

## Productivity of Young Broilers Fed *Phyllanthus niruri* Linn and *Melaleuca cajuput* Leaf Meal as a Phytogenic Feed Additive

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### Abstract

Feed additives from medicinal plants can be used as alternative antibiotics to optimize productivity, growth and health in livestock. Medicinal plants *Phyllanthus niruri* Linn (Meniran) and *Melaleuca cajuput* (Kajuput) as alternative growth promoters contain antioxidants and antimicrobials to improve the quality of animal products. The aim of this study was to evaluate the effect of medicinal plant leaf meals as phytogenic feed additives on broilers' productivity and internal organ parameters. For 21 days feeding, 80 1-day-old Loughmann broilers (MB202) unisex were distributed in 4 treatments with 4 pens per treatment and 5 birds per pen. The dietary treatments were: T1 (antibiotics), T2 (2% Meniran), T3 (2% Kajuput) and T4 (1% Meniran + 1 % Kajuput). There were no significant differences ( $P<0.05$ ) in body weight gain, feed intake, feed conversion ratio, average weights of the carcass and internal organ weight by feed additive supplementation. However, the bursa fabricius weight increased significantly ( $P<0.05$ ) with the feed additive. In conclusion, medicinal plant leaf meal supplementation compared to commercial antibiotics has the same effect on growth performance, carcass and internal organ weight. The combination of meniran and kajuput leaf meal as phytogenic feed additives increases the weight of the bursa fabricius which indicates improved health status.

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**Keywords:** growth performance, carcass, phytogenic, organ weight, meniran, kajuput

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## Introduction

Efficient livestock feeding can increase productivity and reduce production costs to increase profits. Feed additives can improve livestock nutritional health, productivity and fulfilment (Mehdi et al 2018). Antibiotics are one of the feed additives that are widely used throughout the world. However, the use of antibiotics in developed countries has been abandoned as a feed additive since 2006 because it is feared that it will cause antibiotic residues in livestock products, causing allergies to consumers (Diarra et al, 2010), disrupt the balance of microorganisms in the digestive tract and the resistance of microorganisms to antibiotics (Ronquillo dan Hernandez, 2017).

Medicinal plants that have long been known to be efficacious for preventing disease in humans are also believed to be used as multi-function phytobiotics (MFP) natural feed additives (phytogenic feed additives). The use of phytogenic feed additives in animal feed can replace the use of antibiotics (Olawuwo et al, 2022). It can prevent the pathogenic bacteria growth in the feed so that the number of non-pathogenic bacteria in the feed is higher (Abd El-Hack et al. 2022). In addition, it can also increase livestock productivity as a growth promoter, increase feed digestibility, detoxify toxins, increase immunity, reduce morbidity and mortality and prevent and treat livestock diseases (Namdeo et al, 2020).

Some medicinal plants have functioned as antioxidant, antifungal, anti-inflammatory, antiviral, antimicrobial, and immunostimulatory properties (Krishan & Narang, 2014) such as *Phyllanthus niruri* Linn (meniran) (Fang et al 2008) and *Melaleuca cajuput* (kajuput) (El-Hack et al. 2022; Talazadeh and Mayahi, 2017). The secondary metabolites of medicinal plants

are the form of active ingredients or bioactive components that have an important role in livestock survival. The compounds of phytochemicals are considered to be easy to use, safe and environmentally friendly (Akdemir et al., 2012). One plant usually has more than one pharmacological effect due to producing more than one type of secondary metabolite (organic acids, phytoalexins, essential oils, etc.) (Brewer, 2011). Several types of active ingredients from the combination of medicinal plants show more effectiveness than the use of a single active ingredient (Günther dan Ulfah 2003).

Considering this, research is needed on the use of phytogenic feed additives from medicinal plants that contain phytonutrients, phytochemicals and essential oils. The aim of the study was to evaluate the effect of medicinal plant leaf meal (*Phyllanthus niruri* Linn and *Melaleuca cajuput*) as phytogenic feed additives on broilers' productivity and internal organ parameters.

