

Substitution of commercial feed for natural zeolite in Nile tilapias GIFT (*Oreochromis niloticus*)

Sustitución de pienso comercial por zeolita natural en tilapias del Nilo GIFT (*Oreochromis niloticus*)

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Using a one-way design, with four treatments and three repetitions, different percentages (1, 3 and 5) of substitution of commercial feed by natural zeolite in Nile tilapia GIFT (*Oreochromis niloticus*) were evaluated. A total of 240 small fish (0.11 ± 0.03 g initial weigh) were used, which were fed with experimental rations during 60d. The increase of zeolite in the rations decrease ($P < 0.05$) the amount of food per animal (9.08 to 6.50 g) and intake protein (2.95 a 2.09 g). There were not differences ($P > 0.05$) in the final weights (5.88, 5.84, 4.89 and 5.74 g) and survivals (86.66, 95.67, 90.00 and 90.00 %) between the experimental treatments. However, the feed conversion and protein efficiency increase ($P < 0.05$) with 5 % of zeolite, which allowed decrease the feeding costs with saving of US \$ 226.74 /t. It is concluded that the substitution of 5 % of commercial feed by natural zeolite improves the efficiency in the food use as positive economic effect. It is proposed to continue researchers with zeolite as partial replacement of protein raw matters in tilapias feed.

Key words: feeding, minerals, fishes, zoad.

The zeolites are hydrated aluminosilicates, crystalline, microporous, which have several applications, due to their singular physicochemical characteristics, as the ionic exchange and the adsorption-desorption properties (Ghasemi *et al.* 2016). Its main use in the aquatic sector was aimed to improve the water quality of farms and fish transportation tanks by the selective collecting of NH_4^+ and toxic heavy metals(Aly *et al.* 2016 and Martínez *et al.* 2019).

In close systems or with water recirculation in aquaculture, the NH_4^+ produced by the feces decomposition and non-intake food is one of the main causes of mortality in fishes. The biological nitrification is the most common method for their elimination, although it has been informed that processes based on the exchange of zeolite ions resulted effective to control the nitrogen content in the culture water (Motesharezadeh *et al.* 2015).

According to Castro (2014), in the production of land animals, zeolite improves the efficiency in the nutrients use, specially the proteins sources. Therefore, it favors the growth rate and the productive yield, in addition, allows substituting certain raw matters percentages in feeds for monogastric and

Mediante un diseño de clasificación simple, con cuatro tratamientos y tres repeticiones, se evaluaron diferentes porcentajes (1, 3 y 5) de sustitución de pienso comercial por zeolita natural en tilapias del Nilo GIFT (*Oreochromis niloticus*). Se utilizaron 240 alevines (0.11 ± 0.03 g de peso inicial), que se alimentaron con las raciones experimentales durante 60 d. El incremento de la utilización de zeolita en las raciones disminuyó ($P < 0.05$) la cantidad de alimento por animal (9.08 a 6.50 g) y de proteína suministrada (2.95 a 2.09 g). No se encontraron diferencias ($P > 0.05$) en los pesos finales (5.88, 5.84, 4.89 y 5.74 g) y las supervivencias (86.66, 95.67, 90.00 y 90.00%) entre los tratamientos experimentales. Sin embargo, la conversión alimentaria y la eficiencia proteica mejoraron ($P < 0.05$) con 5 % de zeolita, lo que permitió disminuir los costos de alimentación con ahorro de US \$ 226.74 /t. Se concluye que la sustitución de 5 % de pienso comercial por zeolita natural cubana mejora la eficiencia en la utilización del alimento con efecto económico positivo. Se propone continuar investigaciones con la zeolita como sustituto parcial de materias primas proteicas en el pienso de tilapias.

Palabras clave: alimentación, minerales, peces, zoad

Las zeolitas son aluminosilicatos hidratados, cristalinos, microporosos, que tienen diversas aplicaciones, debido a sus singulares características fisicoquímicas, como el intercambio iónico y las propiedades de adsorción-desorción (Ghasemi *et al.* 2016). Su uso principal en el sector acuícola se encaminó a mejorar la calidad del agua de las granjas y tanques de transporte de peces por la captación selectiva del NH_4^+ y metales pesados tóxicos (Aly *et al.* 2016 y Martínez *et al.* 2019).

