

ZOOMETRIC INDICES IN DORPER LAMBS OF DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS

ÍNDICES ZOOMÉTRICOS EM CORDEIROS DORPER COM DIFERENTES IDADES

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Abstract

The zoometric indices can provide information related to the productivity of a herd. With these indices it is possible to classify the capacity for meat production and select the best animals for sustainable animal production. Thus, the objective of this study was to evaluate zoometric indices in Dorper lambs confined in different age groups. The study was carried out at the Sheep Unit of the Instituto de Zootecnia, in Nova Odessa, SP, with 26 registered uncastrated male lambs, from nine farms in the states of São Paulo (7), Santa Catarina (1), and Paraná. (1), with mean age of 102.30 ± 16.30 days and mean weight of 26.10 ± 4.14 kg. The animals were separated into three age groups: group 1 (67 to 93 days, n=9), group 2 (99 to 105 days, n=8), group 3 (112 to 135 days of age, n=9). The animals were confined with access to a trough containing high concentration diet with 15% fiber. The averages of zoometric indices were obtained by morphometric measurements. The weight assessment was performed using a mechanical scale and morphometric measurements were performed with a tape measure and a hypometer. The following zoometric indices were calculated: body index (BI), relative body index (RBI), thoracic perimeter withers ratio (TPWR), and body capacity index (BCI). For normally distributed data, comparison of the means according to age groups was performed with the Tukey test at 5% probability (SAS). The zoometric indices showed no differences ($p>0.05$) between age groups, with averages of BI ($85.49\% \pm 4.12\%$), RBI ($113.81\% \pm 6.14\%$), LBI ($88.10\% \pm 4.70\%$), TPWR ($133.36\% \pm 8.90\%$), and BCI (46.35 ± 5.45 kg/cm). The results showed no differences between age groups for zoometric indices, but the values obtained from the indices showed that the group was composed of animals classified as midline, with little leg development and good development of the thoracic region, allowing good meat production by Dorper lambs, reinforcing that zoometric indices are important to classify the functionality of a herd and select the best animals for sustainable production.

Keywords

Zoometric indices, sheep, lambs, morphometric measurements, animal nutrition.

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