

Kansas Agricultural Experiment Station Research Reports

Volume 0
Issue 1 *Cattleman's Day (1993-2014)*

Article 1380

1972

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Recommended Citation

Harbers, L.H.; Harrison, K.F.; Richardson, D.; and Smith, E.F. (1972) "Whole corn rations for finishing heifers: A comparison of self-fed and mixed supplement, with and without salt.," *Kansas Agricultural Experiment Station Research Reports*: Vol. 0: Iss. 1. <https://doi.org/10.4148/2378-5977.2783>

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Whole corn rations for finishing heifers: A comparison of self-fed and mixed supplement, with and without salt.

Abstract

Twenty-four Hereford x Angus heifers averaging 714 lbs. were allotted by weight to four groups of six animals each to study effects on gain, feed intake, and feed efficiency of: 1. Free-choice whole corn without roughage. 2. Protein supplement either mixed with whole corn or supplied separately (free-choice). 3. Omitting salt

Keywords

Cattlemen's Day, 1972; Report of progress (Kansas State University. Agricultural Experiment Station); 557; Beef; Corn; Finishing heifers; Salt

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Whole Corn Rations for Finishing Heifers:
A Comparison of Self-fed and Mixed
Supplement, with and without Salt.

L. H. Harbers, K. F. Harrison,
D. Richardson, and E. F. Smith

Twenty-four Hereford X Angus heifers averaging 714 lbs. were allotted by weight to four groups of six animals each to study effects on gain, feed intake, and feed efficiency of:

1. Free-choice whole corn without roughage.
2. Protein supplement either mixed with whole corn or supplied separately (free-choice).
3. Omitting salt.

Protein supplement (table 36) was pelleted for uniform consumption of nutrients, however, the pellets had to be ground when fed separately from whole corn to reduce consumption. Groups receiving the complete mixture received supplement in pelleted form (4% of ration) throughout the 85-day trial. Groups receiving salt had access to block salt. Animals were fattened 85 days. Carcass data are not yet available.

Results of the trial are summarized in table 37. Feeding supplement either separately or mixed with whole corn did not statistically affect average daily gain, however, gain tended to be higher in groups fed the mixed ration. Omitting salt from the ration for 85 days did not statistically affect gains. More free-choice supplement was consumed when salt was omitted, possibly to get the sodium content (.26% Na) of supplement compared with whole corn's .01% Na. When animals had access to salt, the highest consumption averaged only 12.24 gms/head/day, equivalent to 0.15% of the ration. The universally accepted dietary level of 0.5% salt was not necessary.

Heifers consumed two to three times more supplement when it was fed separately but tended to gain slightly less. The practice of mixing supplement with grain was confirmed.

Table 36. Composition of feedstuffs used in protein supplement.

| Feedstuff | Amount / 100 lbs. |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Soybean meal (49%) | 77.90 lbs. |
| Ground milo | 9.40 lbs. |
| Ground limestone | 11.25 lbs. |
| Vitamin A (10,000 IU/gm) | 77.20 gms. |
| MGA-100 | 127.10 gms. |
| Aurofac-10 | 204.30 gms. |
| Trace minerals (2-5) | 254.20 gms. |
| Ground milo for premix | 18.20 gms. |

Table 37. Body weight, gain, feed intake, and efficiency data of heifers fed an all-concentrate ration 85 days.

| Indicated Factor | Supplement fed separately | | Supplement mixed with corn | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------|----------------------------|-------|
| | no salt | salt | no salt | salt |
| No. of animals | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Initial wt., lbs. | 714 | 715 | 714 | 715 |
| Final wt., lbs. | 926 | 944 | 968 | 965 |
| Gain, lbs./day | 2.56 | 2.69 | 2.99 | 2.95 |
| Daily feed intake, lbs. | 17.28 | 19.38 | 17.98 | 17.59 |
| Whole corn, lbs. | 14.63 | 17.89 | 17.26 | 16.89 |
| Supplement | 2.65 | 1.49 | .72 | .70 |
| % Protein of ingested feeds | 13.51 | 11.20 | 10.20 | 10.20 |
| Daily salt intake, gm. | --- | 6.90 | --- | 12.24 |
| Salt intake, % of ration | --- | 0.08 | --- | 0.15 |
| Feed/gain ratio (dry basis) | 6.08 | 6.48 | 5.41 | 5.35 |