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## Single Cell Protein as an Alternative Protein Source in Broiler Diet - A Review

**Chala Edea\***

*Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research, Debre Zeit Agricultural Research Center, P.O. Box 32, Bishoftu*

*\*Corresponding author*

### Abstract

The constant expansion in the world's population leads to an increase in food demand. At the moment, animal protein production is insufficient to supply the world's needs due to challenges in feed quality and quantity. This situation gives place the need for urgent development of alternative and sustainable resources to satisfy this nutritional requirement. In the face of such worldwide issues, single cell proteins derived from the waste organic products is a very useful technology. The objectives of this review were to assess the feed value of single cell protein in broiler diet. Single cell protein microorganisms encompass a wide range of bacteria, marine microalgae, yeasts, and molds has numerous applications in the feed industry. To reduce the cost of protein feedstock for broiler feed, the use of single cell protein (SCP) produced from waste of animal agriculture is an interesting choice. Recent evidence suggests that addition of SCP to the diets of broiler chickens improved body weight and feed conversion efficiency. Many authors observed that higher carcass yield and dressing percentage in birds fed single cell protein containing diet as compared to control diet. Most of the publication reported there were no significant differences in most of gastrointestinal tract. Past research findings have shown that abdominal fat deposition tend to decrease in broiler with increasing level of SCP. According to some author reports the SCP decreases mortality rate. Many research reports found lower the population of salmonella and *E. coli* bacteria in broilers fed diet contained SCP compared with the control. Most scientific publications indicate that higher levels of SCP inclusion (10 % and higher) may be harmful to the broilers in terms of productive performance. Moreover, reviewed research works have shown that SCP attractive features as a nutrient supplement for broiler.

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Single cell protein, broiler diet, food insecure, protein deficit.

### Introduction

The growing global population and the negative consequences of climate change, particularly draught, necessitate the development of new and novel methods for producing sufficient food in a sustainable manner. Global demand for high-quality, protein-rich foods will continue to rise as the world's population and income levels rise. Many developing countries are food insecure, with the majority not only lacking adequate food, but

also unable to afford a balanced diet, and protein deficit is becoming a big issue for humanity. The effect of low chicken production and productivity, along with issues in feed quality and quantity, resulted in unaffordable poultry products for the majority of society.

Feed is the major limitation in the poultry industry, accounting for 60-70% of total broiler chicken production costs. Modern fast-growing broiler chickens require a high protein content with a balanced amino acid

content. Soybean meal is the most desired vegetable protein due to its high protein and balanced amino acid content (Hombegowda *et al.*, 2021). Recent price and availability fluctuations, as well as the inclusion of hulls and antinutritional factors (Erdaw *et al.*, 2018), have reduced its use in broiler production. Fish meal, meat meal, bone meal, blood meal, and hydrolyzed feather meal are examples of animal protein sources. However, their use is restricted due to quality variations and the existence of harmful microorganisms.

In view of the above facts, there is continuous search for alternative high quality protein feedstuff that can improve broiler production performance. Single cell protein (SCP) is one of the possible alternative protein sources. SCP products, which are protein meals based on microbial or algal biomass, have the ability to meet this need. It is a very fast way of producing protein compared to the production of protein through cultivation of agricultural crops or animal farming (Pourelmi *et al.*, 2018). The SCP can be manufactured from residual streams from many sectors, allowing for low-cost production (Nasseri *et al.*, 2011). Furthermore, SCP manufacturing can be done in bioreactors, freeing up agricultural area. SCP can be included up to 5% or 30-40% of total CP in broiler diets with enhanced weight gain, feed conversion ratio (FCR), and economic efficiency, according to many research (Zhang *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, the objectives of this paper are to review the use of single cell protein in broiler diets.

### **Over view of SCP**

Single cell protein is a broad term for crude or refined protein derived from bacteria, yeasts, molds, or algae, microorganisms that typically contain more than 40% crude protein on a dry-weight basis. It is protein generated from microorganism cells that have been cultured on various carbon sources for synthesis. SCP contains nutrients other than proteins, including as fats and vitamins. Single cell protein (SCP) is one of the materials for appropriate protein source and feed formulation since it can be used as a protein supplement to replace expensive protein materials and large amounts of SCP can be produced in a short period of time (Chee *et al.*, 2019; Ritala *et al.*, 2017). It is seen as a promising product for addressing the issue of high protein feed prices (Golaghaiee *et al.*, 2017; Reihani & Khosravi Darani, 2018). According to Alloul *et al.*, (2018), SCP can be grown on industrial wastewater to produce protein feed while also treating wastewater in environmental management.

