



ISSN: 2456-2912

VET 2023; 8(1): xx-xx

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www.veterinarypaper.com

Received: xx-11-2022

Accepted: xx-12-2022

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Evaluation of Phytogetic Feed Additive on Egg Production Performance in Hy-Line Commercial Brown Layers

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Abstract

The current study was carried out to evaluate the effect of phytogetic feed additive (PFA) on egg production performance in Hy-Line brown layer birds. A flock size of 14190 birds was selected in commercial poultry farm which was maintained with standard management practices at Spain. The baseline data (T1) was recorded for 20 days, thereafter, birds were fed with PFA (500 g/ton) (T2) supplemented feed for 11 days. The parameters viz. number of eggs, hen day egg production (HDEP) and egg size were recorded. Results revealed that PFA supplementation improved the production parameters viz. no. of eggs/day (204 eggs/day) and HDEP (3%) when compared to baseline. Additionally, the gap between standard HDEP and actual HDEP was reduced (-11.75 Vs. -15.80) in Hy-Line brown layer birds. Also, PFA supplementation augmented the medium sized egg production as compared to baseline (4223 Vs. 3700; Diff. +523). In conclusion, PFA can be used to improve the egg production performance and egg quality traits in Hy-Line commercial layer birds.

Keywords: Phytogetic feed additive, Hy-Line brown layers, HDEP, Egg quality

1. Introduction

There is a resurgence to augment poultry production to meet the increasing demand for animal protein due to the increase in global human population^[1]. However, modern poultry industry has been facing a wide variety of stressors viz. environmental, nutritional, and internal stressors which leads to diminished reproductive production performance and adversely impact the health status of poultry birds as well^[2]. The types of environmental stressors are (i) heat stress^[3], (ii) cold stress^[4], (iii) feed restriction^[5], and many more. Specifically, heat stress is a main pressing issue in present day poultry rearing, as its negative impact on egg production is very much perceived^[6]. Previous studies revealed that stress, in various forms and in various species, would modulate the circulating prolactin and gonadotropins in turkey poults^[7], laying hens^[8], and turkey hens^[9, 10]. These changes in reproductive hormone secretion due to heat stress would negatively impact the reproduction performances.

Adaptogens are defined as metabolic regulators which increase the ability of an organism to adapt to environmental stressors and to avoid damage from such stressors^[11, 12]. Our previous works on Phytogetic Feed Additive (PFA), Phytocee™, in rodent and avian models demonstrated that it possesses an antistress, adaptogenic and antioxidant properties^[13-16]. With these viewpoints, the present study was undertaken to evaluate the effect of PFA on egg production performance parameters in Hy-Line brown commercial layer birds.

2. Material and Methods

2.1 PFA

Phytocee™ is a proprietary PFA developed by Natural Remedies Private Limited, Bengaluru, India, containing mainly dried powder of *W. somnifera stems*, fruits of *E. officinalis* and whole plant of *O. sanctum*.

2.2 General Layer Birds Husbandry Practices

The standard Hy-Line brown layer bird management practices were followed during the experiment. The experimental birds were reared in the cage system and provided with the potable drinking water *ad libitum* throughout the study period. The birds were fed with mash diet as per the breeder manual instructions. Recommended standard Hy-Line layer bird's vaccination schedule was followed.

2.3 Study Design

The study was conducted at commercial poultry farm, Spain. A flock size of 14190 Hy-Line brown layer birds were enrolled and the study design was as described in Table 1.

Table 1: Study design

Group	Treatment	Duration of Treatment	Number of birds /
T1 - Baseline	Standard commercial feed	20 days	14190
T2 - PFA	Standard commercial feed +	11 days	14190

Table 2: Effect of PFA on egg production parameters of Hy-Line brown commercial layer birds

Group	No. of Eggs/Day	Actual HDEP %	Difference		Standard HDEP %	Difference
			No. of Eggs/Day	HDEP (%)		
T1 - Baseline	10771	77	-	-	92.80	-15.80
T2 - PFA (500 g/ton)	10975	80	+204	+3	91.75	-11.75

Values are expressed as mean (average value/day)

