B-86 : EFFECT OF RESTRICTED FEEDING TIME ON GROWTH OF RABBITS

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Twenty New Zealand White crossbred rabbits having a mean body weight of 587 ± 24 g at a mean age of 42 d were randomly allowed either 11 h or 24 h access to feed (10 rabbits per treatment) to study the effect of restricted feeding time on body weight gain (BWG), dry matter intake (DMI), feed conversion efficiency (FCE), and dressing percentage (DP). Except for the time allowed for feeding, all the other management practices were similar for rabbits of both treatment groups. All the rabbits were individually fed daily, with a diet consisting of chopped guinea grass and broiler finisher *ad libitum*, for a period of 49 d. The rabbits which had 11 h access to feed consumed 15 % less dry matter (P), and had 10% higher FCE with no adverse effects on BWG or DP, compared to the rabbits having 24 h access to feed. The results suggest that, in an attempt to reduce the cost of production by lowering DMI and improving FCE in growing rabbits, the time allowed for feeding can be successfully reduced to about 11 h per day with no adverse effects on BWG or DP.