Effect of AM and PM Cut Grass/Alfalfa Hay on Stocker Steers. (C06-mayland130408-Poster)

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Abstract:

To investigate effects of time of cutting hay on cattle performance, alfalfa-timothy hay was cut in Brandon, Canada in 1999. On 10 Sept (1900-2000 h) and 11 Sept (0700-0800h), 1-m2 quadrats were clipped and separated. On 15 Sept, half of the hay was cut at 1730h (PM), and on 16 Sept, the rest was cut at 0900h (AM) (baled 21 Sept). Bales were core-sampled prior to and during the feeding trial in which half of 48 steer calves (BW = 292 kg) were fed PM hay and half the AM hay. Clippings, core samples and orts were analyzed for DM, CP, CF, NDF, ADF, ADL, ash, and GE. Nonstructural carbohydrates (NSC) were calculated as 100-(CP+CF+NDF+Ash). For fresh clippings, there was no effect of time of cutting on alfalfa composition. For the timothy, PM samples had more NSC than those cut in the AM ($P<0.05$). However, alfalfa accounted for 93% of the sample, so its composition prevailed. Time of cutting did not affect DM or NSC intake of steers, although intakes of NDF, ADF, ADL, and ash were higher in the PM-fed group ($P<0.05$). These differences did not affect ADG or feed conversion. There did not appear to be an effect on steer performance of cutting predominantly alfalfa hay in the PM vs. AM.

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