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# ANIMAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA (ASAN-NIAS)

Proceedings of the

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theme:

MEETING THE INCREASING DEMAND  
FOR ANIMAL PRODUCTS BY A HUNGRIER WORLD:  
**THE CHALLENGE OF  
IMPROVED ANIMAL PRODUCTION**

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**Edited by:** O. A. ADEBIYI, O. A. OGUNWOLE, O. J. BABAYEMI and E. A. IYAYI

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## **ANIMAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA (ASAN)**

### **PROCEEDINGS OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

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**EDITED BY**

**O. A. ADEBIYI, O. A. OGUNWOLE, O. J. BABAYEMI and E. A. IYAYI**

**6<sup>TH</sup> - 10<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2015  
IBADAN**

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PH I: 09

## Haematology Parameters of West African Dwarf Rams fed Velvet bean (*Mucuna pruriens*) ensiled with Whole Maize Stover

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### Abstract

The haematological characteristics of West African Dwarf (WAD) Rams fed velvet bean (*Mucuna pruriens*) foliage ensiled with whole maize were determined. Twenty (20) growing rams aged 10-15 months with mean weight ranging between 11.75-12.00kg were randomly assigned to four dietary treatments comprising five animals per dietary treatment in a completely randomized design (CRD). Treatment 1 contained 100% ensiled whole maize, Treatment 2 contained 75% whole maize + 25% *Mucunapruriensfoliage* silage, Treatment 3 contained 50% whole maize + 50% *Mucunapruriensfoliage* silage, Treatment 4 contained 25% whole maize + 75% *Mucunapruriensfoliage* silage respectively. Each animal receive each diet at 5% body weight for 105 days. Blood was collected through jugular vein and put into well labelled bottle containing anticoagulant ethylene diaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA). The blood samples were analyzed for Red blood cell (RBC) count, Parked cell volume (PCV), haemoglobin (Hb), white blood cell (WBC) count, neutrophils, lymphocytes, eosinophils and monocytes. Significant differences ( $P<0.05$ ) were obtained in haemoglobin and neutrophil which range from 6.11-9.87g/dl and 35.28 - 41.23% respectively while other parameters investigated showed no significant ( $P>0.05$ ) differences. The nutritional health status of the rams can be enhanced when fed *Mucunapruriensfoliage* and whole maize silage but best result could be obtained when fed silage containing 75% whole maize and 25% *Mucunapruriens*.

**Key words:** Whole maize, *Mucunapruriens*, silage, haematology.

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### Introduction

Nutrition is one of the most important factors in Livestock production. So animals on good plane of nutrition regardless of breed and likely to dress out better [17]. However, the high cost of conventional feed ingredients which has resulted to high cost of animal production [15] limits profitable production. *Mucunapruriens* is a forage legume which its potential has not been fully harnessed by small ruminant farmers [5]. Maize is a cereal crop which its production is in abundant during rainy season, as large tonnes of maize are been thinned out as a post planting operation. Ruminants have potential to utilize whole maize plant but the whole maize plant dried up quickly after thinning. There is thus a need for preservation. Ensiling has been reported to effectively conserve forage and fodder crops [3]. Silage can be an economical source of nutrient for sheep and goat especially on large farms where feeding can be mechanized [14]. Blood examination is also a good way of assessing the health status of an animal as it plays a vital role in the physiological, nutritional and pathological status of an animal/organism [11]. This study was therefore designed to evaluate the effect of feeding whole maize stover with *Mucunapruriens* silages on haematological characteristics of West African dwarf rams.

### Material and Methods

#### Experimental animals and their management

The experiment was carried out at the sheep and goat unit of the Teaching Research farms of the University of Ibadan, Ibadan. Twenty post weaned West African Dwarf rams with average initial weight of 12.00kg and 10-15months old were purchased from a nearby villages. The rams were latervaccinated against endo and ecto parasites. The animals were housed individually and were allocated to experimental diets in a completely randomized design.

