

Sustainable Agriculture Reviews 57

Vinod Kumar Yata  
Ashok Kumar Mohanty  
Eric Lichtfouse *Editors*

# Sustainable Agriculture Reviews 57

Animal Biotechnology for Livestock  
Production 2

 Springer

# **Sustainable Agriculture Reviews**

Volume 57

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Sustainable agriculture is a rapidly growing field aiming at producing food and energy in a sustainable way for humans and their children. Sustainable agriculture is a discipline that addresses current issues such as climate change, increasing food and fuel prices, poor-nation starvation, rich-nation obesity, water pollution, soil erosion, fertility loss, pest control, and biodiversity depletion.

Novel, environmentally-friendly solutions are proposed based on integrated knowledge from sciences as diverse as agronomy, soil science, molecular biology, chemistry, toxicology, ecology, economy, and social sciences. Indeed, sustainable agriculture decipher mechanisms of processes that occur from the molecular level to the farming system to the global level at time scales ranging from seconds to centuries. For that, scientists use the system approach that involves studying components and interactions of a whole system to address scientific, economic and social issues. In that respect, sustainable agriculture is not a classical, narrow science. Instead of solving problems using the classical painkiller approach that treats only negative impacts, sustainable agriculture treats problem sources.

Because most actual society issues are now intertwined, global, and fast-developing, sustainable agriculture will bring solutions to build a safer world. This book series gathers review articles that analyze current agricultural issues and knowledge, then propose alternative solutions. It will therefore help all scientists, decision-makers, professors, farmers and politicians who wish to build a safe agriculture, energy and food system for future generations.

Vinod Kumar Yata  
Ashok Kumar Mohanty • Eric Lichtfouse  
Editors

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# Preface

This book is the second volume of *Animal Biotechnology in Livestock Production*, published in the book series entitled Sustainable Agriculture Reviews. Biotechnology has shown its impact in livestock production, and it will continue to excel in coming years. This second volume of the book presents the essential concepts and in-depth analysis on animal reproduction and breeding methods.

Chapter 1 focusses the discussion on effects of sexual steroids on stress response and welfare of female ruminants. This chapter also discusses how the behavior and welfare of farm animals could be affected with the application of reproductive biotechnologies.

Chapter 2 provides valuable information on kidney diseases. This chapter includes the discussions on topics such as pathophysiology, molecular biomarkers, and proteomics of kidney diseases.

Chapter 3 covers the updated information on production of genetically modified pigs with the use of CRISPR/Cas9. This chapter focusses the discussion on the production of genetically modified pigs along with pros and cons.

Chapter 4 summarizes various types of anti-nutritional factors and their beneficial and deleterious effects on livestock. This chapter provides information on common factors such as enzymes and chemical compounds found in plant materials used for animal feed.

Chapter 5 summarizes the genetic engineering tools in livestock production. This chapter provides the updated information on biotechnological methods such as molecular gene cloning, diagnostics, vaccines, microarray, marker assisted selection (MAS) in animal breeding, genome editors, role of biotechnology in animal nutrition, artificial insemination, cloning and transgenic animals in livestock production, embryo transfer technology (ETT), and embryo sexing and sperm sexing.

Chapter 6 focuses the discussion on role of specific minerals in female animal reproduction. This chapter covers the discussion on biochemical, enzymatic, and endocrine actions of macromineral (calcium, phosphorus, and magnesium) and micromineral (copper, zinc, and manganese) ions along the hypothalamo-pituitary-ovarian axis.

Chapter 7 discusses genetic selection of livestock such as cattle, sheep, goat, buffalo, and poultry. This chapter also provides a brief overview on statistical models for genomic prediction and whole sequence data.



Dairy cattle production at ICAR-National Dairy Research Institute, India

This book serves as an important reference source for professionals and academicians working in the research area of livestock production. We would like to thank all the authors for their contribution and cooperation. We would like to thank the director of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)-National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), Karnal, India, for providing institutional support. We would like to extend our thanks to the staff of Springer Nature for their support in publication of this book. We would like to acknowledge the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India, for providing financial support from “DBT-RA Program in Biotechnology & Life Sciences.”

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# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Impact of Sex Steroids on the Stress Response and Welfare in Female Farm Ruminants</b> . . . . .	<b>1</b>
	Aline Freitas-de-Melo and Rodolfo Ungerfeld	
<b>2</b>	<b>Insights from Proteomics in Kidney Disease Diagnosis and Various <i>In Vitro</i> and <i>In Vivo</i> Experimental Models</b> . . . . .	<b>27</b>
	Vikram Patial, Garima Dadhich, and Rajiv Kumar	
<b>3</b>	<b>Generation of Gene Edited Pigs.</b> . . . . .	<b>71</b>
	S. Navarro-Serna, C. Piñeiro-Silva, R. Romar, J. Parrington, and J. Gadea	
<b>4</b>	<b>Dietary Anti-nutritional Factors and Their Roles in Livestock Nutrition.</b> . . . . .	<b>131</b>
	Salma H. Abu Hafsa, Ayman A. Hassan, Mona M. M. Y. Elghandour, Alberto Barbabosa-Pliego, Miguel Mellado, and Abdelfattah Z. M. Salem	
<b>5</b>	<b>Genetic Engineering Tools and Techniques in Livestock Production</b> . . . . .	<b>175</b>
	H. B. Ranjitha, Madhu Ramesh, Subhasmita Behera, Dhanesh ValiyaValappil, Suresh H. Basagoudanavar, and Anjum Sherasiya	
<b>6</b>	<b>Mineral Ions in Regulation of Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Ovarian Axis</b> . . . . .	<b>209</b>
	Mustafa Hassan Jan, Harpreet Singh, and Shikha Kapil	
<b>7</b>	<b>Molecular Insights of Compromised Female Reproduction in Ruminants Under Metabolic and Nutritional Stress.</b> . . . . .	<b>229</b>
	S. Nandi, S. K. Tripathi, P. S. P. Gupta, and S. Mondal	
	<b>Index.</b> . . . . .	<b>253</b>

## About the Editors



**Vinod Kumar Yata** is an interdisciplinary researcher working at the National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal, India. Previously, he worked as an assistant professor in the Department of Biotechnology, Dr. B R Ambedkar National Institute of Technology Jalandhar, Punjab, India. He received his PhD in biotechnology from the Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati. He specializes in interdisciplinary research which includes nanotechnology, microfluidics, animal biotechnology, cancer biology, and bioinformatics. He has developed a microfluidic device for the separation of live and motile spermatozoa from cattle semen samples. His research interests have been focused on the development of nanocarriers, understanding prodrug enzyme therapy, and targeted drug delivery. He elucidated the structural features and binding interactions of several biomolecules by *in silico* methods. Vinod has published four books as an editor and one book as an author with Springer Nature. He has published several research papers in peer-reviewed international journals and presented papers at several international conferences.



**Ashok Kumar Mohanty** is an eminent scientist in animal biotechnology and is currently serving as joint director of ICAR-Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Mukteswar, Uttarakhand, India. His group is involved in various basic and applied research related to animal production systems. His research group has made pioneering contributions to the field of animal biotechnology, with emphasis on gene cloning, expression and functional characterization of animal proteins, proteomics in animal production, cell and molecular biology, and structural biology of proteins. His group has developed a buffalo mammary epithelial cell line for the first time which can be used as a model system to understand lactation biology in animals as well as humans. His team has also developed a pregnancy diagnostic kit for the early detection of pregnancy in cattle and buffalo. His group is also extensively involved in developing low-cost technology for semen sexing in cattle. Ashok has organized a number of national and international workshops and international conferences. He is a recipient of several awards, including DBT Overseas Associateship by the Ministry of Science & Technology, Govt. of India., and Jawaharlal Nehru Award (gold medal) by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), New Delhi, for outstanding postgraduate research in the field of animal biotechnology. He is a fellow of the National Academy of Dairy Sciences (NADS), India, executive member of the Proteomics Society of India, and associate fellow of the National Academy of Veterinary Science, India. He has supervised more than 50 graduates, PhD students, and post-docs. Ashok has published more than 200 peer-reviewed research and review papers. He has also authored eight book chapters in the areas of animal and food biotechnology published by national and international publishers.



**Eric Lichtfouse** is Professor of Environmental Sciences and Scientific Writing at Aix Marseille University, Xi'an Jiaotong University, and the University of Shanghai for Science and Technology. He has invented carbon-13 dating, a molecular-level method allowing to study the dynamics of organic compounds in temporal pools of complex environmental media. He has discovered temporal pools of individual substances in complex media such as soils. He is chief editor and founder of the journal *Environmental Chemistry Letters* and the book series Sustainable Agriculture Reviews and Environmental Chemistry for a Sustainable World. He is the author of the book *Scientific Writing for Impact Factor Journals*. Eric has awards in analytical chemistry and scientific editing.

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# Chapter 4

## Dietary Anti-nutritional Factors and Their Roles in Livestock Nutrition



Salma H. Abu Hafsa, Ayman A. Hassan, Mona M. M. Y. Elghandour, Alberto Barbabosa-Pliego, Miguel Mellado, and Abdelfattah Z. M. Salem

**Abstract** Nutrition is widely recognized as one of the chief factors driving profitability, efficiency, and development of livestock production. Plant-derived feed-stuffs are high in macronutrients and micronutrients, but they also possess anti-nutritional factors (ANFs). Anti-nutritional factors are secondary compounds that lower the nutrient content of forages and reduce forage feed intake by livestock. Protease inhibitors, amylase inhibitors, lectins, tannins, mimosine, phytic acid, gossypol, oxalates, cyanogens, saponins, nitrates, alkaloids, and anti-vitamins are some of the most common ANFs found in livestock feed. The ANFs block or interfere with how the animal's body absorbs other nutrients, resulting in reduced bioavailability of various legumes and cereal components. Thus, ANFs may cause micronutrient malnutrition and mineral deficiencies. Different traditional techniques and methods are used alone or in combination to reduce the ANFs content in livestock feed, such as fermentation, germination, debarking, sterilization, steam sterilization, and soaking. The majority of ANFs found in livestock feeds offer potential health advantages or risks for livestock.

**Keywords** Plant-based diet · Anti-nutrients · Potential health benefits · Adverse health effects · Livestock

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## 4.1 Introduction

Plants grown as animal feed are the basic feedstuff that provides nutrients to animals. Various shrubs, cereals, legumes, roughs, trees, herbs, and other non-conventional feeds for animals contain anti-nutritional factors (ANFs). These ANFs limit the usefulness of edible leaves, twigs, and pods of shrubs and trees as livestock feed. The ANFs are substances that, either by themselves or through their metabolic products, interfere with feed absorption and utilization, reduce nutrient intake and digestion, affect animal health and reproduction, or may produce other adverse effects (Akande et al. 2010). When consumed by animals in quantities above a critical threshold, even at a minimum level, ANFs reduce animal productivity, reproduction efficiency, and the quality of their products (milk, meat, and eggs) and cause toxicity. There is a wide distribution of non-lethal toxic factors throughout the plant kingdom, especially in plants used as animal feed (Igile 1996; D’Mello 2000). Several ANFs with potential toxicity for farm animals have been identified and are either heat-labile or heat-stable. These factors include protease inhibitors, amylase inhibitors, lectins, tannins, mimosine, phytic acid, gossypol, oxalates, cyanogens, saponins, nitrates, alkaloids, and anti-vitamin agents. These ANFs, found in plant-derived feeds, cause nutritional and animal health problems. Recently, the knowledge that these factors produce toxins and elicit beneficial biological responses has led to numerous investigations regarding their possible physiological implications in different biological systems (Igile 1996). Some of these factors are known as ‘secondary metabolites,’ which are widely applied in nutrition and as pharmacologically active agents as antioxidants and reduce inflammation (Soetan 2008; Petroski and Minich 2020). Proper precautions, including physical, chemical, and biotechnical treatments, and the quantities and methods of use can aid in destroying or reducing the ANF content in unconventional feeds before feeding to livestock and may help to overcome the deleterious actions of ANFs and to make them useful for livestock (Amaefule and Onwudike 2000; Balogun 2013).

## 4.2 Anti-nutritional Factors

Anti-nutritional factors (ANFs) are chemicals that interfere with the absorption and utilisation of feed and affect animal productivity and health by themselves or their metabolic products. ANFs are also referred to as anti-nutrients, secondary substances, or plant secondary metabolites. Many ANFs with potential toxicity for livestock have been identified and can be either heat-labile or heat-stable (Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1** Heat-labile and/or heat-stable types of anti-nutritional factors in livestock feed

Heat-stable anti-nutritional factors	Heat-labile anti-nutritional factors
Maintained at high temperature Phytic acid, polyphenolic compounds (such as condensed tannins), Alkaloids, Saponins, and non-protein amino acids (Mimosine), etc.	Sensitive to standard temperature and lost at high temperature Lectins, Cyanogenic Glycosides, and Protease inhibitors, etc.

