

YANKASSA SHEEP AND WEST AFRICAN DWARF GOAT PRODUCTION IN THE KAINJI LAKE BASIN OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

Significant linear correlations ($P < 0.05$) were observed between liveweight, heart girth, body length, rump length, height at withers, and hip height in randomly selected Yankassa sheep and West African dwarf (WAD) goats aged 0.5-3.5 years and marketed in the Kainji Lake Basin region. Heart girth was superior to the other measurements in estimating Liveweight. The relationship of heart girth to liveweight in Yankassa sheep is 1 cm increase for each 1 kg increase, with 46 cm representing the 0-1 kg weight, whereas for WAD goats, 30 cm is the 0-kg weight and 1 cm increase is equivalent to 0.7 kg. The effects of three deprivation periods of feed intake were monitored in three groups ($n = 6$) of weaned Yankassa lambs, 4-6 months old, fed ad libitum a ration based on brewers' dried grain (BOG). The rates of daily weight gain were 617.1, 582.9, and 522.9 g for lambs with no initial, 24-h, and 48-h deprivations, respectively. There were no significant differences in total weight gain between the lambs with no initial and 24-h deprivation; ad libitum feeding of weaned Yankassa lambs on alternate days, i.e. 24-h deprivation improved feed conversion efficiency. This regime would be practicable in household lamb-rearing ventures. However, the 48-h deprivation resulted in 'deferred' liveweight changes.

Keywords: Liveweight estimation; Yankassa sheep; West African dwarf goats; Heart girth; Body length; Rump length; Height at withers; Hip height; Deprivation-feeding period