

EFFECT OF SIMPLE PROCESSING METHODS OF CASSAVA LEAVES ON HYDROCYANIC ACID CONTENT AND UTILIZATION BY SHEEP

FASAE O.A., OLATUNJI J.A.

Department of Animal Production and Health, University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria

Abstract

An experiment was conducted to determine the effect of simple methods of processing cassava leaves (Cultivar TMS 30752) on its hydrocyanic acid (HCN) content and utilization by sheep. Cassava leaves (CL) were subjected to four processing methods namely cassava leaves washed (CLW); cassava leaves chopped and washed (CLCW); cassava leaves washed and wilted for 24 hours (CLWW) and cassava leaves chopped, washed and wilted for 24 hours (CLCWW). Four (4) West African Dwarf (WAD) rams in a 4 x 4 Latin square design were used to assess the intake and digestibility of the processed CL by the animals. The results of the study showed that HCN content (mg/kg) varied significantly ($P < 0.05$) among the treatments with CLCWW having the least ($P < 0.05$) HCN content of 26.50 and CLW with the highest content (36.57). DM intake, weight gain, DM and CP digestibilities were least ($P < 0.05$) in rams fed CLW diets relative to the other treatments. The weight gain (g/day) of sheep fed CLCWW diets was significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher compared to other treatments. It was concluded that the effect of simple processing methods of cassava leaves reduced the HCN content. Fresh cassava leaves chopped, washed and wilted for 24 hours before feeding can be included in the diets of sheep for optimum performance.

Key words: cassava leaves, processing, hydrocyanic acid, sheep, performance