En sistemas cerrados o con recirculación de agua en acuicultura, el NH_4^+ producido por la descomposición de excretas y el alimento no consumido es una de las principales causas de mortalidad en peces. La nitrificación biológica es el método más común para su eliminación, aunque se ha informado que procesos basados en el intercambio de iones de zeolita resultaron efectivos para controlar el contenido de nitrógeno en el agua de cultivo (Motesharezadeh *et al.* 2015).

Según Castro (2014), en la producción de animales terrestres, la zeolita mejora la eficiencia en la utilización de nutrientes, especialmente las fuentes de proteínas. Por tanto, favorece la tasa de crecimiento y el rendimiento productivo. Además, permite sustituir determinados porcentajes de materias primas en los piensos destinados

ruminants animals.

The available references in fishes about zeolite as a resource to stimulate growth and improve feed efficiency are few, and it is still a discussing theme. The objective of this study was to evaluate different substitution percentages (1, 3 and 5) of tilapia small fish feed by natural zeolite in the feeding of Nile tilapia GIFT (*Oreochromis niloticus*).

Materials and Methods

The experiment was carry out in the Laboratorio de Nutrición de Peces de la Empresa de Desarrollo de Tecnologías Acuícolas (EDTA), La Habana, Cuba, from June 17 to August 15, 2019. The experimental units consisted in 12 circular cement tanks, of 68 L capacity, with constant water fluid (turnover of 100 % daily).

Small fishes of Nile tilapia GIFT (*Oreochromis niloticus*) were used, from the genetic area of EDTA. They were acclimatized a week in the laboratory with tilapia small fish feed (FTF). After this time, a total of 240 animals were captured and selected, with 0.11 ± 0.03 g of initial weight, at random distributed according to one-way model, with four treatments and three repetitions. A total of 20 animals were placed in each tank. Daily, the dissolved oxygen and the temperature values were recorded, using a portable digital oximeter (HANNA®, Rumania).

The experimental zeolite came from San Andrés plant, in Holguín, Cuba. This product was marketed named Zoad and have a granulometric lower than 0.8 mm.

Four treatments were established: a control, that corresponded with the FTF (table 1), and three experimental diets (D), which consisted on the substitution of 1, 3 and 5 % of FTF by the zeolite (table 2).

Diets preparation. For the elaboration of the FTF, soybean, corn meal and the wheat bran were ground in a nativa hammer mill (250 µm) and mixed in a mixer (HOBART MC-600®, Canada). The oil and the vitamins and minerals premixture were added. Later, the feed was divided in four same portions for the inclusion of the different zeolite levels. From each portion (treatment), a part was used as meal for the feeding in the first stage, and the other one was pelleted in a meat grinder (JAVAR 32, Colombia) at 1 mm diameter. Later, they were dried in an oven (Selecta, España) at 60 oC for 24 h.

The diets were offered as meals in the first 30 d and later in 1 mm pellets. They were supplied in four rations, at 8:00, 11:00, 14:00 and 16:30 h, during 60d. The feeding rate was at 20 % of the body weight per day, which was fitted every 15d. At the end of the bioassay the fishes were individually weighed for the calculation of the fallowing productive indicators:

Supplied food= food added/ number of final animals.

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a animales monogástricos y rumiantes.

Las referencias disponibles en peces acerca de la zeolita como recurso para promover crecimiento y mejorar la eficiencia alimentaria son escasas, y aún constituye un tema objeto de discusión. El objetivo de este trabajo fue evaluar diferentes porcentajes (1, 3 y 5) de sustitución del pienso de alevines de tilapias por zeolita natural cubana en la alimentación de alevines de tilapias del Nilo GIFT (*Oreochromis niloticus*).

Materiales y Métodos

El experimento se realizó en el Laboratorio de Nutrición de Peces de la Empresa de Desarrollo de Tecnologías Acuícolas (EDTA) en La Habana, Cuba, desde el 17 de junio al 15 de agosto de 2019. Las unidades experimentales consistieron en 12 tanques circulares de cemento, de 68 L de capacidad, con flujo de agua constante (recambio de 100 % diario).

Se utilizaron alevines de tilapias del Nilo GIFT (*Oreochromis niloticus*), procedentes del área de genética de la EDTA. Se aclimataron en el laboratorio una semana con el pienso de alevines de tilapias (PAT). Pasado este tiempo, se capturaron y seleccionaron 240 animales, con 0.11 ± 0.03 g de peso medio inicial, distribuidos al azar según modelo de clasificación simple, con cuatro tratamientos y tres repeticiones. En cada tanque se ubicaron 20 animales. Todos los días se tomaron los valores de temperatura y oxígeno disuelto con oxímetro digital portátil (HANNA®, Rumania).