Adapted from Felix and Mello (2000)

### 4.3 Classification of Anti-nutritional Factors

Anti-nutritional factors (ANFs) in plants can be classified based on their chemical composition, properties, mechanisms of action (Aletor and Adeogun 1995), effects on the nutritional value of feedstuffs, and biological effects on the overall animal health (Huisman and Tolman 2001). ANFs which are frequently found in animal feed can be grouped as follows:

The major ANFs commonly found in plant-derived feedstuffs used in animal feed are summarised in Tables 4.2 and 4.3.

#### 4.3.1 *Direct and Indirect Factors Affect on Protein Digestion and Metabolism*

##### 4.3.1.1 Enzyme Inhibitors

###### Protease Inhibitors

Proteinases are enzymes that have diverse effects in improving the functional and nutritional properties of different protein molecules (Salas et al. 2018; Samtiya et al. 2020). Protease inhibitors are natural plant inhibitors. They have been amply studied due to their proteolytic action (reduces enzyme activity by protein–protein interactions), inflammatory response, ability to coagulate blood, and role in numerous hormone processing pathways (Gomes et al. 2011). They are widely distributed within the plant kingdom. For instance, protease inhibitors are present in seeds of most leguminous crops, and their presence prevents the utilization of the seeds as livestock feed, which may lead to reduced mineral bioavailability as well as reduced digestion and nutrient absorption (Bajpai et al. 2005; Yasmin et al. 2008) (Table 4.6). Compared with legumes, cereals contain much less of these digestive inhibitors, particularly those that act against proteases and amylases (Nikmaram et al. 2017). Protease inhibitors are concentrated in the outer portion of cereal cotyledons, which are the most common areas containing anti-nutritional factors in plants, and they can inhibit the activity of proteolytic enzymes secreted in the digestive system of animals (Nørgaard et al. 2019) by blocking the active site of the enzymes through a catalytic means. The N- and C-terminal and the exposed protease inhibitors are

**Table 4.2** Classification of major anti-nutritional factors present in the plant-derived feedstuffs used in livestock feed

Anti-nutritional factors	Plant-derived nutrient source	Means of alleviation
<b><i>Interaction with protein nutrition</i></b>		
Enzyme inhibitors	Soybean, sunflower oil cake, rapeseed meal, lupin seed meal, sesame meal, pea seed meal, Jatropha kernel meal, Rapeseed, mustard oil cake	Heat, autoclaving, boiling, soaking
Lectins (Heamagglutinins)	Soybean, pea seed meal, Jatropha kernel meal	Heat, autoclaving
Saponins	Peas, Jatropha kernel meal, sunflower oil cake, lupin seed meal, pea seed meal	Soaking,
Tannins	Sorghum, mustard oil Cake, Jatropha kernel meal, pea seed meal, Rapeseed, mustard oil cake	Soaking, germination followed by dehulling, genetic modification
Mimosine	<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>	Heat and chemical treatments, supplementation with amino acids or with metal ions
<b><i>Interaction with mineral availability</i></b>		
Phytic acid	Soybean, pea seed meal, cottonseed meal, Jatropha kernel meal, sesame meal, Rapeseed, mustard oil cake	Supplementation, use of phytase, roasting, soaking, autoclaving, fermentation, germination, genetic modification
Oxalic acid	Leaf proteins	Heat treatment, Boiling
Gossypol	Cottonseed meal	Genetic modification, fermentation, use of iron salts
<b><i>Interaction with vitamin availability</i></b>		
Cyanogens,	Cassava, sorghum, pea seed meal	Heat treatment, boiling, simmering, blanching
Alkaloids	Lupin seed meal	Heat treatment, soaking
Antivitamins	Cottonseed meal, soybean meal, pea seed meal	Heat treatment

Francis et al. (2001)

often considered structural features necessary for inhibiting enzyme activity (Otlewski et al. 2005). They bind proteases, which resist digestion in the small intestine; thus, ensuring their removal through excretion (Fig. 4.1). Because of their protein-particular nature, protease inhibitors can be easily denatured by heat treatment, although some residual activity may remain in commercially produced products. The anti-nutrient activity of protease inhibitors is related to growth suppression and pancreatic hypertrophy (Chunmei et al. 2010). There are two types of protease inhibitors, the Kunitz inhibitor (inhibits trypsin only) and the Bowman-Burk inhibitor (inhibits trypsin and chymotrypsin) (Ramteke et al. 2019), commonly found in soybeans and cannot be quickly inactivated by heat treatment due to the presence of disulfide bridges (Liu 1997; Van Der Ven et al. 2005). The trypsin inhibitor in

**Table 4.3** The types of anti-nutritional factors in forage crops

Anti-nutritional substances	Crops/species
<b><i>Non-protein amino acids</i></b>	
Mimosine	<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>
Indospecine	<i>Indigofera spicata</i>
<b><i>Glycosides</i></b>	
Cyanogens	<i>Acacia giraffae</i> <i>Acacia sieberiana</i> <i>Acacia Cunninghamii</i> <i>Barteria fistulosa</i> <i>Bambusa bambos</i> <i>Manihot esculenta</i>
Saponins	<i>Albizia stipulate</i> <i>Sesbania sesban</i> <i>Bassia latifolia</i>
<b><i>Phytohemagglutinins</i></b>	
Ricin	<i>Bauhinia purpurea</i> <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>
Robin	<i>Ricinus communis</i>
<b><i>Polyphenolic compounds</i></b>	
Tannins	All vascular plants
Lignins	All vascular plants
<b><i>Alkaloids</i></b>	
N-methyl-B-phen	<i>Acacia berlandieri</i>
Ethylamine	<i>Sesbania vesicaria</i>
Sesbanine	<i>Sesbania punicea</i> <i>Sesbania drummondii</i>
<b><i>Triterpenes</i></b>	
Azadirachtin	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>
Limonin	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>
<b>Oxalate</b>	<i>Acacia aneura</i>

soybean interferes with methionine availability from raw soybean and forms non-digestible complexes with dietary protein in the gastrointestinal tract (Ramteke et al. 2019). These complexes are not digestible even in large amounts of digestive enzymes (Thakur et al. 2019). Chicks fed raw soybeans develop pancreatic hypertrophy, but this is not observed in pigs and calves (Ramteke et al. 2019). The presence of trypsin inhibitors in the diet creates an irreversible condition known as the enzyme-trypsin inhibitor complex, which leads to a reduction of trypsin in the intestine and a decrease in protein digestion, slowing down the animal growth. Several enzyme inhibitors are found in plant-derived feeds, but those that affect trypsin and  $\alpha$ -amylase activity are the two main types found in all cereals and legume-based feeds. The factors controlling the destruction of protease inhibitors are heat treatment, duration of heating, particle size, and moisture level (Vaz Patto et al. 2015).

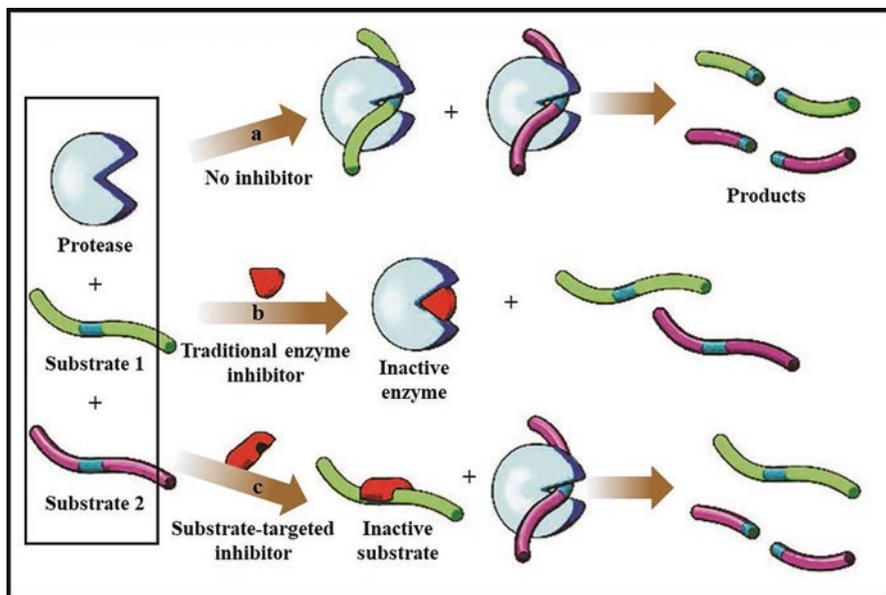


Fig. 4.1 Potential Target molecules of protease inhibitors

### Amylase Inhibitors

$\alpha$ -amylase regulates the breakdown of carbohydrates, such as the breakdown of polysaccharides into oligosaccharides. Amylase inhibitors are known as starch blockers because they contain substances that prevent the absorption of dietary starches. Therefore,  $\alpha$ -amylase inhibitors increase the time for carbohydrate absorption by delaying carbohydrate digestion, thus decreasing the rate of glucose absorption and affecting the average postprandial plasma glucose concentration (Bhutkar and Bhise 2012). These inhibitors are heat-labile and are active in the pH range of 4.5–9.5 (Marshall and Lauda 2007). Amylase inhibitors do not inhibit bacterial, fungal, or endogenous amylase but can inhibit bovine pancreatic amylase. This inhibitor's instability in the gastrointestinal tract leads to reduced insulin responses and increased caloric production from food when the inhibitor is used in starch blocking tablets (Giri and Kachole 1998).

#### 4.3.1.2 Lectins (Haemagglutinins)

Lectins are sugar-binding proteins that readily bind to red blood cells to cause agglutination and are found in most plants, especially seeds such as grains and beans, tubers like potatoes, and raw meat (Hamid et al. 2013). Grains and legumes generally contain lectins, which are glycoproteins. Lectin activity has been determined in more than 800 legumes; 2–10% of the total legume seed proteins are

lectins in soybean and ricin (castor bean), the latter is toxic and causes severe inflammation in the intestine, kidney, thyroid gland, etc. (Ramteke et al. 2019). In addition, the transport and hydrolytic functions of intestinal cells can be impaired by the consumption of foods containing lectins (Krupa 2008). Lectins impair the absorption of nutrients by binding directly to the intestinal mucosa, interacting with enterocytes, and resulting in severe intestinal damage, which disrupts digestion, causes nutrient deficiencies and epithelial lesions within the intestine, and allows bacterial populations to come in contact with the bloodstream (Muramoto 2017) (Fig. 4.2). In a study by Bardocz et al. (1995), the epithelium had an increased density of goblet cells and a marked decrease or absence of absorptive vacuoles; the microvilli of the intestinal cells were shortened with an increase in microvillar

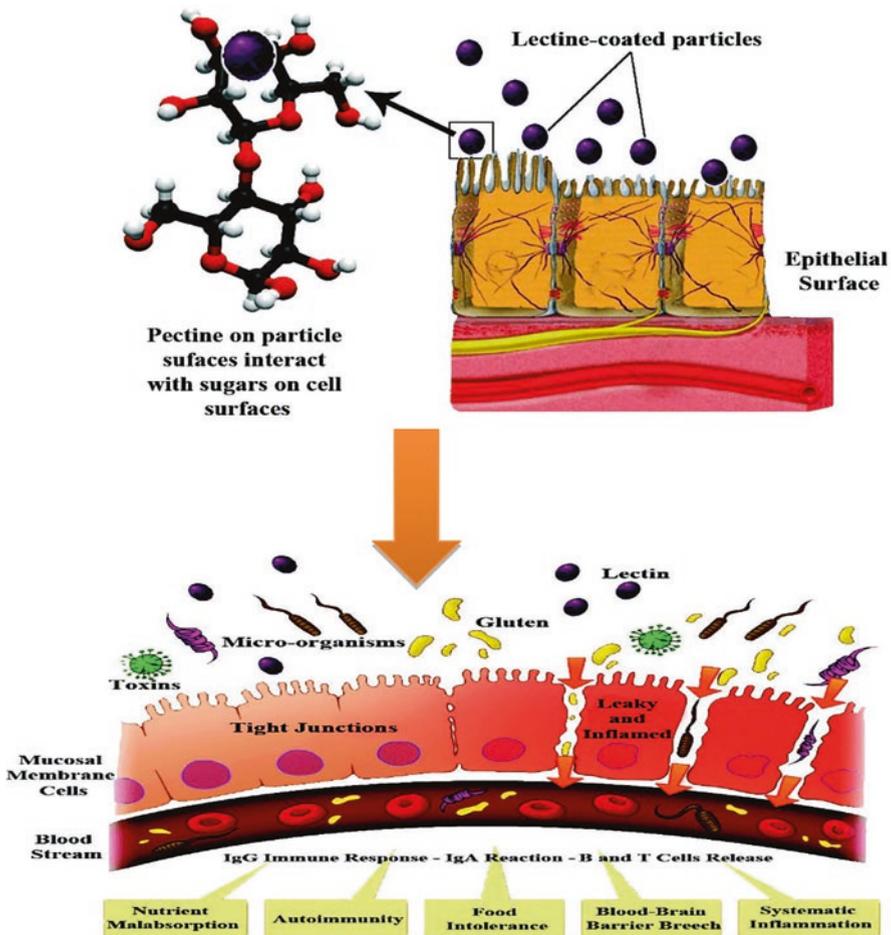


Fig. 4.2 Binding of particle-lectin conjugates with sugar residues of the cell membrane

