

Research Article

Meat qualities characteristics of broiler chickens fed varying levels of *Ocimum gratissimum*

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to determine the effect of *Ocimum gratissimum* (African Basil) on meat qualities of broilers. Two hundred and forty (240) one-day-old broiler chicks were used for this experiment that lasted for eight weeks. The broiler chicks were randomly divided into four treatment groups, each treatment having sixty birds each. Each treatment group was further sub-divided into three replicates with each replicate having 20 birds each. Group 1 was the control which was fed with 0 g level of *O. gratissimum* while groups 2, 3, and 4 were fed different inclusion levels of *O. gratissimum* in the feed at 25g, 50g and 75g per 25kg of feed, respectively. The data obtained were subjected to one-way analysis of variance. Significant ($p < 0.05$) differences were observed in the breast protein, crude fibre and pH. Differences in thigh meat were significant ($p < 0.05$) for crude fat, calcium and pH. In the breast muscle, significant ($p < 0.05$) differences were obtained on tenderness and overall acceptability while the flavor of thigh muscle was significantly ($p < 0.05$) influenced. It could be concluded therefore that *O. gratissimum* inclusion level up to 50g/25kg feed improved the tenderness of broiler breast meat.

Keywords: meat quality, broiler, *Ocimum gratissimum*