## Materials and Methods

For 21 days feeding, 80 1-day-old Loughmann broiler chickens (MB202) unisex were distributed in 16 pens with 5 birds per pen. Broilers were assigned to 4 treatments: T1 (diet with antibiotics (tetracyclines 100 ppm), T2 (diet with 2% Meniran), T3 (diet with 2% Kajuput) and T4 (diet with 1% Meniran + 1 % Kajuput). The diets and water were offered ad libitum. The results of the antioxidant test (polyphenols) of meniran and kajuput leaf meal are shown in Table 1. and the component bioactive are shown in Table 2. The broilers were fed for 21 days (01-21 days of age). The feed nutrients and composition of the basal diet is shown in Table 3.

**Table 1** The results of the antioxidant test (polyphenols)

Item	Polyphenol (%)
<i>Phyllanthus niruri</i> Linn leaf meal (Meniran)	12.53
<i>Melaleuca cajuput</i> leaf meal (Kajuput)	8.62

**Table 2** Component bioactive of *Phyllanthus niruri* and *Melaleuca cajuput*

Component bioactive	Component bioactive	Function	source
<i>Phyllanthus niruri</i>	Lignans: phyllanthin and hypophyllanthin Flavonoids: Rutin, Niruriflavone and Quercetin Alkaloids: Norsecurinine Tannin: Corilagin Terpenes: p-Cymene	Anti-viral and anti-inflammatory Anti-oxidant, anti-fungal and anti-inflammatory Anti-bacterial Anti-fungal Anti-oxidant and anti-microbial	Sibiya et al., 2020; Sagar et al., 2004 Bagalkotkar et al., 2006; Than et al 2006 Bagalkotkar et al., 2006 Zhao et al., 2016 Medeiros et al., 2003
<i>Melaleuca cajuput</i>	Terpenoids: cineol, limonene, 4-terpineol, α-terpineol, α-pinene Linalool caryophyllene and caryophyllene oxide	Anti-bacterial and anti-microbial Anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant and spasmolytic anti-inflammatory, anti-fungal	Ukit et al., 2019; Widiana et al., 2015; Isah et al., 2023 Peana & Mario, 2008 Munoz et al., 2012

**Table 3** Feed composition and nutrient content of the basal experimental diet

Ingredients	Percentage (%)
Maize	56,70
Soybean meal	34,22
Palm olein	2,90
Dicalcium phosphate	1,35
Choline	0,005
DL-methionine	0,28
Premix*	0,51
L-lysine HCl	0,20
L-threonine	0,07
Bone meal	2,00
Phytogenic feed additives	2,00
Analyzed nutrient content	
ME (kcal/kg)	3014,81
Crude Protein (%)	21,77
Lys (%)	1,27
Met (%)	0,59
Trp (%)	0,22
Ca (%)	0,95
P total (%)	0,76
K (%)	0,87
Cl (%)	0,30
Na (%)	0,19
Zn (ppm)	85,61

**Performance parameters:** Productive performance that is measured weekly is final body weight, daily weight gain, feed intake and feed conversion ratio. Mortalities are recorded at the occurrence. On arrival the day-old-chick (DOC) was weighed as initial body weight and during the 3-week trial at the end of each week, the body weight gain was recorded. The difference in weight gain in that week and the previous week is the weight gain.

$$\text{Daily body weight gain (g)} = \frac{\text{final body weight (g)} - \text{Initial weight gain (g)}}{\text{total number of the experiment (21 days)}}$$

Feed intake was measured from the differences between the given feed and the leftover every week. The ratio of their feed intake to weight gain was calculated to get the feed conversion ratio (FCR) of the chickens as the formula below

$$\text{FCR} = \frac{\text{Total feed intake (g)}}{\text{total body weight gain (g)}}$$

**Carcass weight and internal organs weight:** At the end of the experiment (21 d of age), 4 chickens per treatment group (1 chicken/pen) were randomly selected and slaughtered. The weight of their carcasses and internal organ weight (proventriculus, ventriculus, heart, liver, bursa fabricius, spleen, duodenum, jejunum, ileum, colon) were weighed

using a sensitive weighing scale (0.01g). After evisceration, the carcasses were weighed and recorded as relative weights (% live weight).

**Statistical analysis:** Data performance parameters and internal organ weights data were analyzed by one-way ANOVA ( $P < 0.05$ ) followed by Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) using statistical package SAS 9.4.