### Silage Preparation

*Mucunapruriens* foliage was harvested manually at the onset of flowering while whole maize plant was harvested at milking stage of growth. The harvested fodder crops were chopped mechanically and wilted for 24 hours in order to reduce moisture content. The fodder crops were chopped into 2-3cm length for ease of compaction and consolidation for silage. Filling and compaction was done simultaneously to eliminate air. The silage was prepared in polythene bags in triplicates. The polythene bags were sealed and compressed with weight in small 4 litre mini silos for proximate analysis in the laboratory, while another set of silages were compressed with piles of heavy sand bags in 200litre containers for the feeding trials. Fermentation was done for 21 dya .Treatment 1 contained 100% ensiled whole maize, Treatment 2 contained 75% whole maize + 25% *Mucunapruriens* foliage silage, Treatment 3 contained 50% whole maize + 50% *Mucunapruriens* foliage silage, Treatment 4 contained 25% whole maize + 75% *Mucunapruriens* foliage silage respectively.

### Chemical analysis

From different points and depths of the silages, sub-samples were taken and mixed together for dry matter determination by oven drying at 65°C until a constant weight was achieved. The samples were later milled and stored in an air tight container until they were ready for chemical analysis. Crude protein, crude fibre, ether extract and ash content of the silages were carried out in each of the three replicates of each treatment as described by [1]. The fibre components was determined according to [16]. Haematological parameters including white blood cells (WBC), Red blood cells (RBC) count, haemoglobin (Hb) and packed cell volume were determined as described by [8].

### Collection of blood samples

Towards the end of the 105 days feeding trial, about 2mls of blood was collected from each of the animals by jugular vein puncture. The quantity was collected in ethylene diaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA) bottles to prevent blood coagulation and taken to the laboratory for analysis.

### Statistical analysis

Data were analyzed by analysis of variance, ANOVA, using the procedure of SAS outlined by [12]. The significant means were then compared using Least Significant Difference (LSD) of the same package.

### Results

The proximate composition of the silages are shown in Table 1. Dry matter ranged from 21.57% in T<sub>4</sub> to 26.65% in T<sub>1</sub>. Crude protein increase with increased level of *Mucunapruriens* foliage in the silage with values ranged from 8.02% in T<sub>1</sub> to 13.01% in T<sub>4</sub>. While there were also significant differences ( $P<0.05$ ) in crude fibre, Ether extract, Ash and nitrogen free extract (NFE) percentages across the treatments with values ranged from 21.64 (T<sub>4</sub>) – 26.42 (T<sub>1</sub>), 2.35 (T<sub>1</sub>) – 6.60 (T<sub>4</sub>), 6.50 (T<sub>1</sub>) – 14.39 (T<sub>4</sub>) and 44.36 (T<sub>4</sub>) – 56.71 (T<sub>1</sub>) for CF, EE, ASH and NFE respectively.

**Table 1: Proximate Composition of whole maize stover and *Macunapruriens* Silage**

Parameters	Treatment				
	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>3</sub>	T <sub>4</sub>	SEM
Dry matter (%)	26.65 <sup>a</sup>	23.48 <sup>a</sup>	21.80 <sup>b</sup>	21.57 <sup>a</sup>	0.67
Crude protein (%)	8.02 <sup>c</sup>	8.98 <sup>c</sup>	11.74 <sup>b</sup>	13.01 <sup>a</sup>	0.54
Crude fibre (%)	26.42 <sup>a</sup>	26.20 <sup>a</sup>	24.02 <sup>b</sup>	21.64 <sup>ab</sup>	1.24
Ether extract (%)	2.35 <sup>c</sup>	6.9 <sup>a</sup>	4.67 <sup>b</sup>	6.60 <sup>a</sup>	0.09
Ash (%)	6.50 <sup>c</sup>	8.36 <sup>b</sup>	10.39 <sup>b</sup>	14.39 <sup>a</sup>	0.12
Nitrogen Free Extract (%)	56.71 <sup>a</sup>	52.77 <sup>a</sup>	49.18 <sup>b</sup>	44.36 <sup>c</sup>	2.43

a,b,c: means within the same row with different superscripts are significantly different ( $P<0.05$ ).

T<sub>1</sub> = 100% ensiled whole maize, T<sub>2</sub>= 75% whole maize + 25% *Mucunapruriens* foliage silage, T<sub>3</sub>= 50% whole maize + 50% *Mucunapruriens* foliage silage, T<sub>4</sub> = 25% whole maize + 75% *Mucunapruriens* foliage silage.

