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1 **Title**

2 Total Replacement of Dietary Fish Oil with a Blend of Vegetable Oils in the Marine  
3 Herbivorous Teleost *Siganus canaliculatus*

4

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## Abstract

32 To investigate the feasibility of total replacement of dietary fish oil with vegetable oils  
33 (VO) and the optimal dietary polyunsaturated fatty acid (PUFA) level in the marine  
34 herbivorous teleost *Siganus canaliculatus*, six isonitrogenous (32 %) and isolipidic  
35 (8 %) diets were formulated. Control diet (FO) used fish oil as lipid source, whereas  
36 diets VO1-VO5 contained various blends of palm, soybean, rapeseed and linseed oils,  
37 in which the dietary PUFA levels were 42.0 %, 38.2 %, 33.8 %, 29.9 % and 27.1 %,  
38 respectively. After *S. canaliculatus* juveniles were fed with the diets for 9 weeks, their  
39 growth performance exhibited no significant difference among the dietary groups. The  
40 tissue fatty acid profiles in liver and fillet generally reflected the dietary fatty acid  
41 compositions, and showed no significant difference among the VO dietary groups.  
42 The results suggested that dietary fish oil can be replaced completely by VO without  
43 affecting their growth performance. Concerning the effects of the dietary FA profile  
44 on the survival rate, HSI and VSI, and PUFA composition in fillets, diets VO1 and  
45 VO2 were more favorable compared with diets VO3–VO5. Considering the  
46 availability and cost of the VOs, diet VO2 was recommended for practical use in *S.*  
47 *canaliculatus*.

48

49 **Keywords:** *Siganus canaliculatus*; dietary PUFA level; lipid selectivity; growth  
50 performance; fatty acid composition.

51

## 52 **Introduction**

53 With the increasing demand for seafood products, world aquaculture production is  
54 estimated to reach approximately 85 million tons in 2022, although annual production  
55 growth is projected to average 2.5 % in 2013–2022 compared to 6.1 % in 2003–2012  
56 (FAO 2014). The FAO has estimated that the high cost of fishmeal, fish oil (FO), and  
57 other feed ingredients is one of the main causes of this slower growth. As global  
58 demand is higher than the supply, the cost of fishmeal is expected to increase by 6 %  
59 and that of FO by 23 % in 2022 compared with that in 2013 (FAO 2014). This  
60 situation has led researchers in fish nutrition and feeds to develop alternative lipid  
61 sources to dietary FO in recent years.

62 Due to their ready availability and relatively stable cost (Turchini *et al.* 2003, Francis  
63 *et al.* 2006), vegetable oils (VOs) have been evaluated as FO substitutes either alone  
64 or as blends formulated to replicate the fatty acid composition present in FO in terms  
65 of the proportion of total saturated fatty acids (SFA), monounsaturated fatty acids  
66 (MUFA), and polyunsaturated fatty acid (PUFA) (Torstensen *et al.* 2005, Francis *et al.*  
67 2007a). Furthermore, available data have indicated that, provided the requirement for  
68 essential fatty acids is met, a significant portion of dietary FO can be replaced by  
69 alternative lipid sources without significantly affecting growth performance, feed  
70 efficiency, and feed intake in most finfish species studied (Turchini *et al.* 2009). For  
71 instance, the replacement of FO by corn oil did not affect the growth performance of  
72 brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) (Arzel *et al.* 1994). Similarly, the partial substitution of FO  
73 by different VO or animal fats had no significant effect on the growth performance of  
74 brown trout (Turchini *et al.* 2003). In two populations of Arctic charr (*Salvelinus*  
75 *alpinus*), the replacement of FO by echium oil had no effect on the growth, feed  
76 efficiency, and muscle and liver lipid contents (Tocher *et al.* 2006). In addition, the  
77 replacement of FO by different linseed and coconut oil blends in the diets of Arctic  
78 charr did not affect their growth performance or negatively affect the oxidative status  
79 of the flesh or plasma (Olsen and Henderson 1997). In Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*),  
80 changing the dietary fatty acid composition by replacing FO with a VO blend during  
81 both freshwater and seawater stages did not markedly alter body lipid stores (Nanton  
82 *et al.* 2007). Therefore, existing data indicated the feasibility of the substitution of  
83 dietary FO by appropriate VOs in feeds for farmed fish.

84 The terrestrial VO alternatives to FO do not contain the required and essential

85 long-chain PUFA (LC-PUFA) such as eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA, 20:5n-3),  
86 docosahexaenoic acid (DHA, 22:6n-3) and arachidonic acid (ARA, 20:4n-6).  
87 Therefore, although alternative VOs can be used without any apparent detrimental  
88 effects on fish performance, the n-3 LC-PUFA concentration in final fish fillets is  
89 reduced (Sargent *et al.* 2002). In recent years, increasing research has been conducted  
90 to mitigate this effect of dietary VO in modifying fatty acid compositions of farmed  
91 fish. In addition, this research has contributed greatly to the advancement of our  
92 knowledge of fish lipid metabolism; however, a complete solution remains to be  
93 found (Turchini *et al.* 2009). If fish have all the necessary enzymes such as  $\Delta 6$  fatty  
94 acid desaturase (fad),  $\Delta 5$  fad, Elovl5 elongase, and/or  $\Delta 4$  fad, they can biosynthesize  
95 LC-PUFA through a pathway involving a series of desaturation and elongation of  
96  $\alpha$ -linolenic acid (ALA, 18:3n-3) and linoleic acid (LA, 18:2n-6). However, most  
97 marine fishes are unable to produce LC-PUFA because of apparent deficiencies in one  
98 or more steps (enzymes) of the biosynthetic pathway. Moreover, almost all FO  
99 substitution studies in marine fishes have been conducted in carnivorous species but  
100 rarely in herbivorous or omnivorous species.