La zeolita experimental procedió de la planta San Andrés, en Holguín, Cuba. Este producto se comercializa con el nombre de Zoad y tiene una granulometría menor de 0.8 mm.

Se establecieron cuatro tratamientos: un control, que correspondió con el PAT (tabla 1), y tres dietas experimentales (D), que consistieron en la sustitución de 1, 3 y 5 % del PAT por la zeolita (tabla 2).

Preparación de las dietas. Para la elaboración del PAT se molieron las harinas de pescado, soya, maíz y el salvado de trigo en un molino de martillo criollo, a 250 µm, y se mezclaron en una mezcladora (HOBART MC-600®, Canadá). Se adicionó el aceite y la premezcla de vitaminas y minerales. Posteriormente, el pienso se dividió en cuatro porciones iguales para la inclusión de los diferentes niveles de zeolita. De cada porción (tratamiento), una parte se dejó como harina para la alimentación en la primera etapa, y la otra se peletizó en un molino de carne (JAVAR 32, Colombia) a 1 mm de diámetro. Posteriormente, se procedió al secado en una estufa (Selecta, España) a 60 oC durante 24 h.

Las dietas se ofrecieron en forma de harinas los primeros 30 d, y luego en pellets de 1 mm. Se suministraron en cuatro raciones, en los horarios de 8:00, 11:00, 14:00 y 16:30 h, durante 60 d. La tasa de alimentación fue al 20 % del peso corporal por día, la cual se ajustó cada 15 d. Al final del bioensayo se pesaron los peces individualmente para el cálculo de los indicadores productivos siguientes:

Table 1. Percentage and chemical composition of tilapia small fish feed (control)

Ingredients	%
Fish meal	12.0
Soybean meal	40.0
Corn meal	22.4
Wheat bran	20.0
Vegetable oil	3.0
Dicalcium phosphate	1.6
* Vit-mineral mixture	1.0
Total	100
Dry matter	88.1
Crude protein	29.57
Ether extract	6.59
Crude fiber	4.13
Ashes	7.43
Digestible energy(MJ/kg)	12.16

Vitamin-mineral mixture (kg of diet): vitamin A, 500IU; vitamin D, 100IU; vitamin E, 75 000 mg; vitamin K, 20 000 mg; vitamin B1, 10 000 mg; vitamin B3, 30 000 mg; vitamin B6, 20 000 mg; vitamin B12, 100 mg; vitamin D, 60 000 mg; niacin 200 000 mg; folic acid, 500 mg; biotin, 0.235 mg; selenium, 0.2 g; iron, 80 g; manganese 100 g; zinc, 80 g; copper, 15 g; potassium chloride, 4 g; manganese oxide 0.6 g; sodium bicarbonate, 1.5 g; iodine, 1.0 g; cobalt, 0.25 g.

Table 2. Percentage and chemical composition of the experimental diets (g /100 g)

Ingredients	D-I (1 %)	D-II (3 %)	D-III (5 %)
Commercial feed	99.00	97.00	95.00
Natural zeolite	1.00	3.00	5.00
Total	100.00	100.00	100.0
Dry matter	89.26	89.10	90.12
Crude protein	29.24	28.65	28.10
Ether extract	6.50	6.38	6.26
Crude fiber	4.08	4.00	3.92
Ashes	8.62	10.06	12.10
Digestible energy (MJ/kg)	12.04	11.80	11.55

Supplied protein = supplied protein/number of final animals.

Final average weight.

Feed conversion factor (FCF) = Food added /weight gain.

Protein efficiency = Biomass gain /supplied protein.

Survival (S) = Number of final animals / number of initial animals x 100.

Bromatological analysis. The methods described by AOAC (2016) were applied to the meals. From the results, the nutrients contributions of each diet were determined. The digestible energy (DE) was calculated with the caloric coefficients referred by Pezzato *et al.*

Alimento suministrado= Alimento añadido/ número de animales finales.

Proteína suministrada= Proteína añadida/ número de animales finales.

Peso medio final.

Factor de conversión alimentaria (FCA) = Alimento añadido /ganancia peso.

Eficiencia proteica= Ganancia de biomasa /proteína suministrada.

Supervivencia (S)= Número de animales finales/ número de animales iniciales x 100.

