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**THE EFFECTS OF FEEDING FREQUENCY
ON THE INTAKE AND PERFORMANCE OF
COWS GRAZING MIXED PASTURE**

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ABSTRACT

A grazing trial was carried out to compare herbage intake and milk production by dairy cows and observe their grazing behaviour when given all pasture in one break or in four breaks per day.

The experiment was carried out in two periods using a total of 24 animals. Period I with a common herbage allowance of 30 kg DM/cow/day from week 7 to week 9 of lactation and Period II with a common herbage allowance of 40 kg DM/cow/day from week 10 to week 11 of lactation.

The 24 cows which were selected from the high and low breeding index herd were allocated at random to either one break (1B) or four breaks (4B) and used for period I. Sixteen cows were drawn from the 24 cows and used for period II; they were also randomly allocated to the treatments.

Grazing behaviour of cows was observed during Period II of the trial on two separate occasions.

Herbage allowance and herbage intake were estimated by the sward cutting technique. The control group consumed 12.3 and 15.6 kg DM/cow/day while the four breaks (the treatment group) consumed 11.8 and 15.3 kg DM/cow/day for Period I and Period II respectively. Treatment did not have a significant effect.

Milk production, liveweight and body condition score were measured. Treatment had no significant effect on any of these measurements (except for lactose % in Period II).

There was a slight increase in milk production for the treatment group in Period II but the difference was not statistically significant (23.4 versus 22.8 kg milk yield and 1.0 versus 0.9 kg milk fat yield per day).

Grazing time was similar for both groups and there were no significant changes in

liveweight and body condition score.

It was concluded that for the condition and herbage allowances used in this experiment, the frequency of herbage allocation had no significant effect on the performance of cows.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

TITLE PAGE	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
LIST OF PLATES	x
COMMON ABBREVIATIONS	xi

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION	1
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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1	The Responses of Dairy Cows to Levels of Feeding	3
2.1.1	The Effect of Feeding on Immediate Milk Production	3
2.1.2	The Effect of Feeding on Subsequent Milk Production	4
2.1.3	The Effect of Feeding on Efficiency of Milk Production	6
2.1.4	Diet Type	6
2.2	Feeding Value of Pasture and Alternative Methods of Estimating Herbage Yield and Intake for Ruminants	7
2.2.1	Measurement of Food Intake at Pasture	7
2.2.1.1	Sward Methods of Estimating Herbage Mass	8
2.2.1.2	Estimating Intake from Faeces Output and Digestibility	11
2.3	Nutrient Requirements of the Dairy Cow	13
2.3.1	Metabolisable Energy Requirements	13
2.3.2	Protein Requirements	15
2.3.3	Mineral Requirements	16
2.4	Management of Grazing and Livestock	17
2.4.1	Pasture Plants	17
2.4.2	Calving Date and Drying off	18
2.4.3	Stocking Rates (SR), Herbage Allowance and Rotation Time	19
2.4.3.1	Herbage Allowance and Intensity of Grazing	20
2.4.3.2	Rotation Time	20
2.4.4	Feed Conservation	21
2.5	Voluntary Food Intake by Grazing Cows	21
2.5.1	Regulation of Food Intake	23

2.5.2	Initiation and Termination of Meals and Long Term Control of Intake	23
2.5.3	Physical Factors Limiting Intake	24
2.5.3.1	Animal Factors	25
2.5.3.2	Food Characteristics	25
2.5.4	Energy Demands Controlling Intake	32
2.5.4.1	Physiological Factors	32
2.5.4.2	Genetic Potential of the Cow	35
2.6	Herbage Allowance and Sward Conditions Influencing Intake and Grazing Behaviour of Cattle	36
2.6.1	Herbage Allowance on Intake and Cow Performance	36
2.6.2	Sward Characteristics Influencing Herbage Intake	39
2.6.2.1	Herbage Mass	39
2.6.2.2	Herbage Height	40
2.6.2.3	Bulk Density and Leaf/Stem Ratio	41
2.6.3	Grazing Behaviour and Cow Performance	42
2.6.3.1	Ingestive Behaviour of Grazing Cattle	43
2.6.3.2	Bite Size (IB)	43
2.6.3.3	Rate of Biting (RB)	44
2.6.3.4	Grazing Time	44
2.6.3.5	Grazing Patterns	45
2.7	Effect of Frequency of Feeding Upon Food Utilisation	45
2.7.1	Concentrate Based Diets	
2.7.1.1	The Effects of Feeding on the Growth and Efficiency of Food Utilisation	47
2.7.1.2	Feeding Frequency for Lactating Cows	48
2.7.2	Grazed Pasture	52

