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***Hermetia illucens* larvae meal: evaluation of an alternative protein source in diet for rainbow trout**

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Recent investigations highlighted that insect meals can be a valuable alternative to conventional proteins in aquaculture. This research evaluated the effects of six levels of inclusion of a partially defatted *Hermetia illucens* (HI) meal on rainbow trout performance. A partially defatted HI meal was used to formulate six isonitrogenous (about 46% crude protein, as fed), isolipidic (15% ether extract, as fed) and isoenergetic (22 MJ/kg, as fed) diets. The diets were formulated to have partial replacement of fishmeal (0%, 10%, 20%, 30%, 40% and 50%) by increasing levels of HI meal (0% [HI0], 3% [HI3], 6% [HI6], 9% [HI9], 12% [HI12] and 15% [HI15] on as fed basis, respectively). A total of 576 fish (initial body weight: 100.1±9.29g) were randomly allotted to 24 tanks (24 fish/tank, 4 replicates/treatment) and fed for 121 days. Statistical analysis was performed by means of One-way ANOVA. No differences among the treatments were observed for all the considered growth performance parameters: individual weight gain, specific growth rate, feed conversion ratio and protein efficiency ratio. Dietary treatments did not influence the carcass yield (average of 87.67%). Condition factor was higher than 1 in all the treatments but showed the lowest value in the fish fed HI15 (1.08). Hepatosomatic and viscerosomatic indexes showed significant differences among the treatments, with the highest values being observed in the fish fed HI15 (1.47 and 12.56, respectively). These preliminary results suggest that a partially defatted HI meal could be included up to 15% with no negative effects on rainbow trout performance.

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