Análisis bromatológico. A las harinas se le aplicaron los métodos descritos por AOAC (2016). A partir de los

Statistical analysis. The normality and homogeneity assumptions were proved. A one-way ANOVA was performed by the statistical package INFOSTAT, versión 2012 (Di Rienzo *et al.* 2012). When there were differences ($P < 0.05$), means were compared by the Duncan (1955) test.

Economical analysis. Was performed according to Toledo *et al.* (2015) procedure. The experimental rations costs were calculated out of the international prices representative of the raw matters for February 2020 (www.fao.org/giews/pricetool) (table 3). To the results were added 45 % of the total expenses of raw matters per concept of additional expenses (transportation, maquila and administrative for Cuba). These values were multiple by the FCF obtained in this study in order to know the feeding costs.

resultados, se determinaron los aportes de nutrientes de cada dieta. La energía digestible (ED) se calculó con los coeficientes calóricos referidos por Pezzato *et al.* (2001).

Análisis estadístico. Se probaron los supuestos de normalidad y homogeneidad. Se realizó un ANOVA de clasificación simple mediante el paquete estadístico INFOSTAT, versión 2012 (Di Rienzo *et al.* 2012). Cuando se encontraron diferencias ($P < 0.05$), las medias se compararon por la dócima de Duncan (1955).

Análisis económico. Se realizó según el procedimiento de Toledo *et al.* (2015). Se calcularon los costos de las raciones experimentales a partir de los precios internacionales representativos de las materias primas para febrero 2020 (www.fao.org/giews/pricetool) (tabla 3). A los resultados se adicionó 45 % del total de gastos de materias primas por concepto de gastos adicionales (transportación, maquila y administrativos para Cuba).

Table 3. Internationals prices of the raw matters used in the formulation of the experimental rations (US \$ /t)

Raw matters	US \$
Fish meal	1 366.94
Soybean meal	352.90
Corn meal	218.99
Wheat bran	65.00
Vegetable oil	774.91
Dicalcium phosphate	423.10
Vit-mineral mixture	1 975.11
Natural zeolite	75.00

Results and Discussion

The temperature and the dissolved oxygen in the water of the tanks oscillated between 26.1 and 27.4 °C, and between 4.54 and 5.35 mg/L, respectively. These values are considered adequate for the good productive performance of the species (Costa *et al.* 2017). In addition the water circulation was efficiently controlled and 100 % of the daily turnover was guaranteed.

The experimental diets had good acceptation, which showed that the rations palatability was not affected by the evaluated zeolite levels. In the same way, when the food was supply in pellets, the stability of them in the water was good, which could be related with the agglutinating effect of the mineral, as Abdel-Rahim (2017) reported. According to this author, zeolite was register in the European Union as a feed additive (agglutinating, anti-strengthen agent and coagulant), recommended in artificial foods to reduce the toxic effects of aflatoxins, and antimicrobial agent.

Among the main advantages of the zeolite use in fishes is their action in the control of micotoxins and in the reduction of toxic effects of aflatoxins, as well as in

Estos valores se multiplicaron por los FCA obtenidos en este estudio para conocer los costos de alimentación.

Resultados y Discusión

La temperatura y el oxígeno disuelto en el agua de los tanques oscilaron entre 26.1 y 27.4 °C, y entre 4.54 y 5.35 mg/L, respectivamente. Estos valores se consideran adecuados para el buen desempeño productivo de la especie (Costa *et al.* 2017). Además, la circulación de agua se controló eficientemente y se garantizó 100 % del recambio diario.

Las dietas experimentales tuvieron buena aceptación, lo que indicó que no se afectó la palatabilidad de las raciones por los niveles de zeolita evaluados. De igual forma, cuando se comenzó a suministrar el alimento en pellets se observó que la estabilidad de los mismos en el agua fue buena, lo que se pudiera relacionar con el efecto aglutinador del mineral, como informó Abdel-Rahim (2017). Según este autor, la zeolita se registró en la Unión Europea como un aditivo alimentario (aglutinador, agente anti-endurecedor y coagulante), recomendado en alimentos artificiales para reducir los efectos tóxicos de aflatoxinas, y como agente antimicrobiano.

Entre los beneficios principales de la utilización de la

the increase of food intake. The zeolite also take part in the feed conversion decrease by high efficiency in the protein use, which lead to growth increase and the mortality decrease (El-Gendy *et al.* 2015 and Abdel-Rahim 2017). In addition, it can improve the quality of culture water by the ammonium ions collecting, which positive influences on the animals welfare and on the effluents which are threw to the environment (Ghasemi *et al.* 2016 and Martínez *et al.* 2019).