On a dry matter basis, SCPs contain roughly 60 to 80% protein. SPCs are high in important amino acids including methionine and lysine. Single cell protein has been produced using conventional substrates such as starch, fruit, molasses, and fruit waste, as well as unusual substrates such as petroleum byproducts, ethanol, natural gas, lignocellulosic biomass, and methanol.

Microbial protein uses waste or raw materials and microorganisms on a large scale to convert substrate, enhancing microbial growth and production. Furthermore, seasonal variations have little effect on the process's performance. SCP products include a high concentration of nucleic acid (6-10%), which raises serum uric acid levels. This level of access causes uric acid precipitation, which can lead to health concerns such as the production of gout and kidney stones.

### **Effect on performance and feed utilization**

Various studies have found that a single cell has varying effects on broiler body weight, feed intake, and feed conversion ratio. With an increase in the dietary content of Single Cell Protein, there was a decrease in broiler chicken weight gain, feed conversion, and feed intake (Pirmohammadi *et al.*, 1999; Jassim *et al.*, 1986). Similar depression was observed on the growth of broiler chickens fed methanol-utilizing bacteria (Plavnik, 1981).

Schoyen *et al.*, (2007) found that replacing SBM or fishmeal with 6% bacterial protein meal reduced feed intake. Waldroup and Payne (1974) also showed that the powdered texture of the bacterial protein contributes to the reduction in feed intake. White and Balloun (1977) showed similar alterations in feeding behavior at 9% and 12% SCP addition in meals. According to (An *et al.*, 2018), replacing SBM with *Corynebacterium ammoniagenes*-derived SCP at 5% in broiler diet resulted in decreased feed consumption, which was connected with free adenine or unknown components contained in bacteria-derived SCP. Overland *et al.*, (2010) indicated that reduced feed intake was due the decreased palatability with increasing bacterial protein autolysate associated with the greater proportions of free amino acids and resulted in decreased performance of birds.

White and Balloun (1977) investigated the SCP replacing up to 15% of the soybean meal in the feed of broilers. The powdery consistency of SCP tended to reduce BWG and feed conversion efficiency when fed at 9% or more of the mash form diet. Interestingly, pelleting diets containing SCP eliminated these adverse effects. When

diets were pelleted, substitution of SCP for soybean meal, on a weight-for weight basis at levels up to 15% of the diet produced greater and more efficient gains. Anonymous (1989) mentioned that free lysinoalanine is more toxic than covalently lysinoalanine in food proteins. This effect may be due to differences in absorption and copper-binding affinity between dietary LL and DL isomers of lysinoalanine. Primo hammadi *et al.*, (1999) mentioned three types of SCP up to 6% of broilers diet had no adverse impacts on performance. Manal and Abou El Nagha (2012) reported higher body weight gain in broilers fed SCP at the level of 0.3, 0.5 and 0.7%. Shareef and Al-Dabbagh (2009) also reported improved body weight gain using yeast as SCP at the level of 2% in broiler diet. Pourelmi *et al.*, (2018) reported that inclusion of 10% and 15% bacterial cell protein (replacing soybean meal) in broiler diets resulted in significantly decreased body weight gain compared to control and 5% bacterial cell protein diet groups.

According to Waldroup and Payne (1974) and Pourelmi *et al.*, (2018), incorporating SCP at 10% and 15% in broiler diets in place of SBM resulted in decreased FCR when compared to control. Overland *et al.*, (2010), on the other hand, found improved FCR as a result of 12% bacterial protein autolysate substituting SBM in broiler diet. The use different levels of single cell protein improved feed intake and weight gain in broilers, resulting in a reduction in feed conversion factor (Nazarizadeha *et al.*, 2020). Several factors influence the beneficial effects of yeasts in broiler diets. Initially, the yeast single-cell protein can operate as a growth stimulator due to the presence of protein and balanced amino acids, vitamins, and minerals (Amata, 2013), as can the yeast cell wall due to the presence of Glucans and mannan oligosaccharides. To the positive effects of yeasts on mucus and intestinal wall, it improves weight gain in poultry, which increases Willy's height, provides intestine conditions for the growth and activity of beneficial bacteria in the intestine, and improves intestine pH to increase digestion and absorption of nutrients, resulting in weight gain and a decrease in feed conversion factor (Abdel-azeem, 2002).

