Abstract: A field survey was made to assess the lactation performances of native cattle of Khulna region. The survey also included the effects of rice straw and concentrate feed on their lactation performances. The average daily milk yield, lactation length and total milk production were found to be 2.49 ± 0.06 kg, 247.23 ± 3.51 days and 590.40 ± 15.00 kg, respectively. The effects of rice straw and concentrate feed supplement were found highly significant (P<0.001) for all the traits under consideration.

Keywords: Lactation; Native cattle; Bangladesh; Khulna

Introduction

The native cattle of Bangladesh are the main source of milk, meat, draft power and manure. They play an important role in our national health and economy, but their lactation performances are poor mainly because of improper and insufficient feeding. Among all the traits of cattle, lactation performances are important, because these indicate total milk yields. Islam (1998) reported that in Bangladesh, the availability of milk is only 31.86ml/day/person as compared to the recommended allowances of 250ml and the domestic milk production represents only about 13.58% of total need. The deficit is partly met up by imported powder milk.

The purpose of the study is to assess the performances of milk production of native cattle as well as the effects of rice straw and concentrate feed supplement on various milk production traits.

Materials and Methods

The field survey was carried out in the semi-urban areas adjacent to the Khulna City. Data were collected by a prepared questionnaire and the survey covering 112 randomly selected farmers during October 1998 to January 1999. The animals under consideration were grazed regularly on grasses growing naturally on uncultivated government or
private land and roadsides. However, the grazing hours were variable. In addition, cattle were fed with rice straw and concentrate mixtures as supplement. The quantity of concentrate feed supplied to the animals was 0.25kg to 7.0 kg/animal/day, where a small number of farmers supplied no concentrate feeds. The main ingredients of concentrate feed were rice polish, oil cake, wheat bran and pulse bran. The ratio of ingredients was variable from farmers to farmers. The following lactation performances were considered: daily milk yield, lactation length and total lactational production.

The data analysis was done by a statistical package MINITAB. Analysis of variance was carried out on each of the traits for rice straw and concentrate feed supplement.

**Results and Discussion**

The effects of rice straw and concentrate feed supplement on various lactation traits are presented in Table 1. The mean values for each of the traits are shown in Table 2.

**Daily Milk Yield:** The significant effects (p<0.001) of rice straw and concentrate feed were found on daily milk yields (Table 1). Olsson (1996) found significant effect of concentrate feed on milk yield. Chaudhry et al. (1994) also found significant effect of feed on the trait. An average daily milk yield was observed 2.49 ± 0.06 kg (Table 2). The results were consistent with the findings of Husain and Mostafa (1985). They found daily milk yield of native cows as 2.6 ± 0.23 kg and 3.3 ± 0.50 kg under rural and farm conditions, respectively. Relatively higher milk yields were observed in native cattle under farm conditions by Ashraf (1998) (5.01 ± 0.44 kg), Rahman et al. (1987) (3.19 ± 0.13 kg) and Bhuiyan and Sultana (1994) (3.00 ± 0.15 kg). These may be due to differences in feeding and management systems under village and farm conditions. There are several other factors, which causes the variation in daily milk yields such as season, number of lactations and age of cows.

**Lactation Length:** Effects of rice straw and concentrate feed supplement were found significant (p<0.001) on the trait (Table 1). Significant effect of feed on milk yield was also found by Chaudhry et al. (1994). In the present study, average lactation length was
observed 247.23 ± 3.51 days (Table 2), which was consistent with the findings of Bhuiyan and Sultana (1994) (241.18±10.53 days), Ashraf (1998) (244.63±10.16 days) and Hossain and Routledge (1982) (240.00±63.00 days). A lower LL was found by Islam (1995) (200.50±63.48 days) and the highest LL was found by Rahman, et al. (1987) (323.0 ±8.90 days) and Jahan et al. (1990) (317.18±11.18 days). These dissimilarities may be due to variation in different management systems.

**Total Lactational Production:** The trait was found significant (p<0.001) for rice straw and concentrate supplement effects (Table 1). Similar result was also observed by Chaudhry et al. (1994). Average total lactational production was found 590.40 ± 15.0 kg (Table 2). A lower total lactational production was observed by Hossain and Routledge (1982) (213±88kg) but much higher values were found by Jahan et al. (1990) (1148.59±97.99 kg) and Ashraf (1998) (937.0±183.0 kg) in native cows. These variations may be due variation in lactation length, quality and quantity of feed supplied, management factors, rearing pattern etc.

**Conclusion**

It was concluded that the rice straw and the concentrate feed supplement have significant influences on lactation performances of native cows. So emphasis should be given on proper supplementation of rice straw and concentrate feeds in addition to grazing to obtain the maximum yield of milk from the native cows.

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