Effects of early weaning on performance of beef calves in the Pantanal

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Introduction

The global demand for food, cellulose and energy caused heating grain markets, paper and alcohol, causing an expansion of these crops in areas previously occupied by livestock. This process has promoted the shift of beef cattle, primarily systems of calves' production, to the least arable areas and lower fertility as is the case of the Pantanal. In these regions, the generally forage low in nutritional value, causing restrictions on reproductive efficiency and productivity of the herd. Supplementation of calves has fundamental importance in the new models of animal production, animal growth accelerating or increasing the design indexes of arrays, in response to minimizing the nutritional deficit.

Material and Methods

Implanted in São Bento of Abobral Farm (Southern Pantanal), a study to evaluate the performance of early weaning calves submitted (DP) held to 110 days old (DP110) regarding the performance of weaned calves in the conventional way to 210 days of age (DC210). 406 male calves were compared Nellore cattle and Tabapuã, born in the same period (October and November 2012) and kept in native pastures until weaning. After weaning, calves weaned early (DP110), were kept in cultivated pastures of humidicola (*Urochloa humidicola*), and were supplemented with 1.0 kg of feed Via Lac® per animal per day. The native pastures and cultivated were evaluated monthly. The experimental design was completely randomized, with the results compared by Tukey test to 5% by the linear model of the SAS program GLIMMIX procedure version 9.12 (2010).

Results and Discussion

✓ The levels of crude protein, neutral detergent fiber and TDN were 5.30 and 5.74, 70.54 and 69.56, 62.02 and 61.66 for pastures cultivated and native, respectively.

Table 1 - Frequency of the native grassland greater predominance in key places.

Native grassland	Frequency (%)
Mimoso (*Axonopus purpusii*)	29.8
Felpudo (*Paspalum plicatum*	27.7
Mimosinho (*Reimarochloa brasiliensis*)	14.5
Red mimoso (*Setaria geniculata)*	11.7
Red grass (*Andropogon hypoginus*	8.4
Thin grass (*Axonopus paraguaiensis*	5.8

Table 2 - Average weight adjusted to 210 days for breeds and weaned methods.

Breed	Weaned conventional weight (DC210 days)	Weaned early weight (DP110 days)
Nellore	167.82 ± 1.23	165.3 ± 1.73
Tabapuã	171.67 ± 3.53	171.34 ± 3.04
Means	169.75 ± 1.88	168.32 ± 1.74

✓ No differences were found (P > 0.05) between weaning treatments and between weaning and race

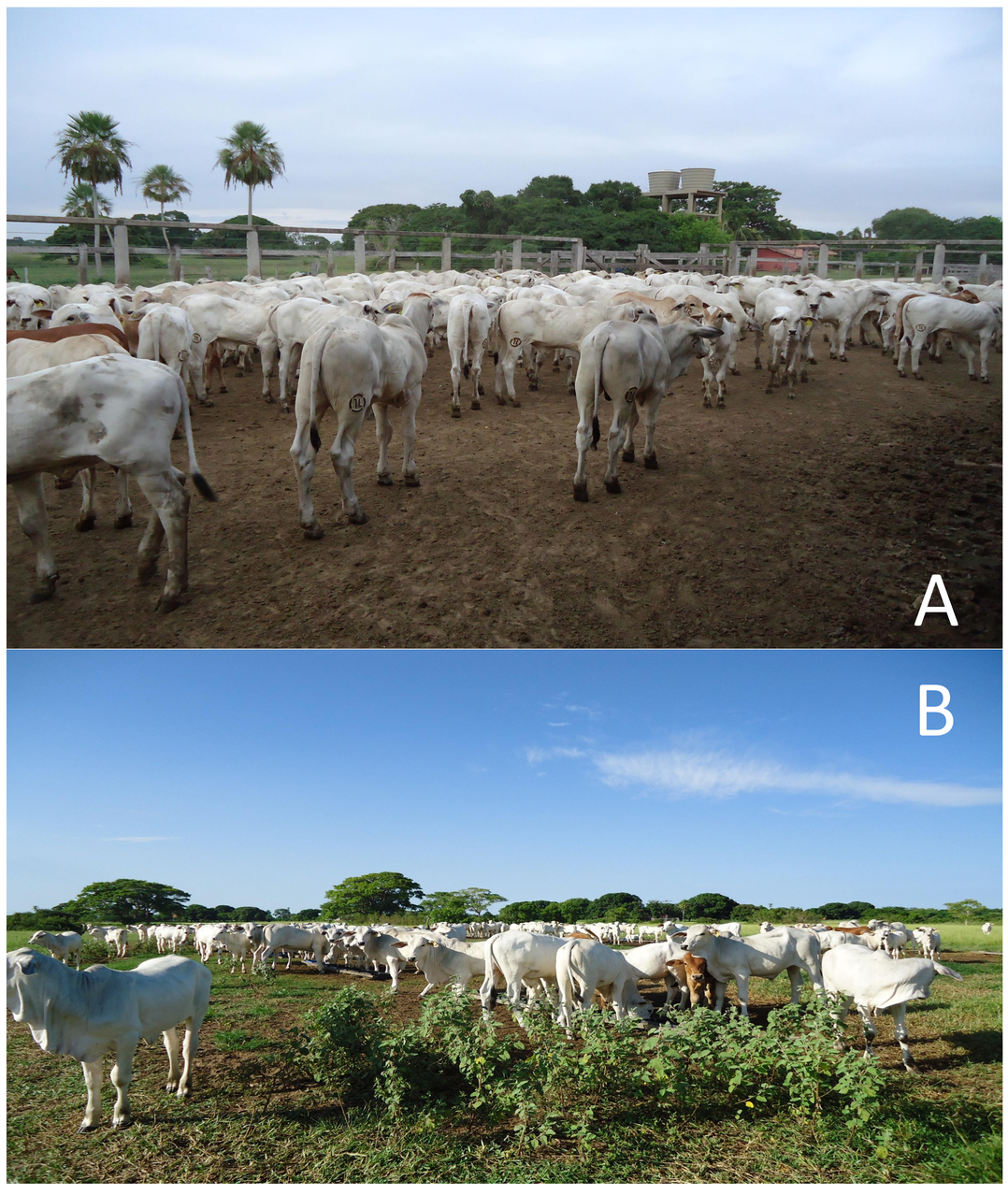

Figure 1 - Early weaning calves; A – day of weaning; B – calves without cows on the pasture

Conclusions

Therefore in the form adopted early weaning did not affect the performance of the calves.

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