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D.E. Isbell

J.L. Morrill

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EFFECT OF LASALOCID IN RATIONS FOR GROWING HEIFERS

D. E. Isbell and J. L. Morrill

Summary

Sixty-four Holstein heifer calves were used from 10 to 26 wk of age to study the effects of lasalocid on growth and feed consumption. Calves were evaluated weekly for weight gain and feed consumption. Lasalocid-fed heifers gained slightly, but not significantly, more than those that did not receive lasalocid. Their hay consumption was not significantly different than that of the control heifers.

Introduction

Lasalocid (Bovatec®) is a feed additive ionophore that is cleared for use in rations of growing heifers. The potential benefit of lasalocid is to produce heavier heifers through greater efficiency in protein and energy utilization in the rumen. The beneficial effect of lasalocid in rations for very young calves and in animals weighing over 400 lb has been demonstrated in recent research. However, there are few data showing the effect on animals weighing between 200 and 400 lb. The purpose of this experiment was to study the effects of lasalocid on heifers from 10 to 26 wk of age.

Procedure

At 10 wk of age, 64 Holstein heifers were assigned randomly to each of two groups. Each heifer in both groups was fed prairie hay ad libitum and 5.7 lb of concentrate per day. The concentrate mixture was formulated so that the diet provided 1978 NRC recommendations for protein, energy, and vitamins A, D, and E. Major minerals were supplied to provide 1978 NRC recommendations and a K:Na ratio of 3 to 1. One group received concentrate with lasalocid added at 25 mg per lb. Within each treatment, heifers were housed together from 10 to 18 wk of age and from 18 to 26 wk of age. The experiment ended when the heifers were 26 wk of age.

Individual weight gains were recorded weekly. Average hay consumptions for the four lots were calculated weekly.

Results

Weight gains and hay consumption are shown in Tables 1 and 2. In the 10 to 18 wk period, lasalocid-fed heifers gained .11 lb/day more than the control heifers, while eating .23 lb/day less hay. In the 18 to 26 wk period, lasalocid-fed heifers only gained .02 lb/day more but also ate .05 lb/day more hay than the control heifers. None of the differences between groups were statistically significant.

Table 1. Body Weight, Total Gain, and Average Daily Gain (ADG) of Heifers¹

Ration	Weight of heifers, lb			Gain, 10 to 18 wk		Gain, 18 to 26 wk	
	10 wk	18 wk	26 wk	Total	ADG	Total	ADG
Control	171 ± 3.48	258 ± 5.38	350 ± 7.45	87 ± 3.15	1.55	92 ± 3.04	1.64
Lasalocid	168 ± 3.36	261 ± 5.21	354 ± 7.22	93 ± 3.04	1.66	93 ± 2.95	1.66

¹Average ± SE.**Table 2. Average Daily Hay Consumption (lb/day) of Control and Lasalocid-fed Heifers¹**

Ration	Age of heifers	
	10 to 18 wk	18 to 26 wk
Control	2.24 ± .157	5.20 ± .158
Lasalocid-fed	2.01 ± .157	5.25 ± .158

¹Average ± SE.