There were differences ($P < 0.05$) in the indicators related with the amount of food and protein per animal from 3 % the zeolite inclusion (table 4). This is due to the growth was not affected and, therefore, the amounts of supplied food were similar. When substituting 3 and 5 % of feed by zeolite, these indicators decreased with respect to the control and the D-I, where only 1 % of feed was substituted.

zeolita en peces se encuentra su acción en el control de micotoxinas y en la reducción de los efectos tóxicos de aflatoxinas, así como en el incremento del consumo de alimento. La zeolita interviene también en la reducción de la conversión alimentaria por mayor eficiencia en la utilización de proteína, lo que conlleva al incremento del crecimiento y a la reducción de la mortalidad (El-Gendy *et al.* 2015 y Abdel-Rahim 2017). Además, puede mejorar la calidad del agua de cultivo por la captación de los iones amonio, lo que influye de forma positiva en el bienestar de los animales y en los efluentes que se vierten al medio (Ghasemi *et al.* 2016 y Martínez *et al.* 2019).

Se encontraron diferencias ($P < 0.05$) en los indicadores relacionados con la cantidad de alimento y cantidad de proteína por animal a partir de 3 % de inclusión de zeolita (tabla 4). Esto se debe a que el crecimiento no se afectó y, por tanto, las cantidades de alimento suministrado fueron

Table 4. Productive performance of the small fish of Nile tilapia with the experimental diets.

Indicators	Control CP	D-I 1%	D-II 3%	D-III 5%	\pm SE Sign
Amount of food/fish (g)	9.08 ^a	8.54 ^a	7.51 ^b	6.50 ^c	1.07 P=0.001
Amount of protein/fish (g)	2.95 ^a	2.76 ^a	2.39 ^b	2.09 ^b	0.10 P=0.001
Final weights (g)	5.88 ±0.46	5.84 ±0.6	4.89 ±0.32	5.79 ±0.43	P=0.404
Feed conversion	1.52 ^a	1.44 ^a	1.50 ^a	1.19 ^b	0.05 P=0.001
Protein efficiency	2.03 ^a	2.16 ^a	2.04 ^a	2.63 ^b	0.09 P=0.001
Survival (%)	86.66	95.67	90.00	90.00	1.75 P=0.24

^{a,b}Different letters in the same row statistically differ to $P < 0.05$, according to Duncan (1955)

The final weights did not differ between the experimental diets (table 4), which shows that the inclusion up to 5 % of zeolite was feasible in the ration of small fish of Nile tilapia. It is important to highlight that this treatment had the lower supplied protein per animal (table 4), and did not affect the small fish growth with respect to the control and the D-I (1 %), which can support those reported by Abdel-Rahim (2017) with respect to the positive effect of adding zeolite on the fishes growth.

Several reports showed the direct relation between the fish growth and the dietetic protein intake (Toledo *et al.* 2007 and Mejías *et al.* 2016). In this study was showed higher efficiency in the protein use with the zeolite incorporation. This is reaffirmed in the values of feed conversion and protein efficiency (table 4), that significantly improves with 5 % of this mineral. In addition, in this experiment is corroborate those informed by Kanyilmaz *et al.* (2015), who found higher digestibility coefficients of dry matter and protein in diets supplemented with 5 % of zeolite in common carp (*Cyprinus carpio*).

Galindo *et al.* (2006) evaluated 3 % of natural zeolite (clinoptilolite and mordenite) from Tasajeras

similares. Al sustituir 3 y 5 % de pienso por zeolita, estos indicadores disminuyeron con respecto al control y la D-I, donde solo se sustituyó 1 % de pienso.

Los pesos finales no difirieron entre las dietas experimentales (tabla 4), lo que indica que la inclusión de hasta 5 % de zeolita fue factible en la ración de alevines de tilapia del Nilo. Es importante señalar que este tratamiento tuvo la menor cantidad de proteína suministrada por animal (tabla 4), y no afectó el crecimiento de los alevines con respecto al control y la D-I (1 %), lo que puede respaldar lo informado por Abdel-Rahim (2017) con respecto al efecto positivo que tiene la incorporación de zeolita en el crecimiento de los peces.

