

Beef Production



Individual measurements of the intake of two rations using electronically controlled mangers.

Estimate of the feed intake of suckler cows

During the winter 2009/10, the individual feed intake of three different breeds of suckler cows (Angus, Limousine and F1 [Limousine - Red Holstein cross]) was recorded. The majority of data on feed intake available up to now, was obtained using a wet feed ration, consisting of a mixture of hay and grass silage. The same feed was distributed to a herd of 18 cows. At the same time, for comparison purposes, another herd

of 18 cows were fed hay only. Both diets consisted of iso-energy feedstuffs. The aim was to study the effect of the type of ration, dry matter or wet feed, on the level of intake, and also to evaluate whether there is any correlation between the breed of cow and the type of ration. The results will be used to more accurately estimate the intake of suckler cows in the next update of the Green Book.

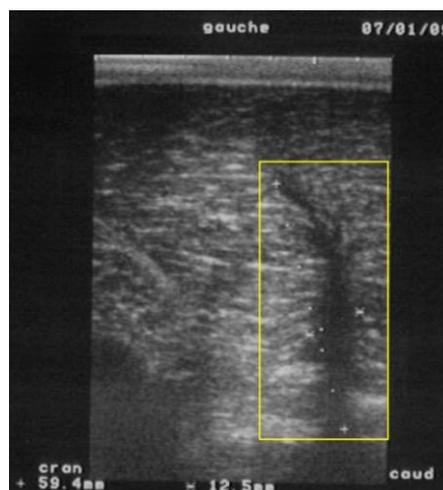


Scarring of the outside flat: Reason highlighted

Scarring of the outside flat is the expression used in Switzerland to describe a quality defect appearing on the main muscle used to produce dried meat. This problem, already known for decades and now clearly increasing, was still yet not explained. For this reason, Proviande, the trade association of the Swiss meat industry, has requested ALP to research the matter. Ultrasound was used as the investigation method to allow diagnosis and follow-up of the live animal, in particular during the rearing phase. This turned out to be a sensible approach.

It has been possible to identify precisely the area concerned on the live animal. It was possible to observe lesions and

monitor them over time. It was not possible to prove the hypotheses which had been in existence up to now. A new hypothesis was therefore formulated, one which attributes the cause to a single trauma caused by a fall, when the animal slipped and twisted the hindquarters on a hard surface. This has been confirmed. ALP has therefore been able to highlight a cause, if not the only cause, of these lesions resulting in a significant decrease in this muscle. The increase in the phenomenon could therefore correspond with the increasing freestall housing with hard surface areas which are associated with an increased risk of falling.



Effect of different types of supplementary fodder on the health and zootechnical performance of veal calves

The practical phase of the research project on the different types of supplementary fodder was completed during the summer of 2010. Since then, the Clinic for Ruminants at the Vetsuisse Faculty at the University of Bern, Switzerland, has concentrated on the task of evaluating and interpreting the results of the three trial periods, carried out at the Agroscope Liebefeld-Posieux ALP research station between 2009 and 2010. The results of the project will be published at the end of 2011.

The ALP management committee has decided to cut back on the level of research into animal health, as part of a reorganization plan commencing in Autumn which is in line with budgetary constraints. The research project into the production of veal will therefore be removed from the ALP Haras catalogue from 2012 on and no further trial will be carried out in this area.