101 The rabbitfish *Siganus canaliculatus* is an herbivorous marine teleost, feeding on  
102 algae and seagrass. *S. canaliculatus* is a commercially valuable species widespread  
103 along the Indo-West Pacific coast and has become one of the most harvested species  
104 in southeastern Asia, including along the coast of southeast China. It is also the  
105 subject of aquaculture activity with the development of a suitable formulated diet a  
106 necessity for the emerging culture industry. However, information regarding optimal  
107 lipid sources and PUFA requirements of rabbitfish is scant. In our recent studies, we  
108 reported that *S. canaliculatus* may have the ability to convert LA and ALA into  
109 LC-PUFA in both brackish water (10 ppt) and seawater (32 ppt) (Li *et al.* 2008) and  
110 that it exhibits activities for elongation and  $\Delta 6$ ,  $\Delta 5$ , and  $\Delta 4$  fatty acid desaturation (Li  
111 *et al.* 2010, Monroig *et al.* 2012). Our preliminary research results revealed that  
112 soybean oil (SO) can replace up to 67% or 45% of total dietary FO for *S.*  
113 *canaliculatus* without negatively compromising the growth performance or nutritional  
114 quality of fish (Xu *et al.* 2012). The expression of key genes involved LC-PUFA  
115 biosynthesis was also affected by the dietary LA:ALA ratio, with ratios of 0.52 or  
116 2.13 showing better growth performance and LC-PUFA biosynthesis in rabbitfish(Liu,  
117 2011). These findings suggested that FO can be partially or completely replaced by  
118 VO in feeds for rabbitfish.

119 The present study aimed to determine the optimal lipid sources and dietary PUFA  
120 contents for *S. canaliculatus* by using a combination of palm, soybean, rapeseed, and  
121 linseed oils as replacements for FO. The results of this study provide a scientific basis  
122 for developing highly effective and low-cost formulated feeds for rabbitfish by using  
123 different VO sources, and increase our knowledge regarding FO replacement in  
124 marine herbivorous fishes.

125

## 126 **Materials and methods**

### 127 **Experimental diets**

128 Using fishmeal and soybean meal as protein sources and FO, palm, soybean,  
129 rapeseed and linseed oils as lipid sources, six formulated diets were prepared with  
130 approximately equal contents of total protein (32 %), lipid (8 %), but with varying  
131 lipid sources and PUFA concentrations. In the control diet, FO was used as the lipid  
132 source, and the proportion of PUFA in the FO diet was 35.8% of total fatty acids.  
133 Diets VO1–VO5 contained a blend of palm, soybean, rapeseed and linseed oils as  
134 lipid sources with ratios of ALA:LA of 0.39, 0.39, 0.37, 0.40 and 0.37, respectively,  
135 and PUFA levels of 42.0 %, 38.2 %, 33.8 %, 29.9 %, and 27.1 % of total fatty acids,  
136 respectively. The feed ingredients and diet proximate compositions are listed in  
137 Table 1. The ingredients were thoroughly mixed and moist pellets ( $\Phi$  4 mm) were  
138 manufactured using an extruder. After air drying at room temperature, the feeds  
139 were stored at  $-20$  °C prior to feeding.

### 140 **Experimental fish and feeding conditions**

141 *S. canaliculatus* juveniles (approximately 12 g wet weight and sex visually  
142 indistinguishable) were captured from the coast near Nan Ao Marine Biology Station  
143 (NAMBS) of Shantou University, South China. Prior to the experiment, the fish were  
144 acclimated to laboratory conditions and fed an equal mixture of the six experimental  
145 diets for 2 weeks.

146 A 9-week growth experiment using the experimental diets was conducted from  
147 October to December in an aquarium system at NAMBS. Each dietary group had  
148 three replicates and thus a total of twenty-one cylindrical tanks (220 L) were used.  
149 Fish of approximately equal size were pooled in a plastic bucket and 18 fish  
150 individually weighed and randomly allocated to each tank after anesthetizing with  
151 0.01 % 2-phenoxyethanol (Sigma-Aldrich, USA) (Table 2). During the experimental  
152 period, half of the aquarium water was changed twice a day (morning and evening).  
153 Oxygen saturation was maintained through aeration, and temperature was maintained  
154 at  $20 \pm 3$  °C. Photoperiod was set at 12 h light and 12 h dark. The fish were fed to  
155 satiation three times a day (around 8:00, 12:00, and 16:00), and the diet weight fed  
156 was recorded daily for each tank. Fecal matter was removed using an auto-discharge  
157 device in the culture system every day.

