Change feeding time to alleviate the deleterious effect of hot assiut summer on performance of New Zealand white rabbits

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Abstract:

This study was conducted to investigate the effects of feeding time management (at morning or afternoon) on productive performance of New Zealand white rabbits in the hot summer of Assiut. Forty rabbits, four weeks old, were reared in batteries and assigned to 5 groups (8 rabbits /each). In the control group, the feed was offered ad libitum daily (C). While, the first treatment group (T1) was fed at 1000 and 1600 h, during the warmest time of day. The second treatment group (T2) was fed at 1600 to 2200 h. The third treatment group (T3) was fed at 2200 to 0400 h. The fourth treatment group (T4) was fed at 0400 to 1000 h, during the temperate climatic conditions, in order to avoid the deleterious effect of the high temperature on the growing rabbits in the summer season under Upper Egypt. All the other conditions were the same during the experimental period. The rabbits were supplied with clean water all the time. The results showed that change feeding time to afternoon significantly (P≤0.05) improved growth performance, body temperature, dressed carcass percentage. While, no significant differences (P≥0.05) existed in most blood parameters. In conclusion, feeding New Zealand white rabbits at afternoon is a good and economical managerial tool to alleviate the harmful effects of high temperature stress during the summer season.

Keywords:

Rabbits performance, feeding time, hot summer

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