Varios informes demuestran la relación directa entre el crecimiento de los peces y el consumo de proteína dietética (Toledo *et al.* 2007 y Mejías *et al.* 2016). En este estudio se evidenció mayor eficiencia en la utilización de la proteína con la incorporación de zeolita. Esto se reafirma en los valores de conversión alimentaria y eficiencia proteica (tabla 4), que mejoraron de forma significativa con 5 % de este mineral. Además, en este experimento se corrobora lo informado por Kanyilmaz *et al.* (2015), quienes encontraron mayores coeficientes de digestibilidad de materia seca y proteína en dietas suplementadas con

deposit, in Villa Clara province, in the food of young white shrimp *Litopenaeus schmitti*. These authors did not obtain statistical differences in the growth between the animals that intake the food with zeolite and without it, but there were in the feed conversion. These showed the best use of the food in which zeolite was included, result that coincides with that obtained in this study with tilapia.

El-Gendy *et al.* (2015) developed a study at productive scale, with 2 % of zeolite in the ration of small fish of Nile tilapia and a feeding rate of 2, 2.5 and 3 % of body weight. These authors informed the best indicators of water quality (pH, ammonium, nitrite, nitrate and alkalinity) and productive, with 2.5 % of biomass. Steica and Morea (2013), when studying the effect of natural zeolite on fish food, concluded that its agglutinating effect improves the food stability and reduces wastes. In addition, increases the palatability and exposes for more time the bolus to the effect of the digestive enzymes, that is why it was considered a growth promoter.

Aly *et al.* (2016) compared 5 and 10 ppt. of natural zeolite with a probiotic product, effective microorganisms (EM) of EMRO Japan, which added to 400 ppm in the culture water of European sea bass *Dicentrarchus labrax* larvae. There were no differences in the final weights, but survival was high in the treatment with EM. This result was attributed to the effect of this lasts on the improvement of microorganisms balance in the intestine, to the immune system strengthen and to the contribution they made to the water quality. In the treatments with zeolite the efficiency in the ammonium elimination was higher.

In this study, the survivals did not show differences (table 4), contrary to that informed in Larmoyeux and Piper (2006) study. These authors reported low incidence of bacterial diseases and mortality, when zeolite was used in fish rations, which is explained because their antimicrobial effect. The values reached were higher to the 60 % informed by Aly *et al.* (2016) in European sea bass larvae with natural zeolite, and resulted slightly lower to 94 % obtained in Nile tilapia by El-Gendy *et al.* (2015).

The economical analysis (table 5) showed that the use of increasing zeolite levels decrease the rations costs, because of its lower price with respect to the commercial feed. In addition, the highest savings were with the use of 5 %, due to be the ration of lower cost, and with which the lower feed conversion was obtained. These results corroborate the El-Gendy *et al.* (2015) and Abdel-Rahim (2017) studies.

It was shown that the substitution of 5 % of commercial feed by Cuban natural zeolite did not affect the growth of small fish of Nile tilapia GIFT, and improved the use of food (conversion and protein efficiency) with a positive economic effect. It is proposed to develop new researchers that evaluate the zeolite

5 % de zeolite en carpa común (*Cyprinus carpio*).

Galindo *et al.* (2006) evaluated 3 % of natural (clinoptilolite and mordenite) from the Tasajeras deposit, in the province of Villa Clara, in the food of juveniles of white shrimp *Litopenaeus schmitti*. These authors did not obtain statistical differences in the growth between the animals that consumed the food with zeolite and without it, but there were in the feed conversion. These showed the best use of the food in which zeolite was included, result that coincides with that obtained in this study with tilapia.

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It was shown that the substitution of 5 % of commercial feed by Cuban natural zeolite did not affect the growth of small fish of Nile tilapia GIFT, and improved the use of food (conversion and protein efficiency) with a positive economic effect. It is proposed to develop new researchers that evaluate the zeolite

Table 5. Economical analysis of Nile tilapia production, with 1, 3 and 5 % of natural zeolite (US \$ /t)

Indicators	Control CP	D-I 1%	D-II 3%	D-III 5%
Ration cost	593.57	588.38	578.01	567.64
Feeding cost	902.23	847.27	867.01	675.49
Savings	-	54.96	35.22	226.74

as replacement of protein raw matters (fish and soybean meals) in the feeding of this species.

crecimiento de alevines de tilapias del Nilo GIFT, y mejoró la utilización del alimento (conversión y eficiencia proteica) con un efecto económico positivo. Se propone desarrollar nuevas investigaciones que evalúen la zeolita como sustituto de materias primas proteicas (harinas de pescado y soya) en la alimentación de esta especie.

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