

CONSTRUINDO SABERES, FORMANDO PESSOAS E TRANSFORMANDO A PRODUÇÃO ANIMAL

PERFORMANCE OF STEERS REARING IN PASTURE WITH LOW LEVELS OF SUPPLEMENTATION

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The development of efficient food strategies is essential for the success of livestock, providing the producer a good profitability, reducing the time of the cattle in property and increasing the turn of animals in the property. The supplementation can offer nutrients that meet the nutritional requirements, allowing differentiated performance to animals, from the simple weight maintenance, to the moderate gains of 200 to 300 g /day, until gains of 500 to 600 g /day Paulino, (2001). This study aimed to evaluate the influence of supplementary strategies on productive performance of steers rearing in *Brachiaria brizantha* pastures. The experiment was conducted at the Princesa do Mateiro farm, in Ribeirão do Largo – BA, totaling 98 days, 33 crossbred steers with a mean initial body weight of 328.33 ± 34.95 kg were used, distributed in a completely randomized design, with three strategies (mineral salt *ad libitum*, protein supplement with 20% of protein and protein supplement with 52% of protein at 0.1% of body weight), and eleven replicates each in *Brachiaria brizantha* pastures cv. Marandu. The performance evaluation of animals was determined by the final live weight (FLW) minus the initial live weight (ILW) and divided by the number of days. The FLW and daily average gain (DAG) obtained during the experimental period did not differ significantly between treatments ($P > 0.05$), even when strategy 3 had a higher crude protein value compared to the other treatments. It was expected that animals submitted to strategy 3 presented a greater weight gain, since the crude protein was higher. However, this did not occur, which may be related to the availability and quality of forage, and to the urea levels that may have regulated the consume. In practical terms, the results found in this study means that when using a quality forage associated with correct management, the use of mineral supplementation is able to provide satisfactory gains for cattle reared in tropical pastures. The values found are in agreement with the values of DAG observed during this period of the year, by other authors, ranging from 0.470 to 0.840 kg / animal (Barbosa et al., 2007; Sales et al., 2008), reaffirming that the use of mineral supplements or low levels of supplementation allows good productive indexes. As the strategies did not present significant differences it is recommended the use of mineral salt when having quality forage.

Keywords: beef cattle, forage

Promoção e Realização:



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