ZOOTECNIA BRASIL
Centro de Convenções da PUC-GO | Goiânia-GO
27 a 30 de agosto de 2018

55ª REUNIÃO ANUAL DA SOCIEDADE BRASILEIRA DE ZOOTECNIA

ZOOTEC 28º CONGRESSO BRASILEIRO DE ZOOTECNIA

CONSTRUINDO SABERES, FORMANDO PESSOAS E TRANSFORMANDO A PRODUÇÃO ANIMAL

GRASS FORAGE ACCUMULATION RATE OF THE DIGIT GRASS SUBJECTED TO FREQUENCY AND DEFOLIATION SEVERITY

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The objective of this experiment was to evaluate the total forage accumulation rate and the morphological components of the digit grass (*Digitaria eriantha* Steud cv. Suvernola) submitted to two frequencies and two post-defoliation residues. The experiment was carried out in the Field of Forage Practices of the Animal Science Department of the Federal University of Sergipe at the São Cristóvão Campus. The experimental period lasted nine months, starting in July 2017 and ending in April 2018. The experimental design used was the randomized block with five replicates, totaling 20 experimental units. The plants were submitted to four treatments resulting from the combination of two frequencies (pre-defoliation heights of 40 and 50 cm) and two defoliation severities (10 and 20 cm post-defoliation residue). The experimental units where the evaluations took place consisted of an experimental bed measuring four m^2 and the total area of the experiment occupied 80 m^2. The total forage accumulation rate, leaves, stems and dead material were evaluated. The data were submitted to analysis of variance with 5% of significance and when significant difference was verified the Tukey test at 5% of probability, using the statistical program SISVAR. The treatments influenced the total forage accumulation rates of 20 cm residue digit grass, presenting mean values equal to 89.75 and 89.71 MST $ha^{-1}day^{-1}$, for the frequencies of 40 and 50 cm, respectively. The treatment corresponding to the frequency of 40 cm and severity of 20 cm presented a higher rate of leaf accumulation (mean: 61.21 LF $ha^{-1}day^{-1}$), differing significantly from the other treatments. The accumulation rate of stalks and dead material did not differ statistically, presenting mean values equal to 30.45 CM $ha^{-1}day^{-1}$ and 2.14 MM $ha^{-1}day^{-1}$, respectively. The treatments with frequency of defoliation of 40 and 20 cm severity presented at higher rate of leaf accumulation and total dry matter, resulting in a greater renewal of the forage canopy and better forage quality.

Keywords: forage plants, grazing management, post-grazing residue