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Effect of Lasalocid¹ on Performance of Grazing Steers

L.R. Corah, J.G. Riley and Ron Pope

Summary

Steers fed 200 mg of Lasalocid per day while grazing bromegrass pasture gained 7.6% faster than non-medicated controls; however, this difference was not statistically significant.

Introduction

Feedlot research has shown that the experimental feed additive, Lasalocid, will improve average daily gain and feed efficiency. Also, a few grazing studies have shown that Lasalocid will improve daily gain. Our study was designed to find the best dosage level of Lasalocid for grazing steers.

Experimental Procedure

One hundred five Hereford steers from one ranch were processed upon arrival at the Beef Research Unit and monitored for sickness for about 2 weeks. Individual weights were taken after 15 hours off feed and water. The steers were stratified by weight and randomly allotted to 16 replicates. There were four replicates per treatment: two with four animals and two with seven. The trial started on April 7 and the last replicate concluded on July 24, 1981, providing an average of 102 grazing days.

The 16 pastures were predominantly bromegrass, stocked at one head per acre. All pastures were fertilized and had enough growth that ample grass was always available. The cattle were rotated between pastures within replicates to reduce any potential pasture effect.

The four treatments were: 1) control, 2) 100 mg of Lasalocid, 3) 200 mg of Lasalocid, and 4) 300 mg of Lasalocid per head daily. Lasalocid was mixed with 2 pounds of ground corn per head and fed once daily in open feedbunks with enough space for all steers to eat at once. Controls received the grain with no Lasalocid. Cattle had free access to a salt-mineral mix and fly-control dust bags.

A 55-day non-shrunk weight was taken on June 1; the cattle were weighed directly off grass. At trial completion, one replicate per treatment was gathered at approximately 8:00 a.m. and weighed within 3 hours. This was used as the final weight, but a "check" weight was taken the following day. That process was repeated for each replicate, so the steers were weighed off test on four different dates.

¹Lasalocid and partial financial assistance provided by Hoffman LaRoche, Nutley, NJ 07110.

The cattle were observed daily for illness and upon completion of the trial they remained at the Beef Cattle Research Unit 44 days for further observation.

Results

The steers started eating the corn-additive mix immediately with no palatability problems at any level of Lasalocid. This consistent intake continued even though grazing conditions were excellent throughout the trial. No health problems occurred either on grass or during the 44-day post-trial observation period.

Initial weight, final weight, and gain are shown in Table 23.1. Lasalocid at 200 mg per head per day improved average daily gain by 7.6%, but the difference was not statistically significant.

Table 23.1. Effect of Lasalocid on Performance of Grazing Steers.

Treatment	Lasalocid mg/hd/day			
	0	100	200	200
No. steers	22	22	22	22
Initial wt., lb	555.4	552.4	551.5	548.3
Final wt., lb	782.7	785.1	797.0	781.2
Gain, lb	2227.3	232.7	245.5	232.9
ADG	2.23 ^a	2.28 ^a	2.41 ^a	2.28 ^a

^aMeans in same row not statistically different ($P > .05$).