## 158 **Evaluation of growth performance and sample collection**

159 The fish were weighed at the beginning and end of the experiment. At the end of the  
160 experiment, six fish from each dietary group were sampled after anesthetizing in 0.01 %  
161 2-phenoxyethanol to measure body weight, length, and liver and viscera weights.  
162 Growth performance was evaluated by measuring weight gain (WG), specific growth  
163 rate (SGR), feed conversion ratio (FCR), and protein efficiency ratio (PER). These  
164 parameters as well as condition factor (CF), hepatosomatic index (HSI), and  
165 viscerosomatic index (VSI) were calculated using the following formulae:

$$166 \quad \text{WG (\%)} = 100 \times (\text{Wf} - \text{Wi}) / \text{Wi}$$

$$167 \quad \text{SGR (\%)} = 100 \times (\ln \text{Wf} - \ln \text{Wi}) / \text{d}$$

$$168 \quad \text{FCR} = \text{Fd} / \text{WG}$$

$$169 \quad \text{PER} = \text{WG} / \text{Fp}$$

$$170 \quad \text{CF} = 100 \times [(\text{body weight, g}) \times (\text{body length, cm})^{-3}]$$

$$171 \quad \text{HSI (\%)} = 100 \times \text{liver weight} \times (\text{body weight})^{-1}$$

$$172 \quad \text{VSI (\%)} = 100 \times \text{viscera weight} \times (\text{body weight})^{-1}$$

173 In these formulae, Wf and Wi were the final and initial body weight, respectively;  
174 d was experimental days; and Fd and Fp were the amount of diet and protein  
175 consumed by fish, respectively.

176 The livers and fillets were sampled from six fish at the beginning of the  
177 experiment and from nine fishes in each dietary group at the end of the experiment  
178 after anesthetizing in 0.01 % 2-phenoxyethanol. All samples were immediately frozen  
179 in liquid nitrogen and stored at  $-80^{\circ}\text{C}$  prior to fatty acid analysis. Six fish from each  
180 dietary group were collected for determining the biochemical composition of the  
181 whole fish.

## 182 **Chemical analysis**

### 183 *Biochemical composition*

184 The methods for determination of biochemical composition were similar to those  
185 described previously (Li et al. 2008). Briefly, the protein content of the diets and  
186 whole fish samples was calculated by determining the total nitrogen content through



187 the Kjeldahl method. The crude lipid content was measured using the Soxhlet  
188 extraction method. The ash content was measured by combusting the samples in a  
189 muffle furnace at 550 °C for 6 h. The dry matter was determined by exposing the  
190 dietary samples to 105 °C in a dry oven overnight. Triplicate analyses were conducted  
191 for each sample.

#### 192 *Lipid extraction and fatty acid analysis*

193 Lipid extraction and fatty acid analysis were performed as described previously (Li *et*  
194 *al.* 2005, 2008). In brief, total lipid of liver and muscle tissues was extracted using  
195 chloroform and methanol in a 2:1 ratio, and fatty acid methyl esters were prepared by  
196 transesterifying the total lipid samples with boron trifluoride etherate (ca. 48 %, Acros  
197 Organics, NJ, USA). Fatty acid methyl esters were separated using a gas  
198 chromatograph (GC; GC-17A; Shimadzu, Kyoto, Japan) equipped with an auto  
199 sampler and a hydrogen-flame ionization detector. Individual fatty acids were  
200 identified by comparison with known commercial standards (Sigma, USA) and  
201 quantified using the CLASS-GC10 GC workstation (Shimadzu, Kyoto, Japan).

#### 202 **Statistical analysis**

203 Data were expressed as mean  $\pm$  S.E.M (n=3). Differences among the dietary groups  
204 were analyzed using one-way ANOVA followed by Tukey's multiple comparison.  
205 The significance level was set at  $P < 0.05$ . Statistical analyses were performed using  
206 the software package Origin<sup>®</sup>, Version 7.0 (USA).

207

### 208 **Results**

#### 209 **Growth performance of different dietary groups**

210 The growth performance of *S. canaliculatus* fed diets having different PUFA profiles  
211 for 9 weeks is shown in Table 2. The total replacement of dietary FO by a  
212 combination of palm, soybean, rapeseed and linseed oils showed no negative effect on  
213 growth performance. Thus, WG, SGR, FCR, and PER did not differ significantly  
214 between the FO and VO diet groups. However, the survival rate exhibited a  
215 decreasing trend with reducing proportion of dietary PUFA. In particular, the survival  
216 rate in fish fed the VO5 diet (PUFA, 27.2 %) was significantly lower than that in fish  
217 fed the VO1 diet (PUFA, 41.6 %) or the FO diet ( $P < 0.05$ ). HSI and VSI were

218 negatively correlated with dietary PUFA contents, and these indexes were  
219 significantly higher in fish fed the VO4 diet than in fish fed the FO and VO1 diets.  
220 The biochemical composition of the whole fish body including moisture, ash, protein,  
221 and total lipid concentrations did not differ significantly among the dietary groups  
222 (Table 3).

### 223 **Fatty acid compositions of liver and fillet**

224 The fatty acid profiles of tissues were markedly influenced by dietary oil sources and  
225 PUFA content (Tables 4 and 5), reflecting the fatty acid compositions of the  
226 respective diets. The contents of ALA, LA and 18:1n-9 were markedly higher in the  
227 fillets of fish fed the diets containing the VO blends than in those of fish fed the FO  
228 diet. In contrast, proportions of EPA and DHA were lower in the fillets of fish fed  
229 diets containing the VO blend than in those of fish fed the FO diet. The contents of  
230 14:0, 16:0, 18:0, and total SFA in the livers of fish fed the VO diets did not differ  
231 significantly compared with those in the livers of fish fed the FO diet. In both the liver  
232 and fillet, the contents of LA and 18:1n-9 were higher in fish fed the VO diets than in  
233 fish fed the FO diet ( $P < 0.05$ ). However, the proportion of ALA was only higher in  
234 the fillets, and not liver, of fish fed the VO diets than in fish fed the FO diet ( $P < 0.05$ ).  
235 Furthermore, the percentage of ALA was lower in the liver (0.01 % – 0.39 %) but  
236 higher in the fillets (0.74 % – 4.34 %). The content of ARA was significantly higher  
237 in the liver of fish fed the FO diet than in liver of fish fed the VO diets; however,  
238 ARA in the fillet did not significantly differ among the dietary groups. The contents  
239 of EPA, 22:5n-3, and DHA were higher in the fillet and those of DHA higher in the  
240 liver of fish fed the FO diet than in fish fed the VO diets ( $P < 0.05$ ). The proportion of  
241 total PUFA in the liver did not differ significantly among the dietary groups. However,  
242 the total PUFA content was highest in the fillet of fish fed the VO1 and VO2 diets ( $P$   
243  $< 0.05$ ).

