The Effect of Weaning Age on Feed Consumption and Rate of Gain in Goat Kids

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This experiment’s purpose was to study the effect of weaning age on feed consumption and rate of gain in goat kids. Weaning can be a management practice that will affect the profit of the producer, provide more meat for the consumer, and benefit the economy. Weaning allows the producer to control the feed intake and evaluate the growth of the goats. The control in this experiment was 90 day weaning, traditionally the time when kids are weaned. Thirty nine goat kids with the same environmental, vaccination, and feeding history were separated into three different weaning age groups: 60 day, 75 day, and 90 day weaning. The amount of feed consumed was measured daily and added together to determine the total feed consumption over a five week period. Kids were weighed at 60 and 90 days to determine rate of gain. The 60 day group had the highest feed consumption while the control group had the lowest. The control group had the highest average rate of gain while the 75 day group had the lowest. A student t-test was conducted to analyze the data. The results show statistical significance comparing the 60 day and control groups for feed consumption and for rate of gain. Comparing the 75 day and control groups there was statistical significance for feed consumption and rate of gain. There was no significance comparing the 60 and 75 day groups in both feed consumption and rate of gain. Evaluating these results from an economic perspective indicates 60 day weaning is most cost efficient. Results show weaning age does have an impact on feed consumption and rate of gain in goat kids.

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