**Growth performance and feeding behaviour of cattle supplemented with babasu palm (Orbignya phalerata) silage**

Faria, P.B.1,2, Babilônia, J.L.1, Bressan, M.C.2,3, Rodrigues, M.C.O.1, Silva, D.C.1, Anjos, M.A.1, Morais, S.B.1, Pereira, A.A.1 and Gama, L.T.3

1 Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia de Mato Grosso - Brasil
2 Universidade Federal de Lavras - Minas Gerais - Brazil
3 Instituto Nacional de Recursos Biológicos, L-INTA, Fonte Boa, Santarém, 2009-048, Portugal

**INTRODUCTION**

Babasu is a palm tree common in northern Brazil.

The leaves are an alternative feed for cattle raised in central-western Brazil in the dry season.

Crude protein in the leaves surpasses the minimum requirements for maintenance of ruminants.

**OBJECTIVES**

Evaluate the effect of Babasuí silage on growth performance, feed intake and feeding behavior (time spent ingesting feed, ruminating, resting and ingesting water).

**CONCLUSIONS**

Substitution of corn silage by Babasuí silage above 25% of the roughage intake caused:

- a decline in feed intake and growth rate
- a change in feeding behavior (↑ resting time, ↓ rumination time)

**MATERIALS & METHODS**

- Castrated Nelore males (n = 25) with initial live weight of 256 kg
- Animals were given commercial concentrate (1 % of live weight / d), and assigned to five treatments.
  - Corn silage (BO) - ad libitum
  - 25% Babasuí silage (B25)
  - 50% Babasuí silage (B50)
  - 75% Babasuí silage (B75)
  - 100% Babasuí silage (B100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredients and composition of concentrate</th>
<th>Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>corn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>soybean meal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>urea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mineral salts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- After an adaptation period (14 d), cattle were kept in individual pens
- Parameters measured over 75 d: feed consumption; average daily gain; time spent ingesting feed, ruminating, resting and ingesting water
- Visual observations for 12 h, with data collected at intervals of 15 minutes

**RESULTS**

- Feed consumption by treatment-period
- Weight daily gain by treatment-period
- Time spent resting, ruminating and ingesting water