

Growth, production and reproduction characteristics of beef heifers primiparous at two years old¹

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ABSTRACT

The work evaluated the productivity of beef heifers primiparous at two years old ("one year system"), from birth to weaning of their calves. The heifers were submitted to three alternatives autumn-winter feeding during 88 days: a) continuous grazing on annual ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum* Lam) (PAST); b) continuous grazing on natural pasture plus ration (CNR); c) feedlot, with sorghum silage + urea (SIL). The data of "one year" system were collected at Agropecuária Guatambu, Dom Pedrito, RS, of 395 beef calves of three genetic groups, Hereford (H); 1/4 Nellore - 3/4 Hereford (1/4 NH); 3/8 Nellore - 5/8 Hereford (3/8 NH). Liveweight (LW), condition score (CS), pelvic area (PA), age at first heat (AH), rates of pregnancy (Pr), calving (C), dystocia (D), weaning (W), pregnancy at second breeding (PS), calves weight at birth (BW) and at weaning (CW) were recorded. At the end of treatments LW was not affected ($P > 0,05$) and CS were greater in SIL ($P < 0,01$). At the end of treatments PAST heifers did compensatory gain and their LW were statistically different ($P < 0,05$) until their second breeding season. At breeding season AH was not statistically different ($P > 0,05$). The use of different feeding systems did not show significant differences ($P > 0,05$) in Pr, C, W, PS. H and 1/4 NH cows were more productive at "one year" system with greater weaning rates (51,8 vs 48,36%; $P > 0,05$) than 3/8 NH (27,7%; $P < 0,01$). The treatments and genetic groups did not affect PS (67,84; $P > 0,05$). D was smaller at CNR ($P < 0,01$). Genetic group and treatments were not statistically different to Bw and Cw.

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