vesicle formation and the number of intestinal crypt cells. The increase in the density of the goblet cells may have been due to the production of hypertrophic mucus in the intestine as a result of the irritation by lectins; thus, preventing the absorption of digestion end products in the small intestine. Lectins may also have resisted digestion through pancreatic juice (Ramteke et al. 2019). Lectins from soybeans, known as soybean agglutinins, impair animal growth, cause enlargement of the small intestine, damage the small intestine's epithelium, and stimulate hypertrophy and pancreas hyperplasia (Grant 1991) (Table 4.6). Lectins also bind with the glycoprotein components of erythrocytes, causing cell agglutination. Lectins have some interesting chemical and biological properties, such as interacting with specific blood groups, performing various mitotic division functions, destroying cancer cells, and having toxic effects in some animals. Since they bind with different sugar groups, lectins that attach to the intestinal wall may vary depending on sugar type. Dietary lectins are important because they are resistant to digestion and are not hydrolyzed in the intestine (Fig. 4.2). Although lectins are proteins, they are partially resistant to proteolytic degradation in the intestine. Soybean lectins can bind to brush border surfaces, particularly in the small intestine's distal part (Grant 1991; Dublecz 2011). Lectins selectively bind carbohydrates and, most importantly, the carbohydrate moieties of glycoproteins present on most animal cell surfaces. Lectins act as protein antigens that simultaneously bind to surface glycoproteins or glycolipids in red blood cells and immune factors, causing haemagglutination and anemia (Sauvion et al. 2004). They are present in small amounts in 30% of foods and in higher quantities in whole-grain diets. Haemagglutination of red blood cells is commonly used to measure lectin activity (Dublecz 2011; Fereidoon 2014). Consumption of feed-containing lectins may result in endogenous loss of nitrogen and reduced protein utilization. Undigested and unabsorbed proteins and carbohydrates in the small intestine reach the colon, where the bacterial flora ferments them into short-chain fatty acids and gases. These may, in turn, contribute to some digestive symptoms related to the intake of raw beans or purified lectins. The gastrointestinal mucosal disruption caused by lectins may allow bacteria and their endotoxins to enter the bloodstream and cause toxicity. Lectins can also be absorbed directly and cause systemic effects such as increased protein catabolism, breakdown of stored fats and glycogen, and mineral metabolism disturbances (Fereidoon 2014).

#### 4.3.1.3 Tannins

Tannins are astringent and bitter plant polyphenols with molecular weights higher than 500 Da. One of the properties of these compounds is their ability to precipitate proteins and various other organic compounds, including amino acids and alkaloids. Tannins are secondary compounds found in plants' leaves, fruits, and bark (Timotheo and Lauer 2018). They are also found in cereals such as sorghum (containing up to 5% condensed tannin) and barley (Serrano et al. 2009; Morzelle et al. 2019), food crops and legumes such as lima beans, fava beans, sunflower seed meal, and rape-seed, in the foliage of many trees and shrubs, and many seeds and agro-industrial

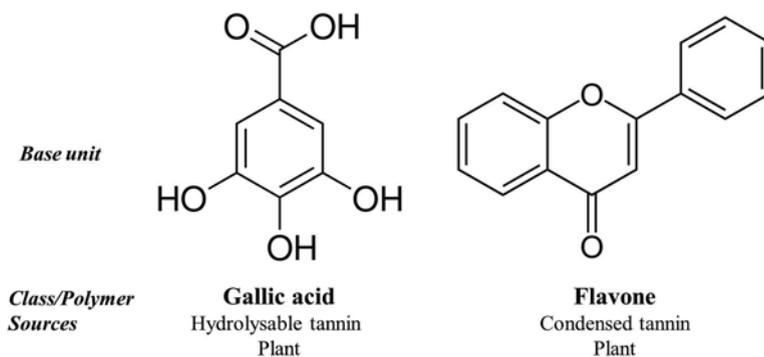
by-products (Dube et al. 2001) (Table 4.4). Tannins usually affect protein digestion by forming reversible and non-reversible tannin-protein complexes between the hydroxyl group of tannins and the carbonyl group of proteins, reducing essential amino acids (Lampart-Szczapa et al. 2003; Patra and Saxena 2010; Raes et al. 2014). In nature, there are two types of tannins: hydrolyzable (e.g., gallotannins and ellagitannins) and condensed (e.g., proanthocyanidins) (Patel et al. 2013) (Fig. 4.3). The two types differ in their molecular weight, structure, and nutritional and toxic effects on herbivorous animals, especially in ruminants that ingest tannin-rich forages (Fig. 4.3).

Condensed tannins (CT) are the most common type of tannins present in legumes, seeds, trees, and stems (Barry and McNabb 1999). They are extensively distributed in legume pasture species, several Acacia species, seeds, and other plant species (Degan et al. 1995). The CT consists of flavonoid units (flavan-3-ol) linked by carbon-carbon bonds, which influence its physical and biological properties (Hassanpour et al. 2011). The complexity of CT relies on flavonoid units that vary

**Table 4.4** Distribution of tannins in selected feedstuffs

Feed ingredients	Tannin concentration (%) <sup>a</sup>	References
Sorghum grain (white)	0.55	Gowda et al. (1994)
Sorghum grain (yellow)	0.2–2.0	Fuller et al. (1996)
Sorghum grain (red)	1.54–7.44	Medugu et al. (2010)
Sunflower cake	2.36	Jacob et al. (1996)
Sesame seed cake	2.15	Jacob et al. (1996)
Mango seed kernel	5.47	Diarra et al. (2008)
Mango seed kernel	0.08–0.10	Bala et al. (2013)
Soybean meal	2.47	Jacob et al. (1996)
Pigeon pea	4.3–11.4	Jambunathan et al. (1988)
Chick pea	1.9–6.1	Jambunathan et al. (1988)
Mucuna beans	0.80	Akinmutimi (2007)

<sup>a</sup>Dry matter basis



**Fig. 4.3** Types of tannins and their primary structures

between components and within sites to form interflavan bonds. Hydrolyzable tannins (HT) are usually found at lower concentrations in plants than CT, and they are further divided into taragallotannins (gallic and quinic acid) and caffetannins (caffeic and quinic acid) (Mangan 1988). The HT are easily hydrolyzed during the digestion process by tanninase enzymes that engage in ester-bond hydrolysis. They can form compounds such as pyrogallol, which is toxic to ruminants. Poisonous compounds from more than 20% HT in the diet can cause kidney damage, proximal tubular necrosis, liver necrosis, lesions related to haemorrhagic gastroenteritis, and high mortality in sheep and cattle (Reed 1995). Previous studies have shown that cattle and sheep are sensitive to these tannins, while goats are resistant (D'Mello 2000; Bhattarai et al. 2016; Smeriglio et al. 2017). Tannins mainly accumulate on the seed coat of legumes; when ingested, they form protein-containing complexes that disrupt various digestive enzymes and reduce protein digestion (Joye 2019). In non-ruminants, HT can reduce growth rates, protein utilization, cause damage to the mucosa of the digestive tract and increase the excretion of protein and amino acids (Hassanpour et al. 2011). CT strongly reduces hydrolyzable tannin's digestibility, while HT causes varied toxic manifestations due to hydrolysis in the rumen (Akanke et al. 2010). Tannins are the most common anti-nutritional factors found in plants. Their anti-nutritional effects depend on their chemical structure and concentration. They can inhibit trypsin, chymotrypsin, amylase, and lipase activities, reduce dietary protein quality, and interfere with dietary iron absorption (Lumen and Salamat 1980; Rao and Desothale 1998). Tannins also form insoluble complexes with proteins, which may explain the anti-nutritional effects of feeds containing tannins (Gemede and Ratta 2014) (Table 4.6). Tannins interfere with digestion by displaying anti-amylase activity and forming a complex with vitamin B (Liener 1980). Other adverse nutritional effects of tannins include intestinal damage and a possible carcinogenic effect, depression of feed intake, growth rate, feed efficiency, and microbial enzyme activities, including cellulose and intestinal digestion, as well as increased endogenous protein excretion, digestive tract malfunctioning, and toxicity of absorbed tannins or their metabolites. Tannins may form small digestive complexes with the feed antagonistic to arginine, interfere with RNA proteins, bind and inhibit endogenous proteins such as digestive enzymes, make proteins partially unavailable, and increase faecal nitrogen (Kumar and Singh 1984) (Fig. 4.4). Tannin-protein complexes include both hydrogen bonding and hydrophobic interactions. The protein-tannin complex's precipitation depends on the pH, molecular size, and ionic strength of tannins (Fig. 4.5). Both protein precipitation and incorporation of tannins in the precipitate increase as the tannins' molecular weight exceeds 5000 Da, and the tannins become insoluble and lose their ability to precipitate protein. The degree of polymerization then becomes necessary to assess the role of tannins in ruminant nutrition. CTs are responsible for the test-linked trypsin inhibitor activity of fava beans (Helsper et al. 1993).

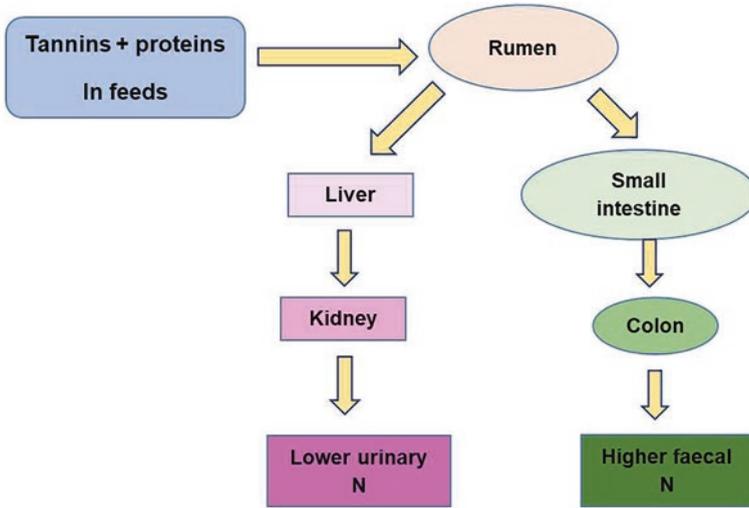


Fig. 4.4 Tannins that bind to dietary protein increase the nitrogen flux from the rumen to the small intestine

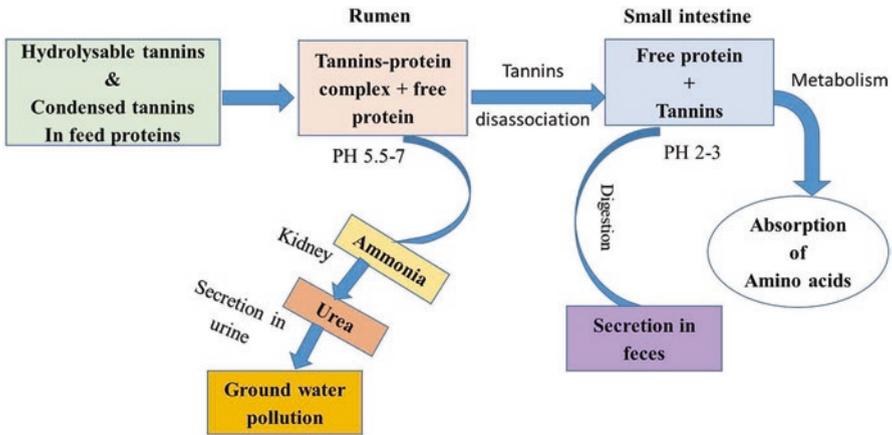


Fig. 4.5 Protection of feed proteins through tannin-protein complexes

#### 4.3.1.4 Non-protein Amino Acids

##### Mimosine

Mimosine is a non-protein amino acid that is structurally similar to tyrosine. It is present in *Leucaena leucocephala*, in which the leaf mimosine level is approximately 2–6% and varies depending on season and maturity of leaves and stems. The main clinical symptoms of toxicity in non-ruminants include poor growth,

reproductive problems, eye cataracts, and alopecia. When *L. leucocephala* is used as a feed meal for poultry, rabbit, or pigs, more than 5–10% of the meal generally causes poor growth and reproduction. In ruminants, mimosine toxicity causes poor body growth, poor wool development, depressed serum thyroxine levels, goiters, alopecia, dullness, swollen and raw coronets above the hooves, lesions in the mouth and oesophagus, and lameness (Table 4.6). Symptoms may be due to the mimosine metabolite in the rumen or 3,4-dihydroxypyridine.