## Results

The chickens in this research were healthy and there were no dead chickens during the entire experimental period of 21 days feeding. The growth performance data of the broiler chickens is shown in Table 4. The supplementation of the phytogenic feed additives had no significant effect ( $P > 0.05$ ) on body weight, daily weight gain, feed intake and feed conversion ratio. The results for the internal organ weights of the chickens are shown in Table 5. The supplementation of phytogenic feed additive had no significant effect on the carcasses and the internal organ weights of chicken (proventriculus, ventriculus, heart, liver, bursa fabricius, spleen, duodenum, jejunum, ileum, colon). However, the bursa fabricius weight was increased significantly ( $P < 0.05$ ) by the feed additive.

**Table 4** Effect of different phytogenic feed additives on growth performance of broiler chickens

Parameters	Treatments <sup>1</sup>				P value
	T1	T2	T3	T4	
Initial BWT (g)	44.45±1.29	43.80±1.50	43.20±2.06	42.40±2.38	0.644
FI (g)	213.75±24.80	239.50±24.90	226.50±43.65	215.75±35.90	0.755
DWG (g)	82.15±17.41	98.79±15.21	91.44±33.33	87.46±15.02	0.731
FCR	2.64±0.33	2.44±0.25	2.69±0.81	2.48±0.31	0.791
Final BWT (g)	519.50±14.84	506.25±4.78	509.00±9.12	512.20±10.23	0.203

<sup>1</sup>T1: diet + tetracycline 10mg/kg (control), T2: diet + 2% Meniran, T3: diet + Kajuput, T4: diet + 1% Meniran + 1% Kajuput

**Table 5** Effect of different phytobiotics on carcass and internal organs weight of broiler chickens

Parameters	Treatments <sup>1</sup>				P value
	T1	T2	T3	T4	
Carcass (%)	62.7±2.9	64.2±1.0	63.9±1.1	63.6±0.9	0.218
Liver (g)	15.86±0.82	15.91±3.06	18.08±6.01	13.10±2.25	0.175
Heart (g)	3.65±0.57	4.00±0.76	3.82±0.43	3.45±0.56	0.653
Bursa (g)	1.26±0.05a	0.67±0.17b	0.83±0.27b	0.91±0.17ab	0.000
Spleen (g)	0.71±0.12	0.57±0.16	0.90±0.66	0.48±0.17	0.631
Duodenum (g)	4.37±0.48	3.53±0.92	3.51±0.41	3.16±0.46	0.080
Jejunum (g)	11.69±1.43	11.05±1.44	11.03±1.47	10.16±3.14	0.569
Ileum (g)	11.52±3.79	10.45±3.79	11.16±0.66	7.78±1.19	0.177
Colon (g)	1.18±0.15	1.05±0.15	1.65±0.50	1.58±1.44	0.539
Proventriculus	4.35±0.96	4.24±0.65	3.83±0.25	2.99±0.56	0.167
Ventriculus (g)	16.63±2.06	16.72±2.46	17.77±4.36	14.49±1.49	0.544

<sup>1</sup>T1: T1: diet + tetracycline 10mg/kg (control), T2: diet + 2% Meniran, T3: diet + Kajuput, T4: diet + 1% Meniran + 1% Kajuput  
Numbers followed by different letters show a significant difference according to the DMRT range test ( $P < 0.05$ )

## Discussion

Natural compounds from plants are often used in the production of some pharmaceutical/cosmetic products and the agricultural industry. One of the *Melaleuca* species, *Melaleuca cajuput* (Kajuput) is commonly found in Indonesia. A number of investigations have revealed that the *Melaleuca cajuput* oil from leaves has antibacterial, antioxidant, antifungal, relieving effects (Pujiarti et al., 2012) and monoterpenes are the main component in the oil (Siddique et al., 2020).

The inclusion of phytogetic feed additives (PFA) in this study had the same result as Hafeez et al., (2016) that broiler chicken feed containing essential oils in a powdered form characterized by anethole and menthol did not affect the growth performance. Supporting other research by Fornós et al., (2022) on young broiler chickens fed with PFA (cinnamon, oregano, citrus peel) it did not influence the average daily gain but improved the feed conversion ratio. However, different results show PFA including cinnamaldehyde, carvacrol and capsicum oleoresin increases the nutritional value of diets and improves growth performance due to the anti-inflammatory effect (Pirgozliev et al. 2019). Another study shows that the addition of commercially available PFA (Digestaron®, Austria) on turkeys had a positive effect on body weight gain on day 14 and day 48 but no effect on day 28 (Zumbaugh et al, 2020).

