

DOES QUALITY OF ROUGHAGE INFLUENCE BEHAVIOUR OF GOATS?

Rasheed A. Adebayo^{1,2} and Ignatius V. Nsahlai²

¹*University of KwaZulu-Natal, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, South
Africa*

Goats are social animals with varying behaviour. Their behaviour impact on feed intake and ultimately on performance. This study aimed at determining whether quality of roughage influence behaviour of goats or not. 18 goats were blocked by weight into two groups of heavy and light and they are randomly assigned to 3 treatments namely Improved Quality Roughage (IQR), Semi-improved Quality Roughage (SQR) and Non-improved Quality Roughage (NQR). Goats were adapted for 14d and fed for 56d after which behaviour was studied for 4 consecutive days using 5 motorized indoor CCTV cameras fixed at different locations in the pen in such a way that each conveniently captured activities of at least 5 goats at a time. Data were saved and adapted for eating, drinking, rumination, idling and other behavioural activities. Time spent for each of these activities was captured with Microsoft excel and analysed with GLM procedure of SAS system (SAS, 2013). Only times for eating and rumination behaviour were significantly different ($P < 0.05$) at certain times of the day. It was however concluded that quality of roughage influence behaviour of goats and that major activities of goats in the day are eating and rumination while rumination proceeds mostly at night. With this, dry matter intake is increased and productivity is enhanced.

Keywords: Goat; Roughage; Behaviour.