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Effect of Fossil Shell Flour Supplementation on Hematobiochemical Profiles and Parasitic Loads in Dohne Merino Wethers

Olusegun Oyebade Ikusika ^{1*}

¹ Department of Livestock and Pasture Sciences, Faculty of Science and Agriculture, University of Fort Hare, Alice, South Africa

Corresponding author: Olusegun

Ikusika(Oikusika@ufh.ac.za)

Tel : +27736535941

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6646-8341>



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Reviewed by

Assistance professor Abdulkarim Jafar Karim
Tropical Biological Research Unit, College of Science, University of Baghdad

*Corresponding author:

Olusegun Oyebade Ikusika (E-mail: [Ikusika\(Oikusika@ufh.ac.za\)](mailto:Ikusika(Oikusika@ufh.ac.za)))

Address: Department of Livestock and Pasture Sciences, Faculty of Science and Agriculture, University of Fort Hare, Alice, South Africa.

<https://orcid.org/0000-000166468341>

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ABSTRACT

In recent livestock production, Fossil Shell Flour (FSF), a naturally fossilized sediment, has garnered attention as a feed additive. This study investigated the impact of varying FSF levels on hematobiochemical profiles and gastrointestinal parasite loads in Dohne Merino wethers. Twenty-four wethers were randomly assigned to different treatments: a basal diet (0% FSF) and diets supplemented with 2%, 4%, or 6% FSF. Blood and fecal samples were collected at intervals during the feeding trial. Results revealed that wethers fed FSF-supplemented diets exhibited significant increases in red and white blood cell counts from day 25 to 100 compared to the control group ($P < 0.05$). Additionally, wethers on a 4% FSF diet had significantly lower blood urea and serum creatinine levels ($P < 0.05$). Overall, FSF supplementation improved hematobiochemical parameters and notably reduced gastrointestinal parasite burdens, particularly at the 4% inclusion level.

Keywords: fossil shell flour, blood haematology, serum biochemistry, faecal egg count, Dohne-Merino sheep

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