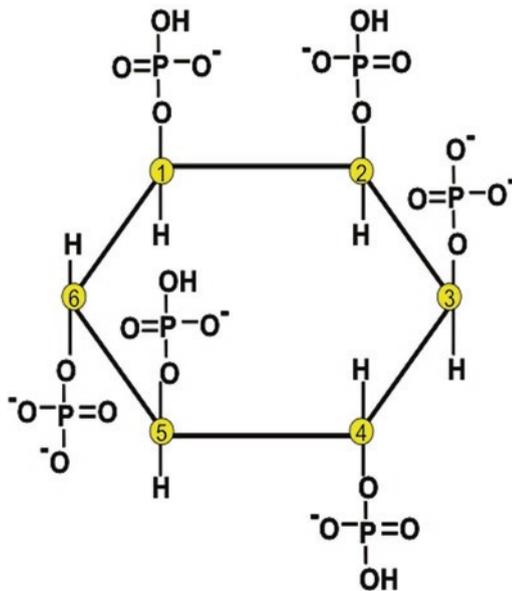
Additionally, Jones et al. (1989) observed a diminished calving percentage in cows fed *L. leucocephala*. The problems caused by mimosine can be solved by genetically selecting *Leucaena* species with low mimosine content, but it has been noted that the low-mimosine species are unproductive and have low vigor; this problem can be solved by producing feed containing *Leucaena* mixed with other forages and concentrates. Hiremat (1981) suggested that the use of *Leucaena* as fodder can be limited to 50% of green forage for goats and 30% for cattle and buffalo. This strategy results in better livestock growth and production.

### 4.3.2 Factors Interfering with Minerals Utilisation

#### 4.3.2.1 Phytic Acid

Phytic acid, also known as inositol hexakisphosphate, occurs naturally as phytate in feedstuffs of plant origin, and it acts as a storage form of phosphorus (Bedford 2000) (Fig. 4.6). Phytic acid is a phosphorus-containing compound that binds to

Fig. 4.6 Phytic acid and its basic structure



minerals and inhibits mineral absorption, resulting in decreased bioavailability of essential minerals, eventually turning them into insoluble compounds that are less readily absorbed and digested in the small intestine (Desphande and Cheryan 1984; Lott et al. 2000; Raboy 2000). Phytic acid is a ubiquitous secondary compound ranging from 0.1% to 6.0% among plant species, especially seeds, legumes, and cereals (Lolas 1976; García-Estepa et al. 1999; Lori et al. 2001; Loewus 2002; Margier et al. 2018). Phytic acid is primarily present as a salt of the mono- and divalent cations  $K^+$ ,  $Mg^{2+}$ , and  $Ca^{2+}$ , and it accumulates in seeds during ripening (Maenz 2001).

Phytic acid is generally a negatively charged structure that binds to positively charged metal ions such as zinc, calcium, magnesium, and iron to form complexes and reduce these ions' bioavailability through lowered absorption rates. Phytic acid is one of the most effective anti-nutrients in animal feeds due to its chelating property. Its presence causes mineral ion deficiency in animal and human nutrition (Walter et al. 2002; Bora 2014; Grace et al. 2017) (Table 4.6). Since phytic acid, one of the strongest ANFs in plant feedstuffs, accumulates in seed storage sites, behaves as a chelating ligand with minerals and forms complex salt phytates; and can act as potent chelators that form protein and mineral-phytic acid complexes in a reduced bioavailability of protein and minerals (Erdman 1979). Most of the phosphorus contained within phytic acid is unavailable mainly to non-ruminants due to the absence of phytase in these animals' gastrointestinal tract (GIT). In chickens, there is a significant inverse relationship between phytic acid availability and the availability of phosphorus, magnesium, zinc, and calcium in feedstuffs, such as rapeseed, palm kernel seed, soybean meal, and cottonseed meal. Phytic acid, a highly negatively charged ion, works in a broad pH range and binds nutritionally important divalent cations in the diet such as iron, zinc, copper, magnesium, calcium, and molybdenum and endogenous GIT secretions such as digestive enzymes and mucins. This binding leads to the formation of insoluble complexes that are not readily absorbed by the GIT and increase the endogenous secretion of nutrients (Frontela et al. 2008; Woyengo and Nyachoti 2013) (Fig. 4.7). It also inhibits the action of GI tyrosinase, trypsin, pepsin, lipase, and amylase. Phytic acid is poorly hydrolyzed by non-ruminants (Woyengo and Nyachoti 2011, 2013). Most poultry does not have endogenous enzymes to break down phytate and release nutrients; thus, phytate transits undigested through the GIT (Fig. 4.8). This is also why high proportions of valuable nutrients from plant sources are not utilized by non-ruminants and are wasted in the excreta (Mueller 2001). Phosphorus bound to phytate is not bioavailable to non-ruminants. Ruminants, such as sheep and cows, chew, swallow, and then regurgitate their food; this regurgitated food is known as cud and is chewed a second time. Due to the phytase activity of rumen microorganisms, these animals can separate and process phosphorus into phytates (Haese 2017).

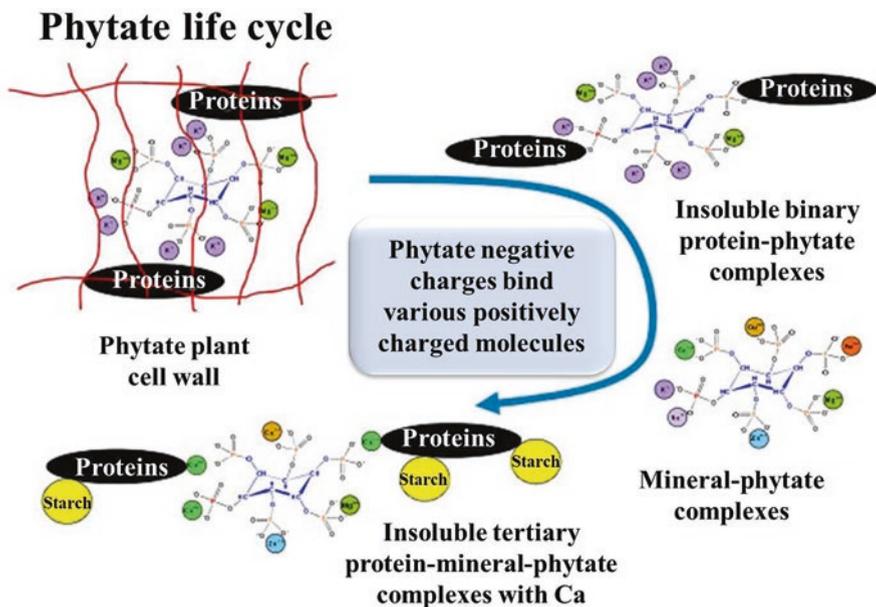
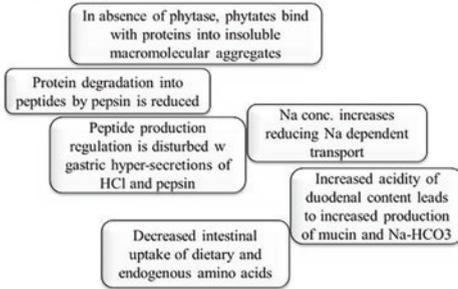


Fig. 4.7 Phytate life cycle

#### 4.3.2.2 Gossypol

Gossypol is a phenolic compound with a yellow pigment, which is a complex of esters and ethers of various carbohydrates found in the pigment glands of plants of the genus *Gossypium*, family Malvaceae. It is present in two forms: free gossypol or bound form (Abbas 2020). Free gossypol contains aldehyde and phenolic groups, making it more reactive and toxic (Leeson and Summer 2001) (Fig. 4.9). Bound gossypol (BG) is not absorbed and is non-toxic. Gossypol is found in higher concentrations in cotton seeds (0.4–2.4%), and the average content of free gossypol in cottonseed meal is 0.01% (Liener 1980). Whole cotton seeds contain the highest amount of free gossypol. Cottonseed meal is a by-product of extracting cottonseed oil from whole seeds. Different extraction techniques significantly impact on the amount of free gossypol contained in cottonseed meal. The screw-press method uses heat that increases protein binding, thus converting more free gossypol (toxic form) into BG (non-toxic). Solvent extraction is widely used because more oil can be extracted. However, because heat is not used in solvent extraction, the amount of free gossypol content in cottonseed meal is approximately ten times higher than that in cottonseed meal processed by the screw-press method. This can be a considerable difference if there is much gossypol in the seed. This switch to solvent extraction explains the increase in gossypol toxicity in the past decades (Morgan 1989). Free gossypol is the most common anti-nutritional factor in cottonseed meal, primarily affecting the heart, liver, reproductive tract, and kidneys (Nagalakshmi et al. 2007). During cotton seed oil extraction, free gossypol binds to the epsilon amino group of

**Phytate w/o Phytase in vivo**



**Phytate w Phytase in vivo**

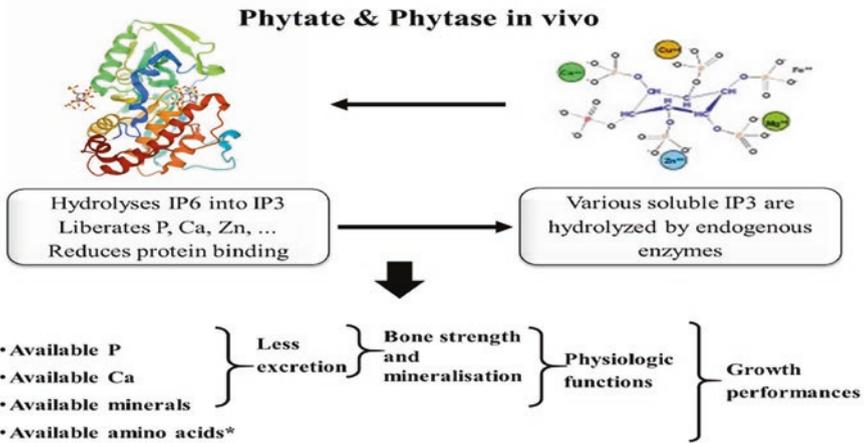
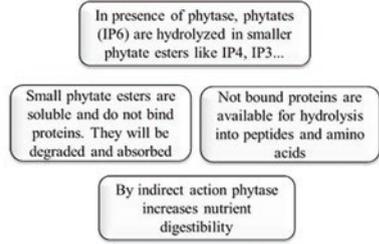
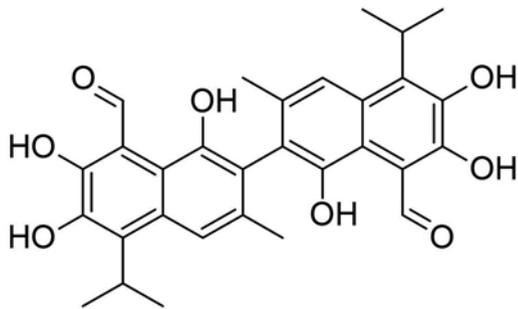


Fig. 4.8 Phytate with/without phytase in vivo

Fig. 4.9 Gossypol and its basic structure



lysine, resulting in BG, which reduces lysine availability to animals. The amount of free gossypol in cottonseed meal can be variable. Many factors influence its content, such as cotton plant species, climatic and soil conditions, oil extraction methods, kernel to husk ratio, and seed coat (Nagalakshmi et al. 2007). This makes it impossible to know how much free gossypol the cottonseed meal contains without testing

it. Hence, the quality of cottonseed meal is restricted by the free gossypol, its unbalanced digestible amino acid, and its high fluctuation in free gossypol concentration. Moreover, methionine, lysine, threonine, and valine deficiency in cottonseed meal protein causes a decrease in its digestibility, probably due to high cell wall components, which provokes a faster digestion passage rate due to gossypol binding to the soluble protein (Nagalakshmi et al. 2007). Gossypol makes an insoluble chelate with many essential elements such as iron and amino acids, hence reducing these nutrients' availability (Church 1991; Robinson 1991). Gossypol may reduce protein digestibility by binding to the free epsilon amino group of lysine during heat treatment, and the gossypol protein complex formed in cottonseed meal may render the adjacent peptides unavailable for proteolytic action. Gossypol inhibits the activity of important enzymes by binding to their free epsilon amino groups (Sharma et al. 1978). Non-ruminants have long been known to be susceptible to gossypol toxicity. Ruminants such as cattle and sheep can tolerate higher free gossypol levels because gossypol binds to proteins in the rumen. However, young calves and lambs are pretty susceptible to gossypol toxicosis. Although they are ruminants, their rumen is not fully functional and cannot bind as much free gossypol as the rumen of adult animals. General signs of gossypol toxicity are reduced appetite and the productive performance of animals, and causes contraception and infertility in animals (Leeson and Summer 2001), inhibition of haemoglobin synthesis by iron-binding, inhibition of respiratory enzymes resulting in difficulty breathing and cardiac arrhythmias (Ferguson et al. 1959; Skutches et al. 1973), reduction in the oxygen-carrying capacity of hemoglobin, and a decrease in the ratio of hemoglobin to red blood cells and decreased serum protein concentration. Dietary gossypol may also cause diarrhea, oedema of the body cavities, liver discoloration, and degeneration of myocardium, liver, and spleen (Church 1991; Olomu 1995). In poultry, free gossypol reduces production performance and causes leg weakness (Lordelo et al. 2007) and egg yolk mottling (i.e., olive green discoloration of yolk) (Davis et al. 2002) due to the interaction between gossypol and yolk iron, and may also harm blood biochemistry variables (Adeyemo 2008) (Table 4.6). Cotton seeds are rich in gossypol and can thus produce severe toxicity to farm animals; however, the cumulative effects of dietary gossypol and toxicity can occur after an ingestion period of 1–3 months (Patton et al. 1985; Kerr 1989; Soto-Blanco 2008; Gadelha et al. 2011). Gossypol toxicity has been reported in many species, including broiler chicks (Henry et al. 2001), pigs (Haschek et al. 1989), goats (East et al. 1994), and sheep (Morgan et al. 1988). Non-ruminants are more susceptible to gossypol toxicity than ruminants (Alexander et al. 2008; Kenar 2006; Randel et al. 1992; Zhang et al. 2007). Moreover, young ruminants are more sensitive to gossypol than adult ruminants (Soto-Blanco 2008) because gossypol is not bound during rumen fermentation, as it is in animals with fully functional rumen. However, if gossypol intake overwhelms the rumen's detoxification capacity, free gossypol may be absorbed in hazardous concentrations even in adult ruminants (Willard et al. 1995). The rate of gossypol absorption is inversely proportional to the amount of iron in the diet (Haschek et al.