244

### 245 **Discussion**

246 The present study indicated that FO in a practical diet with 8% lipid for *S.*  
247 *canaliculatus* can be completely replaced by a combination of VOs (palm, soybean,  
248 rapeseed and linseed oils) without marked adverse effects on growth performance in  
249 terms of WG, SGR, feed utilization, and PER. These results are in agreement with

250 those of previous studies, which reported that the partial or total replacement of  
251 dietary FO by VO did not affect growth performance (Bell *et al.* 2001, Huang *et al.*  
252 2007, Peng *et al.* 2008, Xu *et al.* 2012, Mozanzadeh *et al.* 2016). However, the  
253 survival rate exhibited a positive trend with dietary PUFA content with the survival  
254 rate in fish fed the VO5 diet (PUFA, 27.2 %) being significantly lower than that in  
255 fish fed the VO1 diet (PUFA, 41.6 %). This suggested that lower dietary PUFA  
256 contents may adversely affect the survival rate of *S. canaliculatus*. However, dietary  
257 18:1n-9 content may also influence survival as diets with higher contents of 18:1n-9,  
258 such as in VO3, VO4 and VO5, showed lower survival rates. Although, Ferreira *et al.*  
259 (2015) also reported a correlation between high dietary 18:1n-9 and low survival in  
260 tilapia, *Oreochromis niloticus*, there has been extensive research on the use of  
261 18:1n-9-rich vegetable oils in fish feeds without any reports of major effects on  
262 survival (Turchini and Mailer, 2011). HSI and VSI were highest in fish fed the VO4  
263 diet, and significantly higher than in fish fed the FO and VO1 diets. This is of  
264 potential significance as both VSI and HSI directly affect the yield in fish production  
265 (Wang *et al.* 2005). One possible explanation for the effects on these indices could be  
266 that the digestibility of PUFA is higher than that of MUFA and SFA (Francis *et al.*  
267 2007b), and the proportion of PUFA was lower and those of SFA and MUFA higher  
268 in the VO4 diet than in the FO diet. Thus, the lipid content was more easily  
269 maintained in the liver and viscera of fish fed the VO4 diet. In the present study, the  
270 dietary content of PUFA and the replacement of FO by VO did not affect the  
271 proximate composition of whole fish. This was in agreement with previous studies in  
272 other marine fish species, which reported that the replacement of dietary FO with  
273 different concentrations of soybean oil concentrations did not affect the whole body  
274 biochemical composition of red seabream, turbot, and *Platichthys stellatus* Pallas  
275 (Huang *et al.* 2007, Regost *et al.* 2003, Lee *et al.* 2003).

276 The proportion of dietary PUFA and the replacement of FO by a combination of  
277 palm, soybean, rapeseed and linseed oils markedly affected tissue fatty acid  
278 compositions in *S. canaliculatus*. The fatty acid profiles in both liver and fillet  
279 reflected the dietary fatty acid compositions, which was consistent with the findings  
280 of many other studies (Caballero *et al.* 2002, Tocher *et al.* 2003, Torstensen *et al.*  
281 2004a,b, 2005, Nanton *et al.* 2007, Stubhaug *et al.* 2007). For example, the  
282 proportions of EPA, DHA, and total n-3 PUFA, but not of ARA, were higher in the

283 fillet of fish fed the FO diet than in fillets of fish fed the VO diets. However,  
284 compared with the levels of LC-PUFA, 18:1n-9, LA and ALA exhibited the reverse  
285 trend. Therefore, the replacement of FO with VO reduced the proportions of EPA,  
286 DHA, and total n-3 PUFA in fish and increased the percentages of 18:1n-9, LA and  
287 ALA. Similar results have been reported in other marine fish species where studies  
288 have reported that replacing dietary FO with VO increased the concentrations of  
289 dietary 18:1n-9, LA and ALA and reduced the concentrations of dietary marine n-3  
290 fatty acids, EPA, and DHA (Bahurmiz and Ng 2007, Mørkøre *et al.* 2007,  
291 Yildirim-Aksoy *et al.* 2007, Du *et al.* 2008, Glencross *et al.* 2016) resulting in the  
292 fatty acid compositions of dietary VO being reflected in the fatty acid compositions of  
293 whole fish, organs, and flesh (Tocher *et al.* 2015).