This research was conducted for 21 days so the suggestion is to provide phytogetic feed additives until the end of the period. This research had no significant effect on body weight, daily weight gain, feed intake and FCR for all treatments of PFA and the same as a positive control with a commercial antibiotic. The PFA from meniran and cajuput leaf meal can substitute for commercial antibiotics. The effect of PFA in maintaining the same body weight as the antibiotic control group by improving feed efficiency mediated through feeding is related to hypothalamic neuropeptide modulation (Flees et al., 2020).

Treatment 4 had a bigger weight of bursa fabrisius than treatment 3 and treatment 2 but treatment 1 had the biggest. Treatment 4 was no different from Treatment 1. The bigger the bursa fabrisius, the higher the body's immune system. The immune system in poultry is closely related to the function of several

lymphoid organs, one of which is the bursa fabrisius. The bursa fabrisius serves as a place for the maturation of cells from the antibody-forming system in chickens that can destroy antigens that enter the body (Purnamasari et al., 2020). Weight increase in the bursa fabricius may be a proof of the maturation of a greater number of T lymphocytes (CD4 and CD8) and lymphocyte B (indirectly through antibody production), suggesting enhanced development of adaptive immunity. However, an increase in the weight of this organ does not necessarily reflect a greater number of lymphoid cells (Guimarães et al., 2014). The anatomical and physiological development of the bursa can be influenced by the environment such as stress, poor hygiene, vaccination and pathological conditions due to disease. The lymphoid organs weight such as the bursa fabricius can be measured and reflects the body's ability to produce lymphoid cells in an immune response (Tabeeckh dan Mayah 2009). The bursa fabricius produces B-lymphocytes and distributes them to the germinal center in lymphoid storage. This organ is the primary lymphoid organ that produces immunoglobulins in young chickens (Wardani 2009). The bioactive compound of the *Phyllanthus niruri* Linn and *Melaleuca cajuput* stimulates the activity of lymphocyte proliferation and maturation (Jantan et al, 2019; Qu et al, 2019).

The activity of phytogetic plants depends on bioactive compounds that can provide antimicrobial properties in the intestines of animals (Olayemi et al., 2020). *Phyllanthus niruri* Linn extract contains, tannin, niranti, filokrisna, hypophilantin, pseudokhiratin and nirurin flavonoids and philanthine which have been mass-produced for immunomodulatory drugs (Suhirman dan Winarti 2010) and enhance antibody response (Koutsos dan Klasing 2008). *Phyllanthus niruri* has antibacterial activity against a variety of pathogenic bacterial or fungal strains and the best positive effect is obtained from the nanoemulsion method (Pathania et al. 2022). *Melaleuca* has antifungal activity and has been developed in the prevention of candida infections (Zhang et al, 2018). Our results are the same as the findings of Amad et al. (2011), that showed that the supplementation PFA containing thyme and star anise essential oils as lead active components, did not significantly affect the liver, heart, spleen and kidneys. The internal organ weight was normal weight.

Bioactive compounds feed supplementation improves the derived product quality and some bioactive compounds are easily degraded and confer an unpleasant taste on feed (Tolve *et al.*, 2021). Phytochemical components of herbal medications when given in traditional dosage forms have stability, low bioavailability and distribution. As a result, more research is needed to cover the way into the formulation of different plant extract methods or supplementation as feed additives.

In conclusion, the supplementation of *Phyllanthus niruri* Linn and *Melaleuca cajuput* leaf meal as a phytogetic feed additive did not improve the body weight gain, feed intake, FCR, carcass and of internal organ weight. However, phytogetic feed additive provides the same performance as the use of commercial antibiotics and improved health by increasing the weight of the bursa fabricius with the combination of phytogetic feed additives. This research was conducted during the starter period (21 days) so the suggestion is to provide phytogetic feed additives until the finisher period.

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