Waldroup and Payne (1973) evaluated a single-cell bacterial protein in broiler diets and reported that using this single-cell bacterial protein enhanced weight gain, feed intake, and feed conversion factor compared to the control group. According to the findings of Manal and Abou (2012), adding yeast to broiler diets increases weight gain and feed intake which is similar with the findings of Nazarizadeha *et al.*, (2020).

### Effect of Single cell protein Carcass Performance

Najib (2014) observed that replacing SBM in the broiler ration with SCP at 5%, 10%, and 15% had no influence on dressing percentage. Whereas, Overland *et al.*, (2010) observed that inclusion of bacterial protein autolysate at 8% and 12% of the diet replacing SBM in the broiler diet showed significantly lower carcass weight and dressing percentage compared to the control diet group. Yadav *et al.*, (2018) also observed that supplementation of probiotic (*Bacillus subtilis*) at the level of 1 mg/g of diet has significant effect on weight of the breast muscle.

According to Nahanshon *et al.*, (1994), introducing bacterial probiotics to the die improves protein availability and increases carcass weight as the protein content of the diet increases. An *et al* (2018), on the other hand, observed, that incorporating graded levels of *Corynebacterium ammoniagenes* derived SCP up to 5% (50 g/kg) of ration by replacing SBM in the broiler diet had no significant effect on the relative weight of breast muscle. It was suggested that the difference in dressing % could be related to the use of a different strain of yeast or SCP or manipulation of other components in the diet.

Schoyen *et al.*, (2007) observed replacing SBM and fish meal with graded level of bacterial protein meal (2%, 4%, and 6%) has no significant on weight of thigh. The drumsticks percentage of live weight among various treatments and main components (SCP level and protein source) were non-significant across all diets. The abdominal fat percentage of live weight were found comparable among various treatments and main components (SCP level and protein source) Overland *et al.*, (2010).

### Impact on intestinal morphology

According to Inam *et al.*, (2017), including *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* in the broiler starting ration at rates of 5%, 10%, and 15% had no influence on intestinal morphology such as villus height and crypt depth.

In contrast, Samanya and Yamauchi (2002) found that adding *Bacillus subtilis* at 0%, 0.2%, 0.5%, and 1% levels to a basal mash diet for 28 days resulted in considerably longer villus length in the 0.2% group compared to the control group. Latorre *et al.*, (2017) reported a significant decrease in the villi length: crypt depth ratio, which he attributed to a larger presence of insoluble fiber in the intestinal digesta, which increased cellular turnover.

According to Nazarizadeha *et al.*, (2020), the usage of yeast single-cell protein raised Willy height and decreased crypt depth in recipient broilers. Increasing the Willy height and decreasing the crypt depth enhances nutritional absorption and gastrointestinal tract function, resulting in increased weight gain and a lower feed conversion factor (Pirgozliev *et al.*, 2008).

### **Abdominal fat and GIT**

Schoyen *et al.*, (2007) suggested that abdominal fat deposition tend to decrease in broiler with increasing level of SCP. These findings are in contrast with Overland *et al.*, (2010); Najib (2014) and Hombegowda *et al.*, (2021) who reported that abdominal fat deposition incline to increase in broiler with increasing level of SCP.

Najib (2014) observed significantly different liver weight in broiler birds fed 5%, 10%, and 15% SCP based diets. Inam *et al.*, (2010), on the other hand, found no significant difference in gizzard, heart, or liver weight in broiler chickens fed diets containing 5%, 10%, or 15% *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* instead of SBM. An *et al.*, (2018) showed that including graded levels of *Corynebacterium ammoniagenes* derived SCP up to 5% of broiler feed had no effect on the relative weights of Fabricious' spleen and bursa. Pourelmi *et al.*, (2018) found no influence on the absolute weights of Fabricious' liver, gizzard, spleen, and bursa owing to SCP inclusion at 5%, 10%, and 15% in broiler diets replacing SBM. Further, non-significant difference in gible and lymphoid organs weight was noticed for main component protein source. Ozsoy and Yalcin (2011) also reported no effect of yeast-based SCP on weight of gizzard, liver and heart in broiler chicks fed diet having 1 to 3% yeast.