294 In both the liver and fillet, ALA and LA were well retained. The mean  
295 percentage of LA in the liver and fillet was 1.8 % – 4.9 % and 3.7 %–14.0 %,  
296 respectively. By contrast, the percentage of ALA in the liver was very low (0.15 %–  
297 0.39 %). These data suggested that LA was more directly deposited in both the liver  
298 and fillet, whereas ALA gets metabolized to a greater extent. A similar result was  
299 observed in Murray Cod where ALA appeared to be more catabolized or bioconverted  
300 (Francis *et al.* 2009) and LA tended to be directly deposited in fish tissues (Francis *et*  
301 *al.* 2009, Trushenski *et al.* 2008). However, a different result was obtained in marine  
302 carnivorous fishes such as large yellow croaker, black sea bream, and gilthead sea  
303 bream where ALA but not LA contributed to an increase in growth (Zuo *et al.* 2014,  
304 Peng *et al.* 2008, Montero *et al.* 2008). This may be because of a difference in  
305 endogenous metabolism, that is, the limited dietary ALA content could satisfy the  
306 growing demand of herbivorous rabbitfish compared to other marine species. All  
307 dietary groups appeared to convert EPA into DHA as the EPA level in tissues was  
308 markedly lower than that in the diets and the body lipid content of 22:5n-3 also  
309 increased. In addition, Tan *et al.* (2009) reported that significant elongation and  
310 desaturation of EPA into DHA was observed in yellow catfish.

311 Although the proportion of total n-3 and n-6 PUFA in the liver differed  
312 significantly between fish fed the FO diet and fish fed the VO diet, the proportion of  
313 total PUFA in the liver did not differ significantly among dietary groups. One possible  
314 explanation may be that the progressive reduction in the concentration of n-3 PUFA in  
315 the VO diets was offset by an increase in the concentration of n-6 PUFA (Grant *et al.*  
316 2008). The proportions of total PUFA in the fillets of fish fed the VO diets showed a

317 positive relationship with the corresponding dietary PUFA concentrations, which was  
318 highest in fish fed the VO1 diet and differed significantly among fish fed the VO3 –  
319 VO5 diets, except for fish fed the VO2 diet. This indicated that fish fed a diet having a  
320 low PUFA concentration may result in a decreased PUFA concentration in the fillet.  
321 Notably, ARA content did not significantly differ between the fillet of fish fed the FO  
322 and VO diets, which was consistent with our previous study and suggested that the  
323 biosynthesis of LC-PUFA in rabbitfish can compensate for the reduced dietary ARA  
324 (Li et al. 2008). Therefore, this indicated that rabbitfish can efficiently utilize and  
325 store n-6 PUFA.

326 In conclusion, the results of the present study revealed that the complete  
327 replacement of dietary FO with a combination of VOs had no negative effects on the  
328 growth performance of *S. canaliculatus*. Concerning the effects of the dietary FA  
329 profile on the survival rate, HSI and VSI, and total PUFA content in fillets, diets VO1  
330 and VO2 were more favorable compared with diets VO3–VO5. Moreover, compared  
331 with rapeseed oil, palm oil is more available and has a lower cost. Therefore, the VO2  
332 diet is recommended for practical use in *S. canaliculatus* culture.

333

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340

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501

**Table 1**  
**Ingredients and composition of experimental diets for *Siganus canaliculatus***

	Diets					
	FO	VO1	VO2	VO3	VO4	VO5
Ingredients (g/100 g diet)						
Fish meal	33	33	33	33	33	33
Soybean meal	22	22	22	22	22	22
$\alpha$ -Starch	5	5	5	5	5	5
Starch	20.9	20.9	20.9	20.9	20.9	20.9
Cellulose	9	9	9	9	9	9
Mineral Mixture <sup>a</sup>	2	2	2	2	2	2
Vitamin Mixture <sup>b</sup>	1	1	1	1	1	1
Dicalcium phosphate	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
L-Methionine	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Choline	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08
Vitamin C	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Fish oil	6					
Palm oil		1	2	1.5	3	4
Rapeseed oil		2	1	3	2	1
Soybean oil		2	2	1	0.5	0.5
Linseed oil		1	1	0.5	0.5	0.5
Proximate composition (% dry matter basis)						
Dry matter	89.65	90.13	90.04	91.65	91.23	89.32
Crude protein	33.01	32.84	31.98	32.04	31.94	32.55
Crude lipid	8.33	8.16	8.13	8.32	8.45	8.39
Ash content	9.97	9.46	10.05	10.66	10.73	9.89
Main fatty acids (% area)						
14:0	5.60	1.54	1.74	1.68	1.86	1.79
16:0	22.80	16.30	20.10	17.54	22.66	26.66
16:1	5.76	1.86	1.86	1.83	1.88	1.94
18:0	4.84	4.60	4.67	4.45	4.47	4.60
18:1n-9	21.38	30.78	29.31	37.82	36.74	35.00
18:2n-6	7.60	23.24	20.89	17.52	14.83	13.64
18:3n-3	1.73	9.07	8.06	6.51	5.95	5.06
20:1	0.31	0.97	0.91	0.35	0.07	0.94
20:3n-3	0.01	0.06	0.33	0.37	0.37	0.19
20:4n-6	1.15	0.98	0.81	0.88	0.91	0.80
22:1n-9	0.75	0.01	0.01	0.29	0.20	0.23
20:5n-3	10.23	3.69	3.36	3.54	3.28	3.12
22:5n-3	1.59	0.59	0.71	0.61	0.80	0.62
22:6n-3	15.06	4.97	5.06	5.38	4.97	4.50
$\Sigma$ saturates	33.23	22.44	26.51	23.67	28.99	33.05
$\Sigma$ monoenes	28.20	33.62	32.09	40.30	38.89	38.11
$\Sigma$ n-3 PUFA	28.62	18.38	17.52	16.41	15.37	13.49
$\Sigma$ n-6 PUFA	8.75	24.22	21.7	18.4	15.74	14.44
n-3/n-6	3.27	0.76	0.81	0.89	0.98	0.93
$\Sigma$ PUFA	35.77	41.95	38.18	33.83	29.94	27.12

a The amounts of following ingredients per kg of premix were as follows: iron, 10 g; zinc, 3.2 g; manganese, 3 g; cobalt, 52 mg; iodine, 65 mg; and selenium, 15 mg.

b The amounts of following vitamins per kg of premix were as follows: A,  $1 \times 10^6$  IU; D<sub>3</sub>,  $3 \times 10^5$  IU; E, 5,000 IU; K<sub>3</sub>, 1,040 mg; B<sub>1</sub>, 1,500 mg; B<sub>2</sub>, 2,400 mg; B<sub>6</sub>, 1,200 mg; B<sub>12</sub>, 5 mg; nicotinic acid, 8,000 mg; D-calcium pantothenate, 3,200 mg; folic acid, 400 mg; biotin, 10 mg; inositol, 12,000 mg; and C-monophospholipid, 16,000mg.