1989); thus, dietary supplementation with ferrous sulfate inhibits free gossypol (Barraza et al. 1991). In ruminants, microbial fermentation in the rumen binds dietary free gossypol with proteins (Schneider et al. 2002). However, it is unknown whether the intestine can absorb the BG form or if microorganisms can release free gossypol from the bound form, as absorbed gossypol accumulates in the liver (Lindsey et al. 1980) and kidneys (Kim et al. 1996). The primary route of gossypol excretion is through the bile; it is then eliminated through faeces after conjugation with glucuronides and sulfates (Abou-Donia et al. 1989). Small amounts of gossypol are also excreted in expired air (Soto-Blanco 2008), and some gossypol is excreted in the milk (Lindsey et al. 1980).

### 4.3.2.3 Oxalates

Oxalate (oxalic acid) is a substance that can form insoluble salts with minerals such as Ca, K, Na, Mg, and Fe. These compounds are found in small amounts in both plants and mammals (Petroski and Minich 2020). Under normal conditions, oxalate is confined to separate compartments, but when it is processed and or digested, it comes into contact with the nutrients in the digestive system (Noonan and Savage 1999). When released, it binds with nutrients, rendering them unavailable to the body. If feed with excessive amounts of oxalic acid is consumed regularly, a nutritional deficiency is likely and severe irritation of the gut lining (Liebman and Al-Wahsh 2011). Strong bonds are formed between oxalic acid and many other minerals, such as Ca, K, Na, and Mg (Fig. 4.10). These chemical combinations lead to the formation of oxalate salts found in plants' soluble and insoluble forms. Soluble salts are formed when oxalate binds to Mg, Na, and K, while insoluble salts are produced when oxalate binds to Fe and Ca. Oxalate affects Ca and Mg metabolism and interacts with proteins to form complexes that inhibit digestion. The high content of soluble oxalate content prevents the absorption of soluble Ca ions, as oxalate binds to Ca ions to form insoluble Ca-oxalate complexes (Hamid et al. 2017). This renders Ca unavailable for maintaining healthy bones, as a cofactor in enzymatic reactions, the transmission of nerve impulses, and as a clotting factor in the blood (Table 4.6). Ca loss leads to bone deterioration, impaired blood clotting, and a disturbance in the absorbed Ca:P ratio, which leads to bone mineral mobilization to alleviate hypocalcemia; therefore, prolonged mobilization of bone minerals

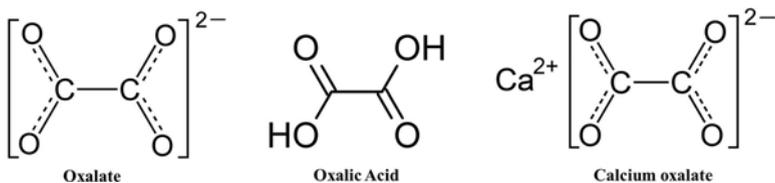


Fig. 4.10 Show the different chemical structure between oxalate, oxalic acid and calcium oxalate

leads to osteodystrophy fibrosa or hyperparathyroidism (Rahman and Kawamura 2011). In ruminants, oxalate is marginally significant as ANF because rumen microflora efficiently metabolize soluble oxalates (Gemedo and Ratta 2014) and, to a lesser extent, even insoluble Ca-oxalate. If large quantities of oxalate-rich plants are ingested, the rumen is overwhelmed and cannot metabolize oxalates, poisoning the animal. A soluble oxalate level of 2% or more in forage grasses may cause severe poisoning in ruminants, but in non-ruminants, a level <0.5% is safe. However, these proposed safe levels of soluble oxalate should be considered preliminary (Rahman et al. 2013). Various tropical grasses, including pangola and buffel grasses, kikuyu-grass, and *Setaria* grasses, contain soluble oxalates in sufficient concentrations to induce Ca deficiency in grazing animals. Young plants contain more oxalate than older ones (Jones and Ford 1972). There is a rapid rise in oxalate content during the early stages of growth, followed by a decrease as the plant matures (Davis 1981). The highest oxalate content in grasses occurs during rapid growth, reaching concentrations up to 6% of the dry weight (Cheeke 1996). Additionally, oxalate content can be manipulated by varying the harvesting interval, decreasing with an increased harvest interval (Rahman et al. 2009; Patel et al. 2013).

### 4.3.3 *Anti-vitamins*

Some anti-vitamin factors are found in plants, especially leguminous plants. Anti-vitamins are organic compounds that destroy specific vitamins, combine and form non-absorbable complexes, or interfere with digestive and/or metabolic functions (Ramteke et al. 2019) (Table 4.6). Antivitamin A in raw soybeans contains lipoxygenase enzymes that oxidize carotene, a precursor of vitamin A. Heating soybeans can destroy it for 5 min at atmospheric pressure. Antivitamin D is a rachitogenic factor in isolated soy protein (unheated). It interferes with the absorption of Ca and P in pigs and chicks, and it is destroyed by autoclaving. Antivitamin E is present in soybeans and alfalfa, and it causes muscle dystrophy and liver necrosis in lambs and chicks by reducing plasma vitamin E. It is similarly destroyed by autoclaving. Antivitamin K in sweet clover causes a fatal haemorrhagic condition in cattle known as sweet clover disease. Dicoumarol reduces the levels of prothrombin in the blood and affects blood clotting. Other anti-vitamins include anti-thiamine, also called thiaminase, which is found in cotton seeds, linseed, mustard seed, and mung bean, and anti-niacin, which is found in sorghum, maize, and wheat bran and causes perosis (chondrodystrophy) and growth depression. Additionally, anti-pyridoxine, also called linatine, has been identified as 1-amino-D-proline, and is naturally occurring with glutamic acid as a peptide, and can be destroyed after water treatment and autoclaving. Finally, anti-vitamin B12 is found in raw soybeans (Ramteke et al. 2019).

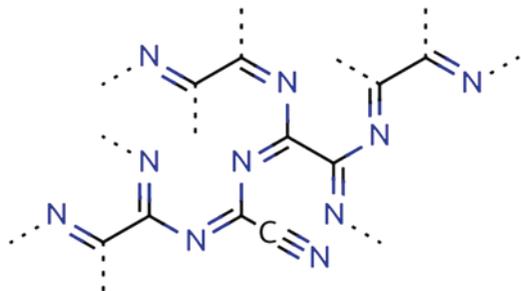
### 4.3.4 Miscellaneous

#### 4.3.4.1 Cyanogens

When consumed, several plant species produce hydrogen cyanide from cyanogenic glycosides, which are sugar glycosides or polysaccharides that combine with cyanide and contain aglycone (Fig. 4.11). More than 2500 plant species have been reported to contain cyanogenic glucosides, including important staple foods such as sorghum, cassava, white clover, and linseed (Rosling 1987; Vennessland et al. 1982). Cyanogenic glucosides, or cyanoglycosides, represent approximately 90% of the broadest group of plant toxins known as cyanogens. The main feature of these toxins is cyanogenes, the formation of free hydrogen cyanide, which binds to cyanohydrins that have been stabilized by glycosylation (binding of polysaccharides) to form cyanogenic glycosides. In addition, cyanogenic glucosides are classified as phytoanticipins. Their function in plants depends on activation by glucosidases to release toxic volatile hydrogen cyanide and aldehydes or ketones to repel herbivory and pathogens (Zagrobelny et al. 2004). Hydrogen cyanide inhibits the cytochrome oxidase enzyme in the mitochondria of cells by binding to the  $\text{Fe}^{3+}/\text{Fe}^{2+}$  present in the enzyme, resulting in decreased tissue  $\text{O}_2$  utilization, causing increased levels of blood glucose and lactic acid, and reducing the ATP/ADP ratio, indicating a shift from aerobic to anaerobic metabolism.

Moreover, many enzyme systems inhibit growth by interfering with certain essential amino acids and utilizing associated nutrients (Table 4.6) and causing severe poisoning, neuropathy, and death (Osuntokun 1972). Cyanide activates the glycogenolysis process and converts glucose in the pentose phosphate pathway, which reduces the rate of glycolysis and inhibits the tricarboxylic acid cycle. Cyanide then reduces the energy availability in all cells, but its effect is immediate on the respiratory system and heart. Since cyanide is highly toxic, it inhibits cytochrome oxidase, which is the last step in electron transport, thus inhibiting ATP synthesis. The most obvious symptom is death, but before dying, symptoms include faster and deeper respiration, a faster irregular and weaker pulse, salivation and frothing mouth, muscular spasms, dilation of the pupils, and bright red mucous membranes. The potential toxicity of cyanogen depends mainly on the potential concentration of hydrogen cyanide that may be released upon consumption. When

**Fig. 4.11** Cyanogens and their basic structure

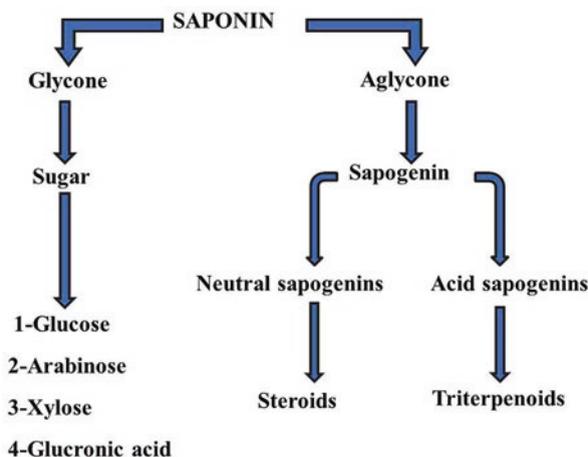


a cyanogenic plant is consumed,  $\beta$ -glycosidase is released during digestion and follows the known cyanide metabolic pathways and toxicokinetic processes in animals and humans (Oke 1979, 1980); it remains active until inactivated by a low gastric pH. After the catabolic intracellular enzyme  $\beta$ -glucosidase is released upon contact with glycosides, this enzyme breaks down cyanogenic glycosides releasing hydrogen cyanide, glucose, ketones, or benzaldehydes (Gonzales and Sabatini 1989; Rosling 1987; WHO 2010). The hydrolytic reaction can occur in the rumen by microbial activity. Hence, ruminants are more susceptible to cyanide toxicity than non-ruminants (Patel et al. 2013). After its absorption, cyanide is rapidly distributed in the animal body through the blood. It is known to combine with Fe in both methemoglobin and haemoglobin found in red blood cells, leading to an increased cyanide concentration in red blood cells compared with that of plasma. Cyanide is detoxified in the liver by the enzyme rhodanese, forming thiocyanate, which is excreted in the urine (Oke 1979, 1980). There is a range for the lethal dose of hydrogen cyanide in animals for various species (0.66–15 mg/kg body weight). For cattle and sheep, the range is 2.0–4.0 mg/kg body weight (Robson 2007).

