Influence of nitrogen supplementation on voluntary intake and live weight performance of whether sheep on wheat straw diets

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Abstract

The effect of the N supplementation at two levels on feed intake and performance of whether sheep (average age 6 months and 24.2 kg live weight) on both urea treated and untreated wheat straw was 'investigated in a feeding experiment which lasted 63 days. Thirty six whether sheep on a basal diet of either treated or untreated wheat straw were offered cottonseed cake supplement at 0, 100 or 200 g/animal per day. The daily straw intake at 518.6, 554.9 and 517:tg/day for sheep on 0, 100 and 200 9 CSC respectively, was not affected (P<0.05) by CSC supplementation, while respective total OMI at 518.6, 644.3 and 697.0 g/day were significantly higher (P>0.05) for supplemented animals than for those on basal diet. Live weight performance followed a similar trend at -28.9, -1.7 and 28.5 g/day respectively and the treatment means were significantly (P>0.05) different. Urea treatment of the wheat straw increased (P>0.05) daily straw OMI from 462.9 to 597.1 g/day and the total OMI from 553.3 to 683.4 g/day.· The live weight performance was similarly improved (P>0.05) from -15.2 to 13.7 g/day for sheep on control diet and treated straw respectively.