**Table 2**  
**Growth performance of *Siganus canaliculatus* fed the experimental diets for 9 weeks\***

Growth index	Dietary groups					
	FO	VO1	VO2	VO3	VO4	VO5
Initial weight (g)	12.04 ± 0.06	11.98 ± 0.08	11.87 ± 0.17	11.88 ± 0.02	11.91 ± 0.04	12.08 ± 0.12
Final weight (g)	44.75 ± 0.67	41.55 ± 2.02	39.56 ± 0.51	39.96 ± 0.51	37.59 ± 1.98	38.31 ± 0.16
Weight gain (%)	271.66 ± 5.42	246.80 ± 17.84	233.48 ± 6.26	236.31 ± 11.31	231.99 ± 10.48	216.03 ± 3.77
Specific growth rate (%)	2.08 ± 0.02	1.97 ± 0.08	1.91 ± 0.03	1.92 ± 0.05	1.82 ± 0.09	1.83 ± 0.01
Feed conversion ratio	1.31 ± 0.11	1.33 ± 0.05	1.41 ± 0.05	1.32 ± 0.02	1.30 ± 0.02	1.33 ± 0.02
Protein efficiency ratio	2.65 ± 0.06	2.55 ± 0.08	2.57 ± 0.08	2.61 ± 0.01	2.59 ± 0.06	2.62 ± 0.04
Survival	98.15 ± 1.85 <sup>a</sup>	98.15 ± 1.85 <sup>a</sup>	90.74 ± 3.70 <sup>ab</sup>	87.03 ± 3.70 <sup>ab</sup>	88.89 ± 3.21 <sup>ab</sup>	83.33 ± 3.21 <sup>b</sup>
Hepatosomatic index (%)	2.46 ± 0.09 <sup>b</sup>	2.67 ± 0.10 <sup>b</sup>	2.82 ± 0.10 <sup>ab</sup>	2.90 ± 0.14 <sup>ab</sup>	3.61 ± 0.23 <sup>a</sup>	3.13 ± 0.16 <sup>ab</sup>
Viscerosomatic index(%)	14.20 ± 0.38 <sup>b</sup>	15.09 ± 0.44 <sup>b</sup>	16.22 ± 0.26 <sup>ab</sup>	15.36 ± 0.48 <sup>ab</sup>	17.63 ± 1.02 <sup>a</sup>	14.48 ± 0.26 <sup>b</sup>

\*Values (mean ± SEM of three replicates) in each row with different superscript letters were significantly different ( $P < 0.05$ ).

**Table 3****Biochemical composition of whole body of *Siganus canaliculatus* fed the experimental diets for 9 weeks\***

Composition (%)	Dietary groups				
	FO	VO1	VO2	VO3	VO5
Moisture	73.69 ± 0.54	71.94 ± 1.81	67.12 ± 1.33	70.02 ± 2.15	73.99 ± 0.35
Crude protein	15.59 ± 0.33	15.71 ± 0.32	15.94 ± 0.90	15.92 ± 0.60	16.15 ± 0.21
Crude lipid	8.18 ± 0.18	8.31 ± 0.20	8.58 ± 0.27	8.61 ± 0.21	8.63 ± 0.17
Crude Ash	3.43 ± 0.16	3.62 ± 0.21	3.31 ± 0.12	3.53 ± 0.33	3.85 ± 0.25

\*Values are mean ± SEM of three replicates in each row.

