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Effect of diets containing conventional and unconventional items on holstein calves

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The objective of this study was to determine the effects of unconventional diets on feed intake, weight gain, feed conversion and body composition characteristics of Holstein calves. Twenty male Holstein calves (average weight 147 kg) were allotted to one of the four diets containing: 1) 25% wheat straw (straw-based diet); 2) 25% cardboard (CB-based diet); 3) 25% date palm leaves (DPL-based diet); and 4) 25% protein-enriched fermented fodder (PEFF-based diet). Average daily gain (ADG) was the highest (0.87 kg) on the CB-based diet and the lowest (0.53 kg) on the straw-based diet. Average daily feed intake (ADFI) was the highest (4.9 kg) on the CB-based diet and the lowest (4.5 kg) on the PEFF-based diet, and FC (ADFI/ADG) was the lowest (5.9 kg) on the CB-based diet and the highest (8.7 kg) was on the straw-based diet. The effect of diets on carcass weight, dressing percentage and skin weight was significant ($P<0.05$). The results revealed good approach of feeding dairy calves on CB-based diets.

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