Furthermore, a level greater than 50 mg/kg is harmful to poultry (Udedibie et al. 2004). Decreased growth and egg production rates have been observed in hens offered feed containing cyanide (Okafor and Okorie 2006), and the acute toxicity of hydrogen cyanide in rabbits occurs at 0.66 mg/kg body weight (EPA 1990). The presence of cyanogens in feed can also deplete sulfur-containing amino acids in birds, resulting in reduced protein synthesis and growth since an adequate amount of amino acids is one of the basic requirements for protein synthesis. The need to supplement cassava feed with methionine and cysteine (sulfur-containing amino acids) has been demonstrated for non-ruminant species (Maner and Gomez 1973).

#### 4.3.4.2 Saponins

Saponins are a heterogeneous group of foam-producing triterpenes or steroidal glycosides that are widely distributed in nature, occurring primarily in the plant kingdom, including in pulses (chickpeas, beans, lentils, among others), oilseeds, groundnuts, lupin beans, sunflower, and alfalfa, with minor levels in other legumes such as soybeans, rapeseed, and various varieties of peas. The name 'saponin' is derived from the Latin word *sapo*, meaning 'soap' because saponin molecules form soap-like foams when shaken in water (Fig. 4.12). Saponins consist of non-polar aglycones coupled with one or more monosaccharide moieties (Oleszek 2002). This combination of polar and non-polar structural elements in their molecules explains their soap-like behavior in aqueous solutions. The structural complexity of saponins results in physical, chemical, and biological properties such as sweetness and bitterness, foaming and emulsifying, pharmacological and medicinal, hemolytic, antimicrobial, insecticidal and molluscicidal activities (Sparg et al. 2004; Gemede and Ratta 2014). Saponins have been recognized as ANF constituents because of their



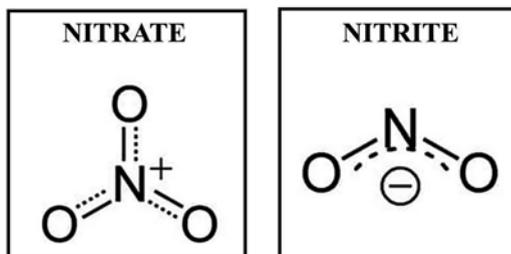
**Fig. 4.12** Pathways of saponins synthesis

adverse health effects, including impaired growth and reduced feed intake owing to bitterness and throat irritation that they cause (Shi et al. 2004). Dietary saponins are poorly absorbed because they can form complexes with sterols, leading to harmful biological effects in the digestive system (Cheeke 1996). Saponins increase the permeability of intestinal mucosal cells, prevent active mucosal transport, and facilitate the uptake of substances that are not customarily absorbed (Johnson et al. 1986). In addition, they reduce the bioavailability of nutrients, decrease enzyme activity, and affect protein digestibility by inhibiting various digestive enzymes such as trypsin and chymotrypsin (Simee 2011). Saponins reduce the absorption of certain nutrients, including glucose and cholesterol, in the gut through an intra-luminal physicochemical interaction (Table 4.6); hence, the effects of hypocholesterolaemia have been reported (Umaru et al. 2007). Additionally, saponins can form complexes with dietary Fe, rendering it unavailable for absorption (Southon et al. 1988). In fact, saponins have lytic action (the specific ability to form pores in membranes) on erythrocyte membranes, causing hemolysis in red blood cells (Seeman 1974). Since they reduce the surface tension of blood in cold-blooded animals, saponins have a highly toxic effect. They reduce growth performance in both poultry and swine. In chickens, saponins reduce growth and feed efficiency and interfere with the absorption of dietary lipids, vitamin A, and vitamin E (Jenkins and Atwal 1994). Compared with non-ruminants, poultry is more sensitive to saponins. Saponins increase the digestibility of carbohydrate-rich foods through a detergent-like activity that reduces viscosity, preventing the regular blocking action of such foods in the intestine. In general, saponins are of minor concern in non-ruminants because they are only present at low levels in common feedstuffs (Dublecz 2011).

#### 4.3.4.3 Nitrates

Nitrates are ANF whose toxicity is associated with consumption of plants with high levels of nitrates, which causes health problems similar to bloating, sweet clover poisoning, or grass/winter tetany. Nitrate accumulates in plants damaged by frost, hail, drought, or even sudden cold and cloudy weather conditions. Also, high nitrates occur in forages subjected to excessive fertilization (Basso and Ritchie 2005). Affected plants must be grazed or harvested to avoid an adverse effect on livestock, especially ruminants. Nitrate toxicity is caused by excess nitrates in feeds, leading to a dangerous condition in ruminants due to a lack of  $O_2$  in the bloodstream; death may result if not treated immediately. It is possible to treat nitrate toxicity, but it is challenging to identify animals with symptoms of this condition. Some forages such as Sudan grass, pearl millet (Andrews and Kumar 1992), and oats can accumulate nitrates at potentially toxic levels. Most nitrate is accumulated in the stem, followed by leaves, and very little in grains (Singh et al. 2000). Nitrate toxicity occurs mainly in ruminants when animals consume feed containing excess nitrate ( $NO_3^-$ ), which is converted into nitrite ( $NO_2^-$ ) by rumen bacteria (Fig. 4.13). Then,  $NO_2^-$  crosses the rumen wall and enters the bloodstream, where it combines with hemoglobin to form methemoglobin, which hampers the ability of red blood cells to carry  $O_2$  into body tissues.  $NO_3^-$  at low levels in forages is converted into ammonia by bacteria in the rumen (Lee and Beauchemin 2014). This process is one of detoxification because  $NO_2^-$  is ten times more toxic than  $NO_3^-$ . This detoxification process occurs more slowly than the conversion of  $NO_3^-$  into  $NO_2^-$ . When microbes that convert  $NO_2^-$  to ammonia are overwhelmed by high  $NO_2^-$  levels in the rumen, toxicity will occur.  $NO_3^-$  and  $NO_2^-$  pass through the rumen wall and interfere with Fe ions in the red blood cells, and the ferrous Fe of hemoglobin turns into the ferric form; thus, forming methemoglobin. This metalloprotein, in which the iron in the heme group is in the  $Fe^{3+}$  (ferric) state, not the  $Fe^{2+}$  (ferrous), does not have the same  $O_2$  carrying capacity as hemoglobin. So the tissues do not get enough  $O_2$  and, thus, suffer from  $O_2$  deprivation (Fig. 4.14). The blood turns to bluish chocolate-brown color rather than the usual bright red. An animal that dies from  $NO_3^-$  ( $NO_2^-$ ) poisoning actually dies from a lack of  $O_2$  (asphyxiation) (Benjamin 2006) (Table 4.6). When forages contain an unusually high level of nitrate, animals cannot complete the conversion process, consequently accumulating the nitrite (Table 4.5). A positive feedback loop occurs if the animals consistently have access to a high-nitrate

**Fig. 4.13** Show the different chemical structures between nitrate and nitrite



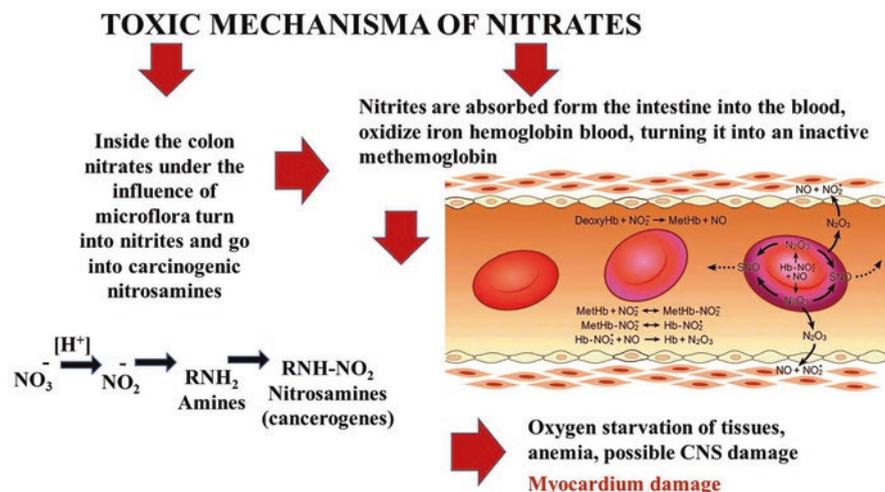


Fig. 4.14 Mechanism of nitrate toxicity

Table 4.5 Level of nitrate in forage (as DM basis) and potential effects on animals

Nitrate content (ppm)	Effect on animals
0–1000	This level is considered safe to feed under all conditions
1000–1500	This level should be safe to feed to non-pregnant animals under all conditions. It may be best to limit its use to pregnant animals to 50% of the total ration
1500–2000	Feeds are fed safely if limited to 50% of the ration
2000–3500	Feeds should be limited to 35–40% of the ration. Feeds containing over 2000 ppm nitrate-nitrogen should not be used for pregnant animals
3500–4000	Feeds should be limited to 25% of the ration. Do not use it for pregnant animals
> 4000	Feeds containing over 4000 ppm are potentially toxic. Do not feed

Adapted from Andrae (2008)

feed. While  $\text{NO}_3^-$  in the bloodstream, which does not initially cause toxicity problems, can be recycled back into the rumen via saliva or intestinal secretions and converted into  $\text{NO}_2^-$ . High-nitrate feed exacerbates the problems because  $\text{NO}_3^-$  is constantly being flooded into the system and either rapidly turns into  $\text{NO}_2^-$  in the rumen or enters the bloodstream to be recycled back into the rumen and reabsorbed into the blood as  $\text{NO}_2^-$ . The rate and quantity of forage consumption, type of forage, energy level, or diet adequacy are the factors that affect the severity of nitrate poisoning. Sheep, goats, and other ruminants are likely to suffer from  $\text{NO}_3^-$  toxicity as cattle. Sheep are the least sensitive to  $\text{NO}_3^-$  toxicity compared with cattle, which are the most sensitive. Sheep convert methemoglobin to hemoglobin and  $\text{NO}_2^-$  to ammonia more efficiently than cattle; therefore they can be safely fed feeds with a higher  $\text{NO}_3^-$  content (Benjamin 2006). Non-ruminants are unlikely to be affected by nitrate poisoning because  $\text{NO}_3^-$  is primarily converted into  $\text{NO}_2^-$  in the intestine,

**Table 4.6** Deleterious and beneficial effects of some anti-nutrients on livestock

Anti-nutritional factors	Deleterious effects	Beneficial effects
Enzyme's inhibitors	<p>Reduce protein digestion and absorption</p> <p>Disturb digestive functions</p> <p>Reduce bioavailability of minerals</p> <p>Decrease the growth</p> <p>Cause diarrhea or excessive gas</p> <p>Pancreatic hypertrophy</p> <p>Animal growth depression</p>	<p>Decrease the incidences of pancreatic cancer</p> <p>Act as anti-carcinogenic agents</p>
Lectins (Haemagglutinins)	<p>Impair animal growth</p> <p>Caused damage to the epithelium of the small intestine</p> <p>Reduced nutrient absorption</p> <p>Cause damage to the gastrointestinal tract</p> <p>Cause endogenous loss of nitrogen and protein utilization</p> <p>Increased protein catabolism,</p> <p>Breakdown of stored fats and glycogen</p> <p>Disturbance in mineral metabolism</p> <p>Stimulate hypertrophy and hyperplasia of the pancreas</p> <p>Cause hemagglutination and anemia</p> <p>Allow bacteria and their endotoxins to enter the bloodstream and cause a toxic response</p>	
Tannins	<p>Decreased growth rate</p> <p>Decrease bioavailability of amino acids</p> <p>Reduce protein digestibility</p> <p>Decreased palatability and feed intake</p> <p>A less digestible complex with dietary proteins</p> <p>Inhibit the endogenous protein such as digestive enzymes</p> <p>Interfere with dietary iron absorption</p> <p>Have the ability to complex with vitamin B</p>	<p>Show antioxidant, antibacterial, anti-diarrhea, free-radical scavenging, anti-proliferative activity</p> <p>Reduce protein degradation during ensilage</p> <p>Increase protein utilization efficiency</p> <p>Reduce parasite burden on gastrointestinal tract</p> <p>Prevent bloating</p> <p>Reduce N emissions into the environment</p> <p>Reduce methane emissions</p> <p>Increase animal product quality</p> <p>Improve live weight gain, reproductive efficiency, and wool production in sheep</p> <p>Increase amino acids absorption in the small intestine</p>

(continued)