**Table 4**  
**Main fatty acids in the liver of *Siganus canaliculatus* fed the experimental diets for 9 weeks\***

Main fatty acids (% area)	Dietary groups					
	FO	VO1	VO2	VO3	VO4	VO5
12:0	0.48 ± 0.01 <sup>b</sup>	0.59 ± 0.01 <sup>ab</sup>	0.64 ± 0.03 <sup>ab</sup>	0.69 ± 0.05 <sup>ab</sup>	0.74 ± 0.01 <sup>a</sup>	0.62 ± 0.08 <sup>ab</sup>
14:0	2.15 ± 0.10	2.77 ± 0.14	2.18 ± 0.10	2.34 ± 0.12	2.47 ± 0.10	2.15 ± 0.10
16:0	37.57 ± 0.79	33.48 ± 0.32	34.59 ± 1.76	35.23 ± 0.87	35.32 ± 0.55	33.56 ± 0.49
16:1	15.24 ± 0.49 <sup>a</sup>	10.99 ± 0.30 <sup>b</sup>	11.41 ± 0.66 <sup>ab</sup>	12.00 ± 0.01 <sup>ab</sup>	11.88 ± 0.20 <sup>ab</sup>	12.83 ± 0.05 <sup>ab</sup>
18:0	6.05 ± 0.18	7.03 ± 0.75	6.96 ± 0.18	5.96 ± 0.42	5.90 ± 0.02	5.90 ± 0.11
18:1n-9	25.53 ± 0.08 <sup>b</sup>	28.79 ± 0.39 <sup>ab</sup>	29.06 ± 0.75 <sup>ab</sup>	30.39 ± 1.21 <sup>ab</sup>	29.47 ± 0.57 <sup>ab</sup>	31.73 ± 1.37 <sup>a</sup>
18:2n-6	1.82 ± 0.02 <sup>b</sup>	4.57 ± 0.20 <sup>a</sup>	4.74 ± 0.53 <sup>a</sup>	4.60 ± 0.20 <sup>a</sup>	4.42 ± 0.40 <sup>a</sup>	4.02 ± 0.19 <sup>a</sup>
18:3n-6	0.18 ± 0.01 <sup>b</sup>	0.85 ± 0.05 <sup>a</sup>	0.97 ± 0.11 <sup>a</sup>	0.82 ± 0.04 <sup>a</sup>	0.73 ± 0.03 <sup>a</sup>	0.72 ± 0.06 <sup>a</sup>
18:3n-3	0.01 ± 0.02 <sup>b</sup>	0.39 ± 0.06 <sup>a</sup>	0.36 ± 0.09 <sup>a</sup>	0.35 ± 0.07 <sup>a</sup>	0.26 ± 0.01 <sup>a</sup>	0.27 ± 0.09 <sup>a</sup>
20:3n-6	0.22 ± 0.01 <sup>b</sup>	0.98 ± 0.02 <sup>ab</sup>	1.13 ± 0.15 <sup>ab</sup>	0.97 ± 0.01 <sup>ab</sup>	0.87 ± 0.09 <sup>ab</sup>	0.88 ± 0.41 <sup>ab</sup>
20:3n-3	0.54 ± 0.08	0.72 ± 0.08	0.80 ± 0.07	0.71 ± 0.01	0.76 ± 0.10	0.54 ± 0.12
20:4n-6	2.15 ± 0.03 <sup>a</sup>	1.12 ± 0.07 <sup>b</sup>	1.08 ± 0.21 <sup>b</sup>	0.98 ± 0.06 <sup>b</sup>	1.10 ± 0.07 <sup>b</sup>	1.09 ± 0.08 <sup>b</sup>
20:5n-3	0.34 ± 0.02	0.14 ± 0.03	0.17 ± 0.03	0.17 ± 0.03	0.13 ± 0.02	0.12 ± 0.01
22:5n-3	0.94 ± 0.02	0.38 ± 0.02	0.46 ± 0.02	0.42 ± 0.05	0.41 ± 0.01	0.45 ± 0.06
22:6n-3	5.31 ± 0.17 <sup>a</sup>	2.55 ± 0.07 <sup>bc</sup>	3.22 ± 0.31 <sup>b</sup>	2.91 ± 0.11 <sup>bc</sup>	3.07 ± 0.32 <sup>bc</sup>	2.67 ± 0.08 <sup>c</sup>
∑SFA	46.24 ± 0.87	43.87 ± 0.91	44.36 ± 1.87	44.22 ± 1.46	44.44 ± 0.51	42.23 ± 0.40
∑MUFA	41.92 ± 0.54	40.91 ± 0.03	41.55 ± 0.30	42.63 ± 1.23	42.44 ± 0.70	45.90 ± 1.55
∑n-6 PUFA	4.36 ± 0.02 <sup>b</sup>	7.52 ± 0.32 <sup>a</sup>	7.91 ± 0.99 <sup>a</sup>	7.36 ± 0.11 <sup>ab</sup>	7.11 ± 0.53 <sup>ab</sup>	6.71 ± 0.36 <sup>ab</sup>
∑n-3 PUFA	6.67 ± 0.18 <sup>a</sup>	3.45 ± 0.13 <sup>b</sup>	4.21 ± 0.45 <sup>b</sup>	3.83 ± 0.21 <sup>b</sup>	3.87 ± 0.34 <sup>b</sup>	3.51 ± 0.24 <sup>b</sup>
n-3/n-6	1.53 ± 0.03 <sup>a</sup>	0.46 ± 0.02 <sup>b</sup>	0.53 ± 0.01 <sup>b</sup>	0.52 ± 0.02 <sup>b</sup>	0.55 ± 0.01 <sup>b</sup>	0.52 ± 0.01 <sup>b</sup>
∑PUFA	11.03 ± 0.20	10.97 ± 0.46	12.12 ± 1.44	11.20 ± 0.87	10.98 ± 0.87	10.22 ± 0.60

\*Values (mean ± SEM of three replicates) in each row with different superscript letters were significantly different ( $P < 0.05$ ).

