

CARCASS IMPROVEMENT BY FEEDING

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SUMMARY

In 1971, 40 p. 100 of the intake cattle to the Kenya meat commission have a live weight of 285 kg yielding carcasses of 128 kg with 99 kg of edible meat.

After feeding for 75 days the carcasses weights 185 kg with 155 kg of edible meat.

The carcass fat content is 24 p. 100. The pistola cuts are exported with a high export value.

The remainder of the carcass left is still available for local consumption at reasonable cost.

RESUME

Amélioration des carcasses par l'embouche

En 1971, 40 p. 100 du bétail entrant au « Kenya Meat Commission » pesait vif 285 kg, donnant des carcasses de 128 kg dont 99 kg de viande consommable.

Après une embouche de 75 jours, les carcasses pèsent 185 kg dont 155 kg de viande consommable.

La viande est grasse ; les morceaux nobles sont exportés à prix élevé, le reste de la carcasse peut être vendu sur place à bas prix.

In 1971 40 percent of the intake of cattle to the Kenya Meat Commission were immatures, with a live weight of approximately 285 kg yielding a carcass of 128 kg. These animals were similar to cattle from the same areas used for feeding at the Beef Research Station, and in a normal feeding period of 75 day we would expect a live weight gain of 1 000 g per day.

In terms of carcass analysis the immature carcass of 128 kg would be composed of :

29 kg bone
14 kg fat
85 kg lean

Total - 99 kg edible meat.

After feeding for 75 days we would expect a carcass of 185 kg composed of :

30 kg bone
44 kg fat
111 kg lean

Total - 155 kg edible meat.

The latter carcass with a 24 percent fat content would have a relatively small amount of excess fat and most of it would be sold with the lean as a higher quality meat. Thus the net improvement in edible meat from 99 kg to 155 kg represents an increase of 56 percent from the 75 days feeding period.

An interesting way of looking at this enhanced production is that the increase in edible tissue of

56 kg is almost identical to the weight of edible tissue contained in the two pistola cuts on the carcass. The pistola cuts are the most attractive export cuts and their export value alone exceeds the value of the whole original immature carcass. Thus if the pistola cuts only are exported the remainder of the carcass left is still available for local consumption and would contain as much edible meat as was in the carcass of the original unfed animal. This concept throws some light on the problem which must be faced by most African countries if the local demand for beef is to be met at reasonable cost. A possible answer is that carcasses must be broken down with portions of high quality being exported and the remainder of lower quality utilised in the domestic market. In turn, this implies a considerable change in domestic retail methods. While tradition in the beef markets is difficult to overcome, such a carcass breaking technique could effectively keep beef prices down, while increasing the total quantity of beef available.

OBSERVATION

From the example quoted above, Kenya could have produced an additional 4,800 tons of high quality edible tissue in 1971, if all the immature cattle actually slaughtered at the Kenya Meat Commission could have been fed before slaughter. This would have been worth about US \$ 8,000,000 on the current export markets.