

(Fly) Food for Thought

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This experiment focuses on the effect of insects on mass of decomposing organisms over time. By using ventilated, secure containers containing chicken thigh meat with four conditions (A- ants, B- flies, C- ants and flies, and D- control with no insects), the question whether ants or flies decompose the most mass was tested. The mass (in grams) was measured daily and temperature (degrees Fahrenheit) and humidity (in percentage) were charted. Shapiro-wilk tests were run to determine whether there was normal distribution of mass, of mass relating to high and low temperature, and of mass relating to high and low humidity in all conditions. The mass of the chicken was normally distributed in all conditions (providing a significant value greater than 5%), but both high and low temperature related to mass provided significant p-values for all conditions (less than 0.05). Although the findings did not support the hypothesis, this study found a direct relationship between temperature and cadaver mass.

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