**Table 5**  
**Main fatty acids in the fillet of *S. canaliculatus* fed the experimental diets for 9 weeks\***

Main fatty acids (% area)	Dietary groups					
	FO	VO1	VO2	VO3	VO4	VO5
12:0	0.33 ± 0.08	0.33 ± 0.03	0.33 ± 0.03	0.33 ± 0.02	0.37 ± 0.03	0.33 ± 0.01
14:0	4.57 ± 0.68 <sup>a</sup>	1.96 ± 0.12 <sup>b</sup>	1.93 ± 0.01 <sup>b</sup>	1.96 ± 0.14 <sup>b</sup>	1.93 ± 0.14 <sup>b</sup>	1.83 ± 0.13 <sup>b</sup>
16:0	27.75 ± 0.18	22.97 ± 0.55	25.90 ± 1.66	26.31 ± 1.16	25.66 ± 0.39	25.18 ± 0.84
16:1	10.75 ± 0.15 <sup>a</sup>	6.12 ± 0.17 <sup>b</sup>	6.25 ± 0.15 <sup>b</sup>	6.88 ± 0.81 <sup>b</sup>	6.81 ± 0.51 <sup>b</sup>	6.76 ± 0.29 <sup>b</sup>
18:0	4.45 ± 0.58	4.53 ± 0.05	4.78 ± 0.10	4.20 ± 0.01	4.70 ± 0.38	4.37 ± 0.24
18:1n-9	19.54 ± 1.12 <sup>d</sup>	31.07 ± 0.01 <sup>abc</sup>	28.18 ± 0.41 <sup>c</sup>	32.18 ± 0.47 <sup>ab</sup>	33.83 ± 0.40 <sup>a</sup>	32.97 ± 0.41 <sup>ab</sup>
18:2n-6	3.67 ± 0.05 <sup>d</sup>	13.96 ± 0.69 <sup>a</sup>	12.50 ± 0.53 <sup>ab</sup>	10.63 ± 0.37 <sup>bc</sup>	9.32 ± 0.16 <sup>c</sup>	9.56 ± 0.15 <sup>c</sup>
18:3n-6	0.20 ± 0.01	0.74 ± 0.10	0.73 ± 0.18	0.60 ± 0.07	0.60 ± 0.07	0.64 ± 0.04
18:3n-3	0.74 ± 0.10 <sup>c</sup>	4.34 ± 0.19 <sup>a</sup>	3.72 ± 0.19 <sup>a</sup>	2.78 ± 0.11 <sup>b</sup>	2.58 ± 0.14 <sup>b</sup>	2.26 ± 0.07 <sup>b</sup>
20:3n-6	0.24 ± 0.02 <sup>b</sup>	0.86 ± 0.06 <sup>a</sup>	0.77 ± 0.04 <sup>a</sup>	0.75 ± 0.02 <sup>a</sup>	0.70 ± 0.03 <sup>a</sup>	0.75 ± 0.07 <sup>a</sup>
20:3n-3	0.88 ± 0.06	0.77 ± 0.04	0.71 ± 0.19	0.55 ± 0.04	0.55 ± 0.07	0.49 ± 0.01
20:4n-6	1.46 ± 0.06	1.43 ± 0.13	1.46 ± 0.08	1.28 ± 0.01	1.21 ± 0.06	1.17 ± 0.10
20:5n-3	2.53 ± 0.14 <sup>a</sup>	0.66 ± 0.03 <sup>b</sup>	0.92 ± 0.17 <sup>b</sup>	0.69 ± 0.07 <sup>b</sup>	0.79 ± 0.01 <sup>b</sup>	0.70 ± 0.02 <sup>b</sup>
22:5n-3	3.71 ± 0.23 <sup>a</sup>	1.76 ± 0.07 <sup>b</sup>	2.19 ± 0.39 <sup>b</sup>	1.74 ± 0.07 <sup>b</sup>	1.67 ± 0.16 <sup>b</sup>	1.82 ± 0.09 <sup>b</sup>
22:6n-3	12.33 ± 0.49 <sup>a</sup>	5.68 ± 0.19 <sup>b</sup>	5.79 ± 0.76 <sup>b</sup>	5.19 ± 0.08 <sup>b</sup>	5.18 ± 0.27 <sup>b</sup>	5.73 ± 0.18 <sup>b</sup>
∑SFA	36.77 ± 0.29 <sup>a</sup>	29.44 ± 0.70 <sup>b</sup>	32.61 ± 1.55 <sup>ab</sup>	32.46 ± 1.27 <sup>ab</sup>	32.29 ± 0.91 <sup>ab</sup>	31.38 ± 1.21 <sup>ab</sup>
∑MUFA	30.82 ± 0.61 <sup>c</sup>	37.54 ± 0.08 <sup>a</sup>	35.05 ± 0.54 <sup>b</sup>	39.63 ± 1.28 <sup>a</sup>	41.21 ± 0.91 <sup>a</sup>	40.30 ± 0.66 <sup>a</sup>
∑n-6PUFA	5.56 ± 0.02 <sup>f</sup>	16.99 ± 0.40 <sup>a</sup>	15.45 ± 0.40 <sup>b</sup>	13.26 ± 0.29 <sup>c</sup>	11.71 ± 0.03 <sup>d</sup>	12.12 ± 0.16 <sup>d</sup>
∑n-3PUFA	19.31 ± 0.86 <sup>a</sup>	12.44 ± 0.48 <sup>b</sup>	12.62 ± 1.51 <sup>b</sup>	10.39 ± 0.33 <sup>bc</sup>	10.21 ± 0.28 <sup>bc</sup>	10.50 ± 0.35 <sup>bc</sup>
n-3/n-6	3.47 ± 0.16 <sup>a</sup>	0.73 ± 0.01 <sup>b</sup>	0.81 ± 0.08 <sup>b</sup>	0.78 ± 0.01 <sup>b</sup>	0.87 ± 0.03 <sup>b</sup>	0.87 ± 0.02 <sup>b</sup>
∑PUFA	24.87 ± 0.84 <sup>bc</sup>	29.43 ± 0.88 <sup>a</sup>	28.06 ± 1.89 <sup>ab</sup>	23.65 ± 0.61 <sup>bc</sup>	21.92 ± 0.26 <sup>c</sup>	22.62 ± 0.51 <sup>bc</sup>

\*Values (mean ± SEM of three replicates) in each row with different superscript letters were significantly different ( $P < 0.05$ ).