**Table 4.6** (continued)

Anti-nutritional factors	Deleterious effects	Beneficial effects
Mimosine	Act as an amino acid Lead to inactivation of the catalytic, transaminases, Complicated with metal such as zinc Cause poor body growth, poor wool development Depress serum thyroxine level and goiter alopecia, dullness, swollen and raw coronets above the hooves, lesions of the mouth and esophagus, and lameness	
Phytic acid	Chelating of mineral cofactors or interacting with a protein Reduce mineral bioavailability and inhibit their absorption Inhibit the action of gastrointestinal tyrosinase, pepsin, trypsin, amylase, and lipase	A powerful natural antioxidant Reducing lipid peroxidation Reduce cholesterol Protect against cancer Against foodborne pathogen Coronary heart disease
Gossypol	Reduce protein digestion Reduce the availability of lysine to the non-ruminants Decreased appetite, weight gain, leg weakness, egg production, and egg size, decreased egg hatchability, caused egg yolk mottling, olive-green discoloration of egg yolk in poultry Decrease hemoglobin, total red blood cell count, protein and albumin to globulin ratio in blood serum	
Oxalates	Form insoluble calcium oxalate Negatively affect the absorption and utilization of calcium in the animal body Cause severe irritation to the lining of the gut	
Cyanogens	Depress growth Interfering with essential amino acids and utilization of nutrients Inhibit many enzyme systems Cause severe toxicity, neuropathy, and death Reduce energy availability in all cells Inhibit cytochrome oxidase Depression in birds growth and small eggs production Deplete the sulfur-containing amino acids for birds resulting in reduced protein synthesis Respiratory inhibitors	

(continued)

**Table 4.6** (continued)

Anti-nutritional factors	Deleterious effects	Beneficial effects
Saponins	Reduce growth rate, bloat (ruminants) Reduce the absorption of nutrients (monosaccharide, glucose, and lipids) Hemolysis in erythrocytes Low blood and liver cholesterol Inhibition of smooth muscle activity Alter the integrity of intestinal epithelial cells Inhibit microbial fermentation and synthesis in the rumen	Antibacterial and antiprotozoal, antioxidants, antitumor property Lowering cholesterol Immune potentiating Bind ammonia and hydrogen sulfide, thus improving air quality in poultry houses Reduced risk of coronary heart diseases Form of first collagen that has a role in the wound-healing process (hydrocarbon ointment)
Nitrate	Nitrite poisoning Convert haemoglobin in the blood to methaemoglobin (blood turns to a chocolate brown color) Animal death from asphyxiation	
Alkaloids	Cause gastrointestinal and neurological disorders Cause infertility	
Anti-vitamins	Form non-absorbable complexes Interfere with digestive and/or metabolic functions Anti-vitamin A Anti-vitamin D interferes with the absorption of calcium and phosphorous in chicks and pigs. Anti-vitamin E causing liver necrosis and muscle dystrophy in chicks and lambs Anti-vitamin K causes a fatal haemorrhagic condition in cattle (known as sweet clover disease) Anti-niacin causes Perosis and growth depression	

closer to the end of the digestive system, thus reducing the chance for  $\text{NO}_2^-$  being absorbed into the bloodstream. However,  $\text{NO}_3^-$  poisoning in non-ruminants is still possible, but it is not as severe as in ruminants (Okafor and Okorie 2006). In ruminants,  $\text{NO}_3^-$  toxicity is most commonly reported in ruminants grazing fresh herbage. Due to insufficient data on nitrite levels in the most common livestock diet feeds, reliable exposure estimates can be calculated. The highest estimated dietary exposure of cattle to  $\text{NO}_3^-$  from feed was for beef cattle fed a grass silage-based diet (53 mg/kg body weight/day). For sheep and goats, the categories 'lactating sheep' and 'goats for fattening' had the highest estimates of exposure to  $\text{NO}_3^-$  from the

silage-based diet, at 46 and 60 mg/kg body weight/day, respectively. In non-ruminants, exposure estimates are low (from the average upper limit 5.6 mg/kg body weight/day in laying hens). However, this may be underestimated due to the lack of data on key ingredients in their diets (EFSA 2020). Risks of nitrate poisoning exist, mainly when animals are not accustomed to consuming nitrate-containing feeds. When animals are introduced to these feeds slowly over time, they can slowly adapt to a feed intake with at least 1% nitrates; it is important to note that this introduction must be prolonged for feeds high in nitrates. Acute toxicity signs and symptoms include a rapid and weak heartbeat, an abnormal body temperature, muscle tremors, weakness, and ataxia. Additionally, brown/bluish-grey mucous membranes, excessive salivation, lacrimation, labored and rapid breathing, frequent urination, vomiting (more common in non-ruminants), diarrhea or scouring, and an inability to get back up from laying down are all common symptoms. Death follows within a few hours of feeding cattle with a nitrate-rich forage. Animals die from asphyxiation due to a lack of O<sub>2</sub> in the body tissues. Subacute nitrate poisoning often corresponds to decreased weight, decreased feed intake, decreased milk production, increased susceptibility to infections and diseases, and reproductive problems such as silent heats and reduced fertility (Lee and Beauchemin 2014).

#### 4.3.4.4 Alkaloids

Alkaloids are common groups of chemical compounds synthesised by plants from amino acids. They are generally found as salts such as malic, oxalic, citric, or tartaric acids (Yilkal 2015), which are small organic molecules found in 15–20% of all plants. Usually, alkaloids consist of several carbon rings with side chains replaced by one or more carbon or nitrogen atoms. Decarboxylation of amino acids produces amines that react with amine oxides to form aldehydes. The distinctive heterocyclic ring in alkaloids undergoes Mannich-type condensation of aldehyde and amine groups (Felix and Mello 2000; Yilkal 2015). The chemical type of their nitrogen ring provides how the alkaloids are sub-classified; for example, glycoalkaloids (aglycone fraction) glycosylated with a carbohydrate moiety are formed as metabolic by-products. Plants repel insects and herbivores with alkaloids due to their potential toxicity and bitter taste (Fereidoon 2012, 2014; Yilkal 2015). Lupins contain high alkaloids, specifically quinolizidine alkaloids, while soybeans and linseed may be contaminated by *Datura stramonium*. Linseed also contains scopolamine and hyoscyamine alkaloids (Dublecz 2011).

Potato tubers naturally contain the two toxic and bitter glycoalkaloids, α-solanine, and α-chaconine. The levels are usually low and have no adverse effects on food safety or culinary quality. However, consumption of potato tubers that are unusually high in glycoalkaloids has sometimes been associated with severe toxicity, including gastrointestinal and neurological disturbances, and the disruption or inappropriate augmentation of electrochemical transmission (Fernando et al. 2012). In tubers, glycoalkaloid levels are inheritable and vary significantly between different species. Environmental factors to which tubers are exposed during germination, growth,

harvest, and storage may further affect glycoalkaloid levels (Jadhav et al. 2009). Indeed, the physiological effects of alkaloids on humans and animals are quite evident (Gemede and Ratta 2014). Consuming a high dose of tropane alkaloids accelerates the heartbeat, causes paralysis and fatality. Ingesting a high dose of tryptamine alkaloids causes a staggering gait and death (Fernando et al. 2012; Gemede and Ratta 2014). Alkaloids are oxidized in the liver to produce metabolites, such as dehydrosparteine, responsible for the observed toxicity. The level of toxicity is affected by the alkaloid composition. There is a high degree of variation in the ability of different animal species to deal with these compounds. Toxicity by alkaloids and their metabolites is mainly mediated through the nervous system, although they also stimulate the liver cells to absorb copper, resulting in copper toxicity. Pigs appear to be more sensitive to alkaloids than poultry. Glycoalkaloids significantly inhibit cholinesterase, and this also causes symptoms of neurological disorders. Alkaloids cause gastro intestinal and neurological disorders (Aletor 1993; Stegelmeier et al. 2020). Coumarins, which are feed components, have been associated with hemorrhagic disease in cattle that consume spoiled sweet clover. Alkaline pH conditions generally improve glycoalkaloid absorption, as binding to sterols in cell membranes leads to extra disruption. Nicotine (tobacco), cocaine (leaves of coca plant), caffeine, quinine (cinchona bark), morphine (dried latex of opium poppy), and solanine (unripe potatoes and potato sprouts), and strychnine are well-known examples of alkaloids. Pyrrolizidine alkaloid toxicity causes liver damage in chickens that initially might not show any clinical signs. The symptoms may appear very vague and are often confused with other diseases. Toxicity occurs in chickens of all ages and breeds, but not all flock members show signs of liver damage. Clinical symptoms of pyrrolizidine alkaloid poisoning include loss of appetite, lethargy, neurobehavioral abnormalities, and excessive drinking.

#### 4.4 Mechanism of ANFs Toxicity

Protease inhibitors reduce protein digestion, so when legumes are eaten either raw or without being properly cooked, they disturb digestive functions and cause diarrhea or excessive gas (Thakur et al. 2019). Feeding animals with raw soybean or isolated soybean inhibitors causes a pancreatic enlargement in susceptible animals, which can be characterized histologically as hypertrophy (i.e., an increase in the size of pancreatic acinar cells) (Friedman and Brandon 2001); this is accompanied by an increase in the secretion of digestive enzymes including trypsin, chymotrypsin, and elastase. This supports the hypothesis that the growth inhibition caused by trypsin inhibitors results from an endogenous loss of amino acids in the form of enzymes secreted by a hyperactive pancreas. Pancreatic enzymes, such as trypsin and chymotrypsin, are particularly rich in sulfur-containing amino acids. Hence, the outcome of pancreatic hyperactivity is converting these amino acids from body tissue protein synthesis to the synthesis of these enzymes, which are subsequently lost in feces (Friedman and Brandon 2001). Trypsin inhibitor-induced pancreatic

hypertrophy/hyperplasia observed in susceptible animal species has been explained by an adverse reaction mechanism where enzyme secretion is inversely related to the level of trypsin present in the small intestine (Liener 1994). Therefore, when the level of active trypsin in the gut is reduced due to the inhibitor's presence, the pancreas compensates by producing more enzymes. Mimosine's function is unclear, but it may act as an amino acid, lead to inactivation of the catalyst (transaminase), or bind to a mineral such as zinc (Hiremat 1981). To overcome the mimosine problem, *Leucaena leucocephala* should be restricted to 50% green forage for goats and 30% for cattle and buffalo (Hegarty 1987). The effects of tannins come from their ability to form strong H-bonds with nutrients, resulting in the inhibition of digestive enzymes and microbial activity in the rumen (Kumar and Singh 1984). These effects can be significantly increased with an increase in tannin molecules. It is well known that tannins are potential protein precipitants (Ahmed et al. 1991) and reduce animal protein digestibility (Salunkhe et al. 1990; Jansman 1993). The increase in faecal nitrogen associated with the ingestion of tannin-containing feed is largely due to interactions between tannin and dietary proteins or tannin and digestive enzymes, or both (Jansman 1993; Kelln et al. 2021). In a study by Ahmed et al. (1991), diets containing tannins, mostly hydrolyzable gallotannins, were fed to broilers at 13.5, 25, and 50 g/kg to verify their effects on enzymes in the pancreas, intestinal lumen, and intestinal mucosa. Pancreatic weight showed a significant increase with an increased dietary tannin level. The activities of trypsin and  $\alpha$ -amylase in the pancreas of birds fed the highest level of tannins were more than double those of birds fed a tannin-free diet. In the intestinal lumen, the inhibition of trypsin activity increases with an increase in dietary tannin level. Likewise, dipeptidase and sucrose  $\alpha$ -glucosidase were inhibited by tannins in the intestinal mucosa. Protein digestion and bird growth were negatively affected by tannin-containing diets. Similarly, feeding pigs with fava bean hulls high in tannins significantly reduced aminopeptidase activity in the jejunal mucosal homogenates in young piglets (Van Leeuwen et al. 1995). Low aminopeptidase activity was associated with decreased protein digestibility. Pancreatic enlargement caused by diets containing tannins may be mediated by hormones transported in the blood (Ahmed et al. 1991). The pancreatic enlargement caused by dietary tannins has also been reported in response to dietary trypsin inhibitors (Liener 1994). This might indicate a common mode of action for these ANFs, at least on the cellular level. The consumption of tannin-rich sorghum, CT, which has been isolated and purified from sorghum, or tannic acid, increase the size of the parotid glands, synthesis and secretion of proline-rich proteins (Mehansho et al. 1992), and the synthesis of proline-rich proteins secreted with saliva and associated with dietary tannins in the oral cavity to protect dietary protein. The association of tannins with dietary and endogenous proteins, such as digestive enzymes and proteins located on the luminal side of the intestine, has been used to explain the reduced digestion of protein in diets containing tannins (Jansman et al. 1994). There is no clear evidence for systemic effects in animals after they have been intensively fed with CT. It is hypothesized that CTs are resistant to intestinal degradation and are poorly absorbed due to forming a less digestible compound with dietary proteins. They may bind and inhibit endogenous proteins, including digestive enzymes.