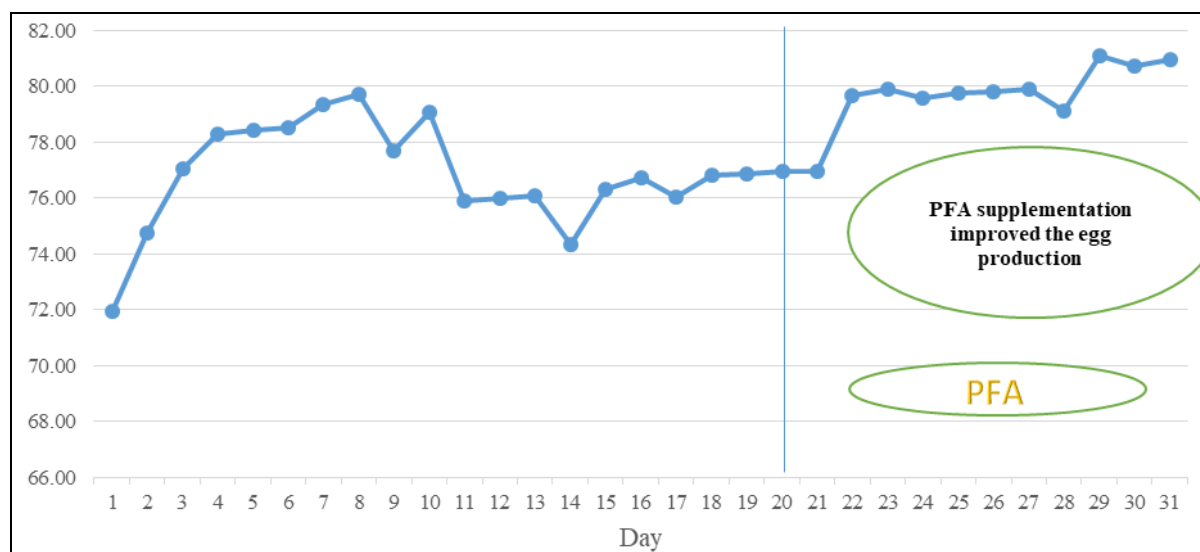


Fig 1: Effect of PFA on egg production parameters of Hy-Line brown commercial layer birds

The results of effect of PFA on egg size of layer birds was as represented in Table 3. Results revealed that PFA supplementation at 500 g/ton (T2) improved the medium

sized eggs production as compared to baseline group (T1) [4223 Vs. 3700; Diff. +523].

Table 3: Effect of PFA on egg size of Hy-Line brown commercial layer birds

Group	Egg Size (Nos.)			
	Jumbo (XXL)	Extra Large (XL)	Large (L)	Medium (M)
T1 - Baseline	193.80	1087.90	5630.30	3700.90
T2 - PFA (500 g/ton)	149.64	916.09	5452.27	4223.18
Difference	- 44	- 172	- 178	+ 523

Values are expressed as mean (average value/day)

4. Discussion

To the best of our literature knowledge there are no reports available evidencing the conducive effects of medicinal herbs *viz. W. somnifera stems, E. officinalis* and *O. sanctum* neither

individually nor synergistically on egg production performance and egg quality traits in Hy-line brown commercial laying birds. Hence, the present study was undertaken to evaluate the effect of PFA on egg production

performance parameters and egg quality traits in Hy-Line commercial layer birds.

Our study results depicted that egg production parameters viz. no. of eggs/day and HDEP was improved by 204 eggs/day and 3% respectively after PFA supplementation in Hy-Line brown layer birds. Furthermore, the gap between standard HDEP production of Hy-Line brown layer birds and actual HDEP was reduced in PFA supplementation period as compared to baseline (-11.75 Vs. -15.80). Additionally, PFA supplementation augmented the medium sized egg production as compared to baseline (4223 Vs. 3700; Diff. +523). Moreover, the findings of egg production in our study are in accordance with the previous findings reported by Akdeimar *et al.*, Radwan *et al.*, Park *et al.*, Damaziak *et al.*, Abou-Elkhair *et al.*, wherein addition of the different phytogetic feed additives in the layer bird's diet significantly increased the HDEP ^[17-21]. Typically, commencement of lay is a prolonged stress factor in young layers which might alter their hormonal system thereby compromising the immunity and making them vulnerable to any infection ^[22]. However, the ability of birds to cope with the stress associated with initial production process can be improved by the addition of herbal adaptogens. Hence the conducive effects of PFA on egg production performance and egg quality traits could be ascribed to the synergistic effects of phyto-actives present in the individual herbal ingredients of Phytocee™ which was evidenced from literature reports that demonstrated the antistress, adaptogenic, and antioxidant potential ^[13-16]. Therefore, the augmentation of egg production performance and enhancement in medium sized eggs production effects in Hy-Line layer birds in the present study following supplementation of Phytocee™ at 500 g/ton could also be attributable to anti-stress, adaptogenic and antioxidant properties of synergistic effect of individual herbal ingredients.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, the results of the present study demonstrated that the supplementation of PFA at 500 g/ton improved the egg production performance as well as enhanced the egg quality traits which can be related to the synergistic beneficial effects of phytoactives present in Phytocee™. Hence, Phytocee™ can be used to improve the egg production performance and egg quality traits of Hy-Line brown commercial layer birds.

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