative source in the feed of quails. Therefore, the objective of this study was to evaluate the inclusion of wafer biscuit residue in the feed of quails type meat on the productive performance of the final phase of growth (22 - 42 days). 250 European quails (*Coturnix coturnix*), unsexed, were distributed in a completely randomized design consisting of 5 residue inclusion levels (0, 5, 10, 15 and 20%) with 5 replicates and 10 birds per plot, totaling 25 units experiments. During the period of 22-42 days, the linear reduction ($P < 0.05$) of the feed intake was observed as the wafer biscuit residue inclusion levels were increased. Wafer cookie residue - due to its physicochemical transformation during the manufacturing process - increases more caloric energy to the ration than corn, which could justify a decrease in feed intake as the levels of inclusion of the residue increased, so that the nutritional requirements of quails could be met, without having to eat more ration, which would increase energy expenditure due to digestion. On the other hand, this decrease in intake may be related to a possible behavioral response, so that birds search for larger particles - such as the basal diet - reducing the intake of the other levels. Despite the decrease in feed intake, both the weight gain and the feed conversion were not influenced ($P > 0.05$) by the inclusion of the biscuit residue, remaining equivalent to the feed with 0% inclusion, which may characterize a certain financial gain when compared to corn, as far as its addition is concerned, which also depends on price, regional availability and other variables. From the above, it can be concluded that wafer biscuit residue, without filling, may be included up to a level of 20% in the diets for quails intended for meat production.

Keywords: alternative foods, feed conversion, feed intake, productive performance, weight gain