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS AND MATERIALS

3.1	Aims of the Experiment	55
3.2	Experimental Environment	55
3.3	Weather	56
3.4	Outline of the Experiment	56
3.4.1	Statistical Design	56
3.4.2	Cow Selection and Quality	57
3.4.3	Feeding Level and Allocation of Feed	58
3.4.4	Experimental Period	60
3.5	Management of Paddocks and Experimental Animals	60
3.5.1	Management of Paddocks	60
3.5.2	Management of Experimental Animals	60
3.6	Estimation of Herbage Yield and Feeding Value of Feed	61
3.6.1	Herbage Mass Before and After Grazing (kg DM/ha)	61
3.6.2	Daily Herbage Allowance, Intake and Degree of Defoliation	62
3.6.3	Herbage Organic Matter Concentration, Organic Matter Digestibility, Nitrogen Concentration and Nitrogen Digestibility	63
3.7	Measurement of Animal Production Responses	63
3.7.1	Milk Yield and Milk Composition	63

3.7.2	Cow Liveweight and Body Condition Score	64
3.8	Grazing Behaviour Measurements in Period II	64
3.9	Statistical Analysis	65
3.9.1	Yields of Milk, Milkfat, Milk Protein, Lactose and Concentration of Milkfat, Milk Protein and Lactose	65
3.9.2	Liveweight and Body Condition Score Change	66
3.9.3	Final Liveweight and Body Condition Score	67
3.9.4	Herbage Measurements - HM, HA, RHM and DMI	67
3.9.5	Grazing Time	68

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

4.1	Animal Production Responses	69
4.1.1	Milk Production	69
4.1.1.1	Yields of Milk, Milkfat, Milk Protein and Lactose	69
4.1.1.2	Concentrations (%) of Milkfat, Milk Protein and Lactose	77
4.1.1.3	Yields of Milk, Milkfat, Milk Protein and Lactose for Evening (PM) and Morning (AM) Milkings	82
4.1.1.4	Concentrations of Milkfat, Milk Protein and Lactose for Evening (PM) and Morning (AM) Milkings	86
4.1.1.5	Interactions Between Time of Day Effect and Treatment Effect on Yield	89
4.1.1.6	Interactions Between Time of Day Effect and Treatment Effect on Concentration of Milk Components	92
4.1.2	Liveweight and Body Condition Score	93
4.1.3	Grazing Behaviour	96
4.1.3.1	Grazing Time	97
4.2	Herbage Measurement, Feed Intake and Chemical Analysis	99
4.2.1	Herbage Measurement and Feed Intake	99
4.2.2	Chemical Analysis and Gross Energy Determination of Herbage	100

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

5.1	The Effect of Feeding Frequency on Intake and Production	101
5.1.1	Herbage Allowance Determination	102
5.1.2	Herbage Intake in Relation to Herbage Allowance	102
5.1.3	Effects of Feeding Frequency on Milk Production	103
5.1.3.1	Yields of Milk, Milkfat, Milk Protein and Lactose	104
5.1.3.2	Concentrations of Milkfat, Milk Protein and Lactose	106
5.1.4	Change in Liveweight and Body Condition Score	106
5.2	The Effects of Feeding Frequency on Grazing Behaviour and on cow performance	107
5.3	Experimental Design and Reliability of Method for Determining Dry Matter Yield and Intake	108
5.3.1	Layout of Experimental Area	108
5.3.2	Reliability of Herbage Cutting Technique	108

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION	109
BIBLIOGRAPHY	110
APPENDIX 1	
3.1 A Daily Climatological Observations for the month of October, 1986	136
3.1 B Daily Climatological Observations for the month of November, 1986	137
APPENDIX 2	
4.2 Grazing Behaviour Measurements	139

LIST OF TABLES

2.1 Example of an Energy Balance	15
2.2 Mineral requirements of lactating cows (milk yield 20 kg/day)	16
2.3 Mean yields (kg/d) and composition (g/kg) of milk with the yield of milk constituents (kg/d) from 20 Friesian cows grazing either perennial ryegrass or white clover <i>ad lib</i> from week 4 to 18 of lactation	16
2.4 Values of Herbage Allowance, Intake and Residual Yields from Experiments with Dairy Cows	38
2.5 Effect of feeding frequency and diet composition on energy utilisation, rumen volatile fatty acids (VFA) and plasma insulin	51
3.1 Treatment combinations and time sequence of the feeding frequency trial	57
3.2 Age, Liveweight, Body Condition Score, Milk Fat Yield and Calving Dates of Dairy Cows Allocated to the Two Treatments at the start of Each Period	58
4.1 Yields of milk, milk fat, milk protein and lactose for the two treatments in both periods (kg/cow/day) together with results of analysis of covariance	70
4.2 Concentrations (%) of Milk Fat, Milk Protein and Lactose for the two treatments in both periods, together with results of analysis of covariance	71
4.3 PM and AM yields of milk for the two treatments in both periods (kg/cow/day) together with results of analysis of covariance	83
4.4 PM and AM yields of milk fat for the two treatments in both periods (kg/cow/day) together with results of analysis of covariance	84
4.5 PM and AM yields of milk protein for the two treatments in both periods (kg/cow/day) together with results of analysis of covariance	85
4.6 PM and AM yields of lactose for the two treatments in both	

