

Productive Performance of Goats fed with Leaves of Banana Tree in the Semi-arid Region of Brazil.

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Abstract

Resumo:

The production of forage to feed animals in the semi-arid region is seasonal. During the dry season, it is observed a low quality and amount of feeding resources; in addition, the productive performance of animals is very poor. This work aimed to evaluate the productive performance of goats kept in the Caatinga vegetation and fed with leaves of banana tree in the dry season of the year. Twenty-four adults crossbred goats were allocated in three homogeneous groups: 1) Control (they had exclusive access of Caatinga); 2) Leaves 1x (they were fed with leaves of banana once a week) and 3) Leaves 2x (they were fed with leaves of banana twice a week). Goats were kept in the Caatinga vegetation during the all day. Leaves of banana tree were offered to groups Leaves 1x and Leaves 2x before letting them to go to native pasture. All animals were weighted, every 14 days, making a total of 98 days of evaluations. It was used a random experimental design, with three treatments and eight repetitions per treatment. It was observed that all groups showed loss of weight (3.8, 2.6 and 1.8 kg, respectively to Control, Leaves 1x and Leaves 2x). The Control group, which was kept exclusively in the Caatinga, lost a little more weight. However, there were no significant difference ($P>0.05$) between groups. The leaves of banana tree were not enough to supply the nutritional demand of animals. The consumption of leaves of banana tree did not influence the productive performance of goats. In case of reduction or lack of forage, the leaves of banana tree can be an alternative to reduce the loss of weight of goats kept exclusively in the Caatinga during the dry period of the year.