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Age effect on feeding and idling behavior of weanling goat reared under stall-fed conditions

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Weanling goats are slaughtered in developing countries mostly between the ages 9 to 12 months. Times spent feeding determines the nutrient uptake by goat, which in turn plays a large role in determining both quality and quantity of goat meat. But information on the feeding behavior of goat under stall-fed conditions is very limited. The aim of this study was to observe the feeding behavior of 18 stall housed weanling goats (9 males and 9 females) during each of three periods of their body growth viz. between 3 to 4 (G1), 5 to 6 (G2) and 8 to 9 months of age (G3). The experimental animals had free access to feed and fodder only during the daytime. The time spent eating forage increased significantly ($H_2 = 32.32$, $P < 0.001$) with the increase age of animals; the G3 age group spent about 7.45 h day⁻¹ in eating forage whereas the animals in the G2 and G3 age groups spent about 5.65 h day⁻¹. However the total time spent eating (both forage and concentrate) was more or less same (about 9 h day⁻¹) in all the three age groups. The total time spent on different idling activities (viz. loafing, resting and sleeping) during daytime was more or less same (about 1.8 h) in both the G1 and G3 goats; whereas it was higher (2.3 h) in the G2 goats.

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