	periods (kg/cow/day) together with results of analysis of covariance	86
4.7	PM and AM Concentrations (%) of Milk Fat, for the two treatments in both periods together with results of analysis of covariance	87
4.8	PM and AM concentrations (%) of milk protein for the two treatments in both periods together with results of analysis of covariance	88
4.9	PM and AM concentrations (%) of lactose for the two treatments in both periods with analysis of covariance	89
4.10	Differences in yields (kg/cow/day) of milk, milkfat, milk protein and lactose between morning (AM) and evening (PM) production in both periods together with results of analysis of covariance	90
4.11	Differences in concentrations (%) of milk fat, milk protein and lactose between morning (AM) and evening (PM) production in both periods together with results of analysis of covariance	93
4.12	Unfasted liveweight, liveweight change, body condition score and condition score change for the two treatments for both periods	95
4.13	Grazing time (minutes) for a 24 hour period on 30th - 31st October (Day 1) and 3rd - 4th November (Day 2) 1986 for the feeding frequency treatment	97
4.14	Mean herbage mass yields, herbage allowance and intakes for the treatment groups	99
5.1	Mean herbage allowance and intakes for the treatment groups	102
5.2	Comparison between PM and AM yielded increases of milk relative to lactose (%)	105

LIST OF FIGURES

2.1	Simplified models to describe the relationship of food to milk and liveweight in dairy cows according to responses to levels of intake	4
2.2	The Massey Grass Meter	11
2.3	Schematic representation of factors influencing dry matter intake in ruminants	22
2.4	The relationship between digestibility of the diet selected (OMD%) and the herbage intake (g OM/kg LW) of lactating cows and growing calves	26
2.5	Relationship between voluntary food intake and digestible energy yield of feeds for cows of various milk yields and physical characteristics	28
2.6	Changes in milk yield, body weight and appetite of dairy cows during lactation	34
2.7	The relationship of pasture intake to various pasture characteristics and methods of pasture allocation	37
2.8	Typical variation of pH value in the forestomachs regarding different feeding frequencies using concentrates	51
3.1	Layout of grazing area and allocation of feed for 72 hours	59
4.1	Yields of Milk for the Two Treatments in both Periods	71
4.2	Yields of Milk Fat for the Two Treatments in both Periods	73

4.3	Yields of Milk Protein for the Two Treatments in both Periods	74
4.4	Yield of Lactose for the Two Treatments in both Periods	76
4.5	Concentrations of Milk Fat for the Two Treatments in both Periods	78
4.6	Concentrations of Milk Protein for the Two Treatments in both Periods	80
4.7	Concentrations of Lactose for the Two Treatments in both Periods	81
4.8	Proportion of each hour of the day spent grazing on 30th - 31st October 1986	98
4.9	Proportion of each hour of the day spent grazing on 3rd - 4th November 1986	98
5.1	Dry matter intake of lactating cows over a range of pasture allowances	103

LIST OF PLATES

Plate		At end of chapter
A	HERBAGE MASS AFTER 22 HOURS OF GRAZING FOR I BREAK GROUP (CONTROL) IN PERIOD II	2
B	HERBAGE MASS AFTER 22 HOURS OF GRAZING FOR 4 BREAK GROUP (EXPERIMENTAL) IN PERIOD II	2

Common Abbreviations used in this thesis

MY	Milk yield
MF	Milk fat
MP	Milk protein yield
ML	Lactose yield
PF	Milk fat concentration (%)
PP	Milk protein concentration (%)
PL	Lactose concentration (%)
LW	Liveweight
CS	Body condition score
HBI	High breeding index
LBI	Low breeding index
1B	One break (B stands for break as a treatment)
4B	Four breaks
HM	Pregrazed herbage mass
RHM	Residual herbage mass
HA	Herbage allowance
DM	Dry matter
DMI	Dry matter intake
DMD	Dry matter digestibility
DOMD	Digestible organic matter in the dry matter
GE	Gross energy
DE	Digestible energy
ME	Metabolisable energy
MEI	Metabolisable energy intake
SEM	Standard error of means
GB	Grazing behaviour
GT	Grazing time
RT	Ruminating time