

OFFTAKE AND FOETAL WASTAGE OF CATTLE AT AKURE MAIN ABATTOIR

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ABSTRACT

From July to December 2008, early morning visit was made daily to the Akure main abattoir to determine the offtake as well as the foetal wastage of cattle slaughtered. In each day of visit, the number of bulls and cows slaughtered were recorded and added together at the end of each month. A total of 6,848 cattle was slaughtered. Mean monthly values for bulls and cows for the six months were $1,046.50 \pm 36.88$ and 94.83 ± 4.16 respectively. The least (990) and highest number (1,260) of cattle were slaughtered at the beginning and end of the investigation respectively. At the end of the trial, results showed that 6,279 or (91.69%) bulls were slaughtered as against 569 (8.31%) cows. The ovaries of the cows slaughtered were carefully examined to ascertain whether they were still active or otherwise. A total of 548 ovaries (excluding that of pregnant cows), with 26.10% of the examined ones were classified active and 73.91% were inactive. Dissections of the uteri of the cows slaughtered were carried out to observe their contents. Twenty-one or (3.69%) of the total cows slaughtered have developing fetuses that were still in their first and second trimesters of pregnancies with none in the third trimester. This figure indicates that Akure loses 3.69% of its future reproductive herd as a result, of lack of cattle control posts and indiscriminate slaughtering of cows. Results also revealed that 26.10% of the ovaries were still active meaning that cows with such ovaries have not outlived their reproductive lifespan. This study was, therefore, concluded with the recommendations that Government should upgrade the Akure abattoir to a standard one and set up cattle control posts. Livestock legislations and regulations must also be strictly adhered to so as to discourage people from slaughtering pregnant animals.

Keywords: cattle, offtake, foetal wastage, Akure abattoir