**Table 2: Haematological parameters of WAD rams fed Whole maize and *Mucuna pruriens* foliage silage**

Parameters	Dietary				SEM
	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>3</sub>	T <sub>4</sub>	
PCV (%)	28.20	30.02	29.73	27.21	1.03
HB (g/dl)	9.00 <sup>a</sup>	9.87 <sup>a</sup>	9.56 <sup>a</sup>	6.11 <sup>b</sup>	0.34
RBC ( $\times 10^6 \mu\text{l/ml}$ )	10.87	11.66	11.14	10.02	1.27
WBC ( $\times 10^3 \mu\text{l/ml}$ )	7.48	8.85	8.08	7.43	0.77
NEUT (%)	41.01 <sup>a</sup>	41.23 <sup>a</sup>	40.05 <sup>a</sup>	35.38 <sup>b</sup>	3.24
LYMP (%)	56.28	57.03	56.62	56.02	3.46
MONO (%)	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	0.17
EOSI (%)	2.87	3.02	3.00	2.27	0.52

a.b.: means within the same row with different superscripts are significantly different (P<0.05).

T<sub>1</sub> = 100% ensiled whole maize, T<sub>2</sub> = 75% whole maize + 25% *Mucunapruriensi*sfoliage silage, T<sub>3</sub> = 50% whole maize + 50% *Mucunapruriensi*sfoliage silage, T<sub>4</sub> = 25% whole maize + 75% *Mucunapruriensi*sfoliage silage.

Haematological response of WAD rams to different silages is shown in table 2. There were only significant differences (P<0.05) in haemoglobin concentration and Neutrophils across the dietary treatments while there were no significant differences (P>0.05) in the variations observed in all the other parameters investigated.

### Discussion

Crude protein and ether extract increased with increasing inclusion of *Mucunapruriensi*sfoliage in the silage while the Dry matter decreased with increased level of *Mucunapruriensi*s in the silage. There were significant differences (P<0.05) in all the parameters across the treatment. The CP content in T<sub>1</sub> and T<sub>2</sub> were within the critical value of 7% recommended for small ruminants ([10] while T<sub>3</sub> is within the minimum protein requirement of 10-12% recommended value by [2] for ruminants while the CP content of T<sub>4</sub> was slightly above the recommended value by [2]. The CP contents of all the silages under investigation exceed the 8% that can provide the minimum ammonia level required for microbial activities [9]. Decrease in NFE percentage across the treatment is a good indication that whole maize stovers has high soluble carbohydrates needed to supply energy.

The PCV range of 27.21 – 30.02% obtained in this study were within the values (22.00-37.00%) reported by [13] for normal healthy sheep. These values were also close to 29.9 – 33.6% reported by [8] for Clinically healthy sheep. The Hb values obtained in this study is comparable to the normal values recorded for healthy sheep by [6], an indication that dietary treatments T<sub>1</sub>, T<sub>2</sub>, T<sub>3</sub> and T<sub>4</sub> respectively are capable of supporting high oxygen carrying capacity in the animals. Furthermore, the values of PCV and Hb of WAD rams fed whole maize Stover and *Mucuna prureins* foliages is an indication that the animals were not anemic. For RBC, the range of value of 10.02-11.6% obtained in this study was above the range values of 2.40-4.20% reported by [13]. Also the values for White blood cells (WBC) and neutrophils (NEUT) were above the normal range reported for healthy sheep [8] while the values for lymphocytes, monocytes and eosinophils (EOSI) were within the normal range reported by the same authors for clinically healthy sheep. WBC in animal possesses phagocytes functions [4] differential WBC counts were used as an indicator of stress response and sensitive to immune function [5]. The higher WBC and differential counts reported in this study indicated that, the WAD rams seems to possess protective system, providing a rapid and potent defense against any infectious agent. This probably is the physiological basis for the adaptation of this species to this ecological zone characterized by high prevalence of disease.

### Conclusion

The results of this experiment revealed that the silages were not toxic to the animals and have no adverse effects on their health status. Although, most of the parameters investigated in this study were not significant statistically, animals fed silage containing 75% whole maize stover + 25% *Mucunapruriensi*sfoliage performed better in most of the parameters measured.

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