### **Immune response and survivability**

According to Pourelmi *et al.*, (2018), there is a positive association between dietary SCP levels and mortality rate. Birds fed diets containing no SCP and 5% SCP showed 1.19% mortality, but birds fed diets containing 10% and 15% SCP showed 40% and 100% mortality, respectively (Pourelmi *et al.*, 2018). Ashraf (1981) also observed that increasing dietary SCP enhanced chicken mortality. He speculated that it was due to a lack of selenium. In contrast, other researchers found that increasing the proportion of yeast single cell protein in broiler diets reduced mortality (Gao *et al.*, 2008; Yalcin *et al.*, 2008). The difference in response may be due to

SCP product formulation and SCP origins. The black box of the SCP might be related to lysinoalanine, N6-(DL-2-amino-2- carboxyethyl)-L-lysine which is an unusual amino acid.

### **Effect of feeding of SCP on blood biochemical characteristics of broiler chicken**

The effect of cultured yeast on poultry performance was investigated in a study by Panda *et al.*, (2005), and it was reported that the use of cultured yeast had no significant effect on the blood biochemical parameters of broilers, which contrasts with the report of (Nazarizadeha *et al.*, (2020) who reported that the use of single cell yeast protein has a significant effect on blood biochemical parameters. Yalcin and Ozsoy (2011) investigated the effect of yeast use on the performance and biochemical parameters of broiler serum and immune System, and reported that the use of cultured yeast in broiler diets had no significant effect on blood biochemical parameters such as total protein, cholesterol, triglyceride, and alanine, which contrasted with the results of (Nazarizadeha *et al.*, 2020).

Blood hemoglobin, glucose, total protein, albumin, globulin, AST, and ALT levels all decreased significantly, but uric acid increased. There was no effect on serum triglyceride or cholesterol levels, however. Reduced hemoglobin, total protein, albumin, globulin, and glucose levels indicate malnutrition, which is reflected in significant difference in feed intake of experimental birds with increased level of SCP (Taraknath *et al.*, 2023) which agrees with the findings of Aderolu *et al.*, (2007) and Rameshwari *et al.*, (2005). Hyperuricemia developed, possibly due to starvation, and was followed by significant tissue deterioration and renal disease (Chandra *et al.*, 1983).

### **Effect of single cell protein on growth of caecum bacteria**

Nazarizadeha *et al.*, (2020) showed that the use of yeast single-cell protein in broiler diets reduced the population of *Salmonella* and *E. coli* bacteria and provided conditions for the growth of beneficial bacteria such as *Lactobacillus*, which, according to the obtained results, increasing the population of *Lactobacillus* bacteria was observed in broilers receiving yeast single-cell protein. Improving broilers feed intake and weight gain in yeast single-cell protein receiving treatments can be due to a reduction in the number of harmful bacteria and an increase in the number of beneficial bacteria due to the

use of yeast single cell protein. Researchers believe that the use of yeast in broilers diet can develop the digestive tract of broilers and maintain the integrity of the mucous membrane of the intestine (Iji *et al.*, 2001).

### Conclusion and Recommendation

Single cell protein is a more sustainable, high-quality, safe and traceable alternative to conventional protein sources used in broiler diet. Reviewed research works have shown that SCP attractive features as a nutrient supplement for broiler. It basically comprises of protein, carbohydrate, fats, water and elements like phosphorous and potassium and essential amino acids. Thus, the use of SCP as an alternative nutrient supplement can solve the problem of feed scarcity of rapidly growing population especially in a developing country like Ethiopia. Many research works concluded that higher levels of SCP inclusion (10 % and higher) may be harmful to the broilers in terms of productive performance. In future, research on the single cell protein in broiler diets should continue in order to establish the most appropriate conditions at which the single cell protein would exert their positive effect at the greatest extent in order to produce high quality and healthy meat.

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