

digestibility efficiency which was in accordance with the bibliography results obtained with sheep and cattle. The positive effect of BG on fat secretion was not systematic in the literature and these divergences are probably due to experiments conducted with insufficient levels of BG DMI in the diet which had hidden the specific BG effects contrary to our present data.

X Pasture and Rangelands

174 LIVELWEIGHT RESPONSES OF NATIVE DOES GRAZING NATIVE PASTURES (CAATINGA) UNDER DIFFERENT STOCKING RATES

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Changes in liveweight of native does were evaluated in a herd grazing a dense caatinga area with a predominant shrub-tree layer. The study was conducted at the Caatinga Management Experimental Station, in Petrolina, Pernambuco, Northeast Brazil. Ninety does were allocated by stratified randomization, on the basis of liveweight, into three treatments with two replications. Stocking rates applied were: 0.33 (A), 0.50 (B), and 1.00 (C) doe per hectare. Animals were fed no dry season supplement. Does and kids were weighed at 28-day intervals. Does were continuously exposed for mating throughout the year. Bucks were weekly rotated among treatment groups. Kids were removed from the plots at weaning. There were no significant differences ($P>0.05$) in liveweight among treatments during different seasons over the three-year experimental period, although the A does had consistently shown higher liveweight values than the B and C does. The pattern of liveweight changes during the period was characterized by large oscillations which followed a similar trend for all groups. Peaks in liveweight losses averaged 23% and were observed at the beginning of the rainy seasons. Peaks in liveweight gains averaged 41% and were observed at the beginning of the subsequent dry seasons. Similarities in liveweight changes may explain the fact that all treatment groups performed similarly in terms of fertility. Results showed a seasonal growth pattern of native pastures leading to a seasonal variation in liveweight of does with depressing effects on their performance.

KEY WORDS: Native pastures, grazing pressure, body weight, goats.