

The effects of probiotics supplement (*Bacillus subtilis* and *Lactobacillus acidophilus*) on feed efficiency, growth performance and fecal consistency index of weaning rabbits

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ABSTRACT

Sixty-four weaning New Zealand White rabbits were used to investigate the effects of probiotics supplement on feed efficiency, growth performance, and fecal consistency index. At 28-days old, the animals were randomly distributed into 4 groups fed four diets for 6 weeks. The treatments composed of basal diets with no probiotic supplement (control), 1×10^6 cfu/g *B. subtilis* (BS), 1×10^7 cfu/g *L. acidophilus* (LA), and 0.5×10^6 cfu/g *B. subtilis* plus 0.5×10^7 cfu/g *L. acidophilus* (BL). The results showed that the average daily gain significantly increased from 24.0 g/day in the control group to 28.1 and 27.9 g/day in the LA and BL groups ($P < 0.05$). Feed conversion rate was significantly reduced to 2.55 and 2.56 in the LA and BL diets as compared to 2.89 in the control diet ($P < 0.05$). Fecal consistency index was significantly reduced to 0.46 and 0.44 in the LA and BL groups as compared to 0.59 in the control group ($P < 0.01$). No different effects were observed on performance of weaning rabbits when supplement only *B. subtilis*. In conclusion, dietary supplementation of probiotic such as 1×10^7 cfu/g *L. acidophilus* could improve feed efficiency, growth performance, and reduce fecal consistency index of weaning rabbits.

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