

CONSTRUINDO SABERES, FORMANDO PESSOAS E TRANSFORMANDO A PRODUÇÃO ANIMAL

INTERMITTENT STOCKING STRATEGIES FOR SUDANGRASS CV. BRS ESTRIBO

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The sudangrass (*Sorghum sudanense*) cv. BRS Estribo is an annual cycle plant with great potential for forage production in the dry and transition periods. However, protocols for its management, such as sward and residual heights, still need to be established. Thus, the objective was to evaluate the production and structure of the sudangrass cv. BRS Estribo, under different strategies of intermittent defoliation. The experiment was carried out from March to June 2017. The experimental design was a randomized complete block with four replications, in a 3 × 2 factorial scheme (three pre-defoliation heights - 40, 55 and 70 cm and two residual heights - 10 and 20 cm). The plots of 3 × 4 m² were established with sowing rate of 70 viable pure seeds per linear meter and 25 cm between rows. The plants were irrigated during all period. The plants were fertilized with simple superphosphate (equivalent to 90 kg ha⁻¹ of P₂O₅) and ammonium sulphate (equivalent to 200 kg ha⁻¹ of N). Average forage production per cycle (APF in kg ha⁻¹.cycle), total accumulated production (TAP in kg ha⁻¹) and leaf:stem ratio (RLS) were evaluated. APF differed among the three pre-defoliation heights with values of 2,484.76; 1,799.05 and 1,255.35 kg ha⁻¹.cycle for treatments 70, 55 and 40 cm, respectively. For TAP variables, there was statistical difference between the heights of 70 (10,071.16 kg ha⁻¹) and 40 cm (7,359.97 kg ha⁻¹), but they were statistically equal to 55 cm (8,488.54 kg ha⁻¹). There was significant interaction for RLS, where the residue of 20 cm associated with the sward height of 40 cm provided higher RLS (2,9), being 36 and 51% higher than the treatments with 55 and 70 cm, respectively. On the other hand, TAP at the heights of 70 and 55 cm was superior to the treatment of 40 cm in 26.9 and 13.3%, respectively. Thus, defoliation between 55 and 70 cm, independently of the residual height, increases the production of sudangrass cv. BRS Estribo. The use of more frequent (40 cm) and less intense (20 cm) defoliation improves the leaf:stem ratio of the forage.

Keywords: forage production, leaf:stem ratio

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