

CONSTRUINDO SABERES, FORMANDO PESSOAS E TRANSFORMANDO A PRODUÇÃO ANIMAL

INGESTIVE BEHAVIOR OF SHEEP AND GOATS FED WITH DIFFERENT ROUGHAGES

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Animal production in the semiarid region is limited due to periods of food shortage since the reduced and irregular rainfall throughout the year. The use of adapted forage species to these conditions may be a viable alternative for production systems. Knowing the animal ingestive behavior is important to evaluate the differences between feedstuff and animal species, since the feeding behavior is adjusted according to the nutritional requirements of each animal. The objective of this study was to evaluate the ingestive behavior of goats and sheep fed with different roughages at 24, 48, and 72h. Five females of each species were distributed in two Latin squares 5x5. The diets were composed of cactus *Nopalea* (*Nopalea cochenillifera* - Salm Dyck) cladodes and cactus *Opuntia* [*Opuntia stricta* (Haw.) Haw] cladodes plus urea plus sugarcane bagasse (NUB and OUB), Tifton hay (TH), corn and sorghum silage (CS and SS); added with common salt and mineral mix. The ingestive behavior was evaluated by recording the ingestive, rumination, and idle activities, every 10 minutes, for 24, 48 and 72h. Statistical procedures were conducted using the PROC MIXED of SAS, and the averages were compared with the Tukey test at 5% of probability. The comparisons between 24 and 48h observations, based on 72h observation, were performed by adjusting the simple linear regression model by SAS program. No differences were observed for animal species and for roughage x animal species interaction. Longer ingestion time was observed for SS-fed animals (291 min/day) and lower for NUB and OUB (189 min/day). The rumination time was higher for animals that consumed TH, CS, and SS (565 min/day) and lower for NUB and OUB (339 min/day). These results may be related with the chemical composition of roughages and the quality of the feed consumed. It was verified that the statistical analysis of the intercepts and slope coefficients of straight lines indicated that both null hypothesis were accepted for 48h, indicating that the observed values for the ingestion, rumination, and idle times are equivalent to those verified at 72h. However, the null hypotheses were rejected for 24h of observation. In confinement system, sheep and goats do not present differences in terms of voluntary intake for the roughages studied. For NUB and OUB, shorter ingestion and rumination times were observed. The evaluation of the ingestive behavior by instantaneous scanning method can be evaluated in a period of 48h.

Keywords: cactus, idle, ingestion, rumination, ruminants

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