



PÔSTER – ETOLOGIA APLICADA

Correlation between methods of temperament evaluation on confined Angus x Nellore crossbreed steers

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The aim of this study was to understand the correlations between the three methods of temperament evaluation on confined beef cattle. The experiment was conducted at the Laboratory of Biometeorology and Ethology of the Faculty of Animal Science and Food Engineering of the University of São Paulo, FZEA/USP, in Pirassununga Campus, State of São Paulo (21°57'12" South, 47°27'06" West, 606 meters). One hundred and twenty Angus and Nellore crossbreed male steers with an average of 17 (± 2) months of age and 365.4 (± 29.97) kg of initial body weight, were finished in a feedlot during 130 days, housed in four pens, with 20 m² of free area, 6 m² of artificial shade, and 70 cm of linear feeder per animal. Every 28 days the animals were weighed, and at the same time the temperament was assessment by the Crush Score Tests in squeeze chute (CS) assigning a 1-4 score (ranging from non-reactive to very reactive). After, the exit velocity of the animal from the chute was measured, named Flight Speed (FS). The Qualitative Behavior Assessment (QBA) was recorded by the individual observation of the animal in a corral, after exit from the chute, and then describe its body language using a list of six adjectives/indicator categories (motor activity, relaxed, agitated, fearful, attentive and calm), quantified along a 125 mm visual analog scale, which indicates the intensity of each behavioral expression. Specific and trained person made these entire tests. Spearman's correlations were used to examine the relationship between CS, FS and QBA. The means observed for FS and for CS were 3.28 ± 0.083 m.s⁻¹ and 1.96 ± 0.058 , respectively. There was a negative correlation ($p < 0.05$) between FS and CS (-0.37) and between FS and the QBA categories of motor activity, agitated and fearful with values of -0.48, -0.41 and -0.39, respectively. The correlation results allow us to conclude that animals, which were more reactive to containment during weighing, showed lower flight speed afterwards, but were then more active, agitated and fearful in a corral as evaluated by the QBA.

Key words. Beef cattle, management, reactivity