These compounds are astringent and negatively affect animal feed intake (Patel et al. 2013). CT concentration above 4% of diet is toxic to ruminants because they are resistant to microbial attack and are harmful to various microorganisms (Waghorn 2008), resulting in reduced palatability, feed intake, growth rate, utilization, and iron absorption (Roeder 1995). Phytate can adversely affect digestive enzyme activity by chelating mineral cofactors or interacting with proteins at an acidic or alkaline pH (Ryden and Selvendran 1993; Khare 2000). For full activity, some digestive enzymes require metal cofactors, such as calcium, zinc, copper, magnesium, iron, and molybdenum. For example, these enzymes include  $\alpha$ -amylase, carboxypeptidases, aminopeptidases, and alkaline phosphatase. Phytate binding to proteins may directly form phytate-protein complexes or indirectly form phytate-cation-protein complexes. These processes may differ according to pH, time, and relative concentrations (Ryden and Selvendran 1993). At the low pH in the stomach, the positively charged side-groups of protein essential amino acids can bind to the negatively charged phytate due to strong electrostatic interactions (Cheryan 1980; Deshpande and Cheryan 1984). Above its isoelectric point, the protein carries a net negative charge. A multivalent cation bridge (which includes calcium) appears to be involved in the complex formation between phytate and proteins. Phytate-cation-protein interactions are expected to be predominant at high pH in the small intestine (Selle et al. 2000). Another indirect mechanism for phytate inhibition of digestive enzyme activity measured *in vitro* has been proposed to include complex interactions between phytate, digestive enzymes, and other proteins present in solution (Li et al. 1993). These interactions also inhibit the action of gastrointestinal tyrosinase, pepsin, trypsin, amylase, and lipase (Khare 2000). Oxalic acid binds with calcium to form insoluble calcium oxalate, which negatively affects the absorption and utilization of calcium in the bodies of animals (Akande et al. 2010). Gossypol binds to proteins and/or to a group of free essential amino acids. In particular, gossypol binds to lysine in cottonseed meal, resulting in BG, which is less toxic to non-ruminants than is free gossypol. The free and BG content in the meal varies with the cultivar and the type of treatment. Gossypol reduces protein digestion in two ways. First, by binding to free epsilon amino group of lysine during heat treatment and the gossypol-protein complex formed in the meal makes the adjacent peptides unavailable for proteolytic action. Second, gossypol may directly affect certain enzymes in the gastrointestinal tract, such as pepsinogen, pepsin, and trypsin, by binding to the free epsilon amino groups (Sharma et al. 1978). Gossypol toxicity in poultry results in decreased appetite, weight loss, leg weakness, reduced egg production, and egg size, egg yolk discoloration, and decreased egg hatchability, hemoglobin, total red blood cell count, protein, and albumin-to-globulin ratio in blood serum (Waldroup and Goodner 1973; Suryawanshi et al. 1993). Saponins decrease the absorption of certain nutrients, including monosaccharides, glucose, and cholesterol in the gut through intraluminal physical and chemical interactions; thus, they have been reported to have hypocholesterolemic effects (Umaru et al. 2007). Additionally, saponins have distinctive foaming properties, as observed in white clover and alfalfa. Saponins can negatively affect animal performance and metabolism in several ways: hemolysis in erythrocytes, low blood and liver cholesterol, reduced

growth rate and bloat in ruminants, inhibition of enzyme and smooth muscle activity, reduced absorption of nutrients, and inhibition of microbial fermentation and synthesis in the rumen (Akande et al. 2010). However, saponins have diverse biological effects due to structural differences in saponin fractions. Finally, some plant alkaloids have been reported to cause digestive and nervous disorders and infertility (Aletor 1993; Olayemi 2010), while glycoalkaloids (solanine and chaconine), found in potatoes and *Solanum* spp. (Saito et al. 1990; Aletor and Adeogun 1995) are toxic to humans (Table 4.6).

## 4.5 Methods of Reducing the Deleterious Effects of ANFs

The abundance of ANFs and consequent toxic effects in the plant-based diets of animals is a cause for concern, and ways to reduce their levels should be explored (Soetan and Oyewole 2009). Removing undesirable components is essential for improving a plant-based diet's nutritional quality and effectively utilizing its full potential as a feed source for livestock. It is widely accepted that simple and inexpensive processing techniques effectively achieve desirable changes in feed ingredient composition (Akande and Fabiyi 2010). Uhegbu et al. (2009) reported the effects of several methods tested to overcome ANFs and their harmful effects in various browses, grains, seeds, and agro-industrial by-products. These methods include mechanical or physical techniques (e.g., processing, wilting, and ensiling) and biological or chemical techniques (e.g., treatment with alkalis, organic solvents, and precipitants). In general, of the different processing methods that are used to reduce levels of various ANFs (soaking, boiling, and toasting) (Balogun 2013), soaking is one of the most common methods to lower trypsin inhibitors (from 13.8 to 9.4 TIU/100 g), phytates (from 0.18% to 0.09%), tannins (from 0.23% to 0.09%), saponins (from 0.42% to 0.24%), hydrogen cyanide (from 8.6% to 5.7%), and alkaloids (from 0.34% to 0.28%) (Nwosu 2010). Boiling, simmering, and blanching reduce the cyanide content in *Moringa oleifera* leaves by 88%, 81%, and 62%, respectively (Sallau et al. 2012). Owing to the water solubility of oxalates, wet treatment methods such as boiling and steaming produce the highest oxalate reduction (Mada et al. 2012; Petroski and Minich 2020). Autoclaving seeds for 20 min reduce phytic acid by 24.7%, while roasting can reduce phytic acid content by 23.1–28.6% (Embaby 2011). Amaefule and Onwudike (2000) and Kankuka et al. (2000) reported that cooking legumes improve their nutritional value by destroying most ANFs and improving protein and energy availability. Autoclave treatment or boiling also reduces the content of protease inhibitors. Ramteke et al. (2019) reported that the trypsin inhibitor activity of soybean meal was destroyed by autoclaving under specific conditions (i.e., 5, 10, and 15 psi for 45, 30, and 20 min, respectively) or by exposure to steam for 60 min. Likewise, a longer boiling time (40 min), autoclaving (20 min), and microwaving (12 min) cause complete disruption of trypsin inhibitor activities (Sallau et al. 2012). Although lectins are usually degradable, their stability varies among plant species, as many lectins are resistant to dry heat inhibition and

require moisture for destruction (Boehm and Huck 2009; Ramteke et al. 2019) or can quickly disintegrate by hydrothermal treatment (100 °C for 10 min) or autoclaving (Grant 1991). Physical treatments such as heat and chemical treatments or supplementation with amino acids or mineral ions such as Zn, Fe, and Al reduce mimosine's toxicity (Hiremat 1981). Other processing methods, like germination followed by dehulling, reduce tannins by 43–52% and phytic acid by 47–52% (Ghavidel and Prakash 2006). Polyethylene glycol is the most frequently used reagent to neutralize the secondary compounds in tannin-rich diets for animals. It can be used in various ways, such as applied in concentrate or feed blocks, sprayed on feed, or dissolved in water. Additionally, polyethylene glycol is an effective supplement for increasing feed intake, digestion, daily weight gain, and the synchronized, fractionated, and balanced supply of essential nutrients for rumen microflora and host animals fed on diets rich in tannins (Mueller 2001; Patel et al. 2013). Fermentation can reduce some anti-nutrients in feed, such as phytic acid and tannins (Sarangthem and Singh 2013; Singh et al. 2017). This method could also improve the nutritional value of cottonseed meal and increase the lysine and methionine content of cottonseed meal when fermented with *Aspergillus oryzae* NRRL 506 *Aspergillus Janus* NRRL 1935 for 48 h (Nagalakshmi et al. 2007). One of the recent trends in reducing free gossypol content in cottonseed meal is to produce varieties of cotton plants through genetic modification; however, other cotton seed processing methods such as pelleting, extrusion, cooking, and  $\text{Ca}(\text{OH})_2$  can be used to improve the nutritional value of cottonseed meal for poultry (Nagalakshmi et al. 2007). Treatment with iron 1: 1 ratio can remove 80–99% of gossypol; moreover, high protein content in the meal is also helpful in reducing the effect of gossypol (Leeson and Summer 2001). Moreover, using exogenous phytases to enhance phosphorous digestibility is now common practice where animal agriculture's contribution to environmental pollution is of concern. The phytase enzyme releases phosphorus, bound minerals, and amino acids from phytate, increasing nutrient utilization. Evidence indicates that phytases enhance ileal amino acids, which increase the body's nitrogen, calcium, and phosphorus retention and increase fecal energy digestibility in poultry (Woyengo and Nyachoti 2011). The use of gamma irradiation to reduce anti-nutrients in canola meal causes a significant increase in its nutritional value for broilers (Gharaghani et al. 2008). Finally, the use of the electron beam radiation method reduces hydrocyanic, phytic, and tannic acids.

#### 4.6 Beneficial Effects of Anti-nutritional Factors

The potential beneficial effects of protease inhibitors remain unclear. However, a decrease in the incidence of pancreatic cancer has been observed in a population where the consumption of soybean and its products was high (Giri and Kachole 1998) (Table 4.6). Additionally, protease inhibitors have been associated with pancreatic cancer in animal studies, and they may act as anti-carcinogenic agents (Chunmei et al. 2010). It is not necessary to completely eliminate anti-nutritional

factors from plant-based diets such as that of *Moringa oleifera* leaves because low amounts of ANFs, such as tannins and hydrolyzable phenols, may act as antioxidants in animal feed and may not only help improve meat quality but also reduce methane emissions (Su and Chen 2020) and gastrointestinal nematodes (Naumann et al. 2017) from ruminants. The benefits of tannins in animal feed and health include increased protein utilization efficiency, amino acid absorption (Hervás et al. 2003), antioxidants, antibacterial and anti-diarrhoeal effects, free-radical scavenging, and anti-proliferative activity (Corder 2006). Also, tannins reduce the impact of gastrointestinal parasitism, protein degradation during ensilage (Reed et al. 1990), prevent bloating, increase animal product quality, reduce N emission to the environment and promote rumen defaunation as a CH<sub>4</sub> mitigation strategy (Animut et al. 2008; Boadi et al. 2004), and reduce methane emissions from rumen fermentation (Waghorn 2008) (Table 4.6). CTs help to improve weight gain, reproductive efficiency, and wool production in sheep, reduces the effect of gastrointestinal parasitism, and lessens methane emissions from rumen fermentation (Waghorn 2008), allows dietary protein to bypass the rumen for digestion in the lower gastrointestinal tract (Hassanpour et al. 2011), and shows a bacteriostatic effect on *Salmonella enteritidis* infection in broiler chickens and can reduce excretion of these bacteria (Redondo et al. 2013a). Both HT and CT have antimicrobial activity against *Campylobacter jejuni* (Anderson et al. 2012; Gutierrez-Banuelos et al. 2011). The *in vivo* effects of tannins in the necrotic enteritis model reduce the incidence and severity of gross lesions and improve broilers' productive performance (Redondo et al. 2013b). Tannic acid can treat diarrhea because it causes constipation without inflammation (Phytolab 2007).

Phytic acid has been suggested as a store of cations, high-energy phosphoryl groups, and free iron chelates, making phytic acid a potent natural antioxidant (Mueller 2001). In addition, phytic acid can reduce cholesterol and protect against iron-induced intestinal cancer. Furthermore, phytic acid exhibits natural antioxidant properties, providing other benefits such as reducing lipid peroxidation (Table 4.6). Of the many plant compounds, saponins have beneficial biological effects, including antibacterial, antiprotozoal (Avato et al. 2006), antioxidant, antitumor, cholesterol-lowering, immune-potentiating, and anticancer (Blumert and Liu 2003) effects. Furthermore, saponins reduce the risk of coronary heart diseases (Ferri 2009) and the probability of forming collagen, a protein with a role in wound healing that can also be used as a hydrocarbon ointment. Saponins attract considerable interest due to their beneficial effects in the poultry industry; they can bind ammonia and hydrogen sulfide, thus improving air quality in poultry houses (Table 4.6).

## 4.7 Conclusions

Anti-nutritional factors (ANFs) in plant-based protein diets for livestock may reduce their full utilization. Thus, to justify the nutritional value of any plant-based protein source, it is imperative to appropriately assess the nature, type, and concentration of

the ANFs present in the diet and the bioavailability of the required nutrients. Basic information about the most common factors found in plants used for animal feed includes protease inhibitors, amylase inhibitors, lectins, tannins, mimosine, phytic acid, gossypol oxalates, cyanogens, saponins, nitrates, alkaloids, and anti-vitamin agents. These ANFs interfere with the nutritional value of feed by reducing digestion, absorption, and utilization of proteins and minerals that cause toxicity and lead to undesirable effects on animal health if their consumption is excessive. However, these ANFs may have beneficial health effects if they are present in low amounts. Risk factors associated with ANFs include a lack of knowledge on tolerance levels of these compounds in livestock, limited information on the degree of variability of individual risk, and lack of knowledge regarding the influence of environmental factors on the detoxification capacity of livestock feed. Thus, using appropriate and effective techniques and methods alone or in combinations can help eliminate or reduce the harmful effects of these ANFs in plant-based diets and, therefore, improve their nutritional value. Several strategies are used to counteract the effects of ANFs, including physical and chemical treatments, supplementation with enzymes, amino acids or mineral ions, germination, fermentation, and genetic modification.

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