

Effect of diets containing different nutrient density on performance and faecal egg count of West African Dwarf rams

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Abstract

A study was conducted to determine the effect of different nutrient densities on performance characteristics and faecal egg count of West African Dwarf (WAD) rams semi-intensively managed. Twenty four yearling lambs between 10 – 15kg were used for the experiment. The lambs were allotted to two treatment groups containing 12 animals per group. They were released into the paddock containing sown pasture to graze for 6 hours per day. The animals were randomly assigned to treatments containing two levels of protein-energy density; low energy, low protein (LELP) and high energy, high protein (HEHP) in a completely randomized design. Performance characteristics of WAD rams showed that protein and energy density have significant effect ($P < 0.05$) on weight gain, daily weight gain and protein intake. Metabolic weight gain was influenced ($P < 0.05$) positively by the protein and energy density. Animals fed HEHP diets had significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher protein intake (54.66 g) than those fed LELP diets (22.92 g). The slope observed for animals on HEHP diet was lower compared to that of their counterpart on LELP diet. Hence, HEHP diets improved performance of West African Dwarf sheep as well as reducing the gastrointestinal parasite infection due to lower FEC recorded.

Keywords: Nutrient densities, performance, faecal egg count