

Feeding Cost, Growth Performance, Meat and some Carcass Characteristics for Algerian “Hamra” Lambs

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Abstract : Forty Hamra single non-castrated male lambs were included in the present study. Traits analyzed were weighted at birth (BW) every 20 days. At 99.15 ± 1.07 days old, the animals were weaned, then divided in two identical groups: control and experimental lambs (n=20) according to their live weight; 24.63 ± 0.47 and 24.35 ± 0.64 Kg respectively. During 59 days, two varieties of feed were given to assess the growth performance. The feeding system consisted of supplying a commercial concentrate (corn based) for control lambs. However, a similar amount of experimental concentrate (barley based) was given to the experimental ones. Both diets were supplemented with 200g straw of barley/animal/ration. 10 lambs fed with experimental concentrate were slaughtered at 37.85 ± 0.78 Kg live weight. The growth performance, the diet cost, and some of the carcass and meat characteristics were evaluated. Chemical analysis of both given diets showed an elevated crude fibre content in the commercial concentrate. However, the experimental concentrate contained higher amounts of calcium. Both groups grew at a similar rate ($p > 0.05$) and showed the same final body weight. Concerning the cost of the given diet, a significant difference has been found ($p \leq 0.001$), between both diets. This could affect the price of the produced meat. The dressing percentage was 46.65%, with 2.49% of carcass shrink. Furthermore, an interesting percentage of total muscle was obtained (63.73%) with a good carcass conformation scoring 9.56. Compared to other breed sheep, “Hamra” carcass could be considered as the most valuable economically.

Keywords : Carcass characteristics, feeding cost, growth performance, Hamra lamb, meat

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