

Accepted Manuscript

Title: Diet energy and feed intake in chickens

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PII: S0377-8401(16)30093-1

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.1016/j.anifeedsci.2016.03.004>

Reference: ANIFEE 13488



To appear in: *Animal Feed Science and Technology*

Received date: 28-10-2015

Revised date: 1-2-2016

Accepted date: 7-3-2016

Please cite this article as: Classen, Henry L., Diet energy and feed intake in chickens. *Animal Feed Science and Technology* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.anifeedsci.2016.03.004>

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Diet energy and feed intake in chickens

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Highlights

- Factors affecting feed intake responses to dietary energy in chickens are reviewed.
- Chickens are unable to accurately alter feed intake in response to dietary energy levels.
- Meeting the chicken's energy requirements promotes maximum diet protein accretion potential.

Abstract

Energy homeostasis is of fundamental importance to animal well-being as well as in the feeding of species like chickens. Optimizing the balance between energy intake and expenditures is required for efficient, highly productive flocks, and understanding its relationship to production characteristics including energy and feed intake is fundamental to the formulation of chicken diets and levels of other dietary nutrients. A historical perspective on this relationship is that chickens alter feed intake to maintain energy intake when diets contain variable dietary energy. In turn levels of other nutrients, and in particular amino acids, should be adjusted in accordance. However, control of feed intake is complex and even if this perspective were correct, multiple factors can compromise the appropriate adjustment in feed intake. The validity of broilers altering feed intake in response to dietary energy has

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