

Effect of bovine appeasing pheromone on young bovine performance

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The trial objective was to assess the effect of Bovine Appeasing Pheromone (BAP: a synthetic pheromonal complex) on 'broutards' from weaning until their departure to final fattening. French 'Broutards' are young cattle that are first raised in France, and then are exported. The study was performed on 2 groups of young cattle (N=32) weighing from 250 to 500 kg. Group A was treated with BAP whereas group B was given a placebo. The treatment is similar to the type of solid block generally used as a 'salted block'.

There was no statistical difference between the groups in weight on arrival (Mann-Whitney: $U=115.5$; $N1=N2=16$; $p=0.86$). The breeders were impressed by the ease of handling of A group animals, for example when they were weighed. Indeed, the principle of the appeasing pheromones is to aid in preventing stress. The treated group grew faster, allowing them to be sent to fattening after 196 days (D196), as opposed to 217 days (D217) for group B. Groups A and B differed in weight at D196 (Mann-Whitney: $U=70.5$; $N1=N2=16$; $p=0.03$). Daily weight gain from D0 to D196 differed significantly between A and B (Mann-Whitney: $U=41.0$; $N1=N2=16$; $p=0.001$). Over the whole period (D0 to D196), there was a transposition of the weight/age ratio between the beginning and the end of the protocol, which also demonstrates that BAP treated animals had a better weight gain over the period. In conclusion, there could be several possible effects of BAP on feedlot performance: improved behaviour, economic gain and faster growth. Results on a larger scale are needed to confirm this efficiency; these are underway.