Ingestive behaviour of Holstein cows grazing fescue managed at differents defoliation intensities

Gabriel MENEGAZZI*[1], Pamela GILES[2], Matías OBORSKY[1], Cristina GENRO[3], Diego MATTIAUDA[1], Pablo CHILIBROSTE[1]

*corresponding author: menegazzi95@gmail.com
[1]Facultad de Agronomía. Universidad de la República Uruguay, Paysandú, Uruguay
[2] Facultad de Agronomía de Azul. Universidad Nacional del Centro de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, Azul, Argentina
[3] Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária, Bagé, Brasil

Introduction

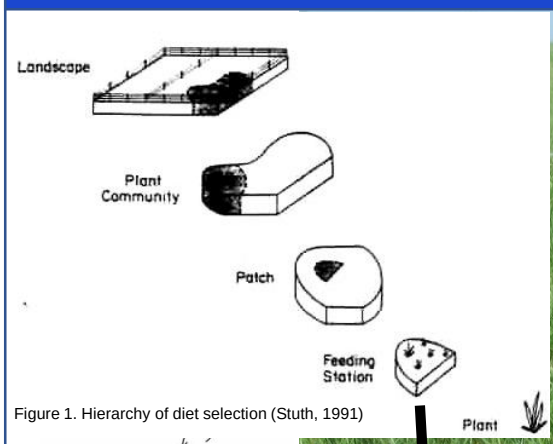
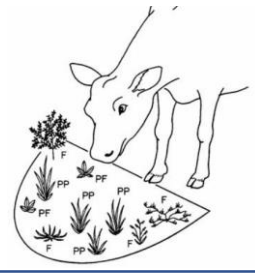
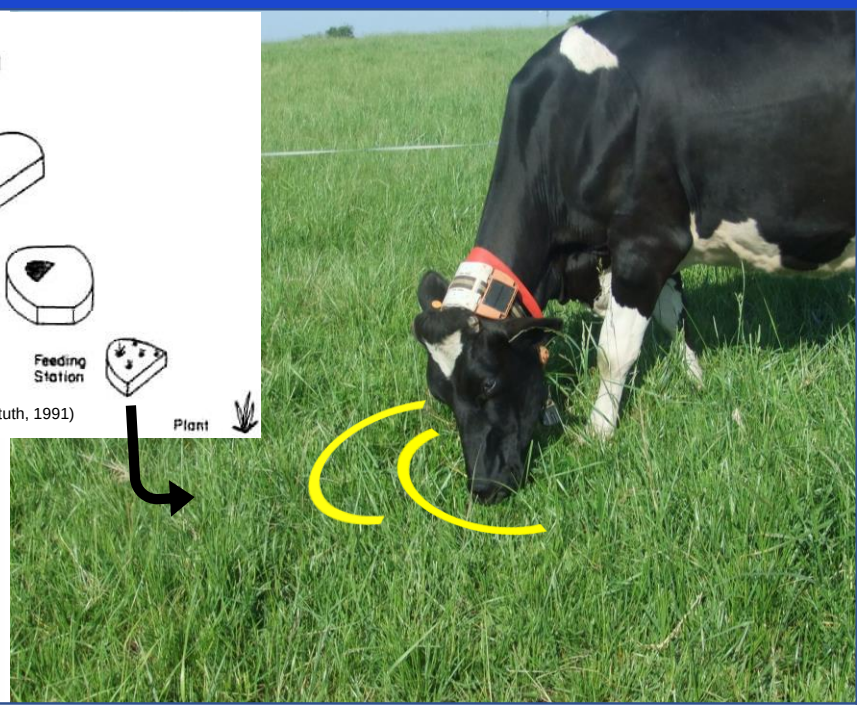


Figure 1. Hierarchy of diet selection (Stuth, 1991)





✓Considering the feeding station (FS) as a reference of the study, the behavior of the animals in the pasture can be summarized to the **time of search and fall between FS**, bite size of each FS (Griffiths et al., 2003) and **time of permanence in the FS** (Gonçalves et al., 2009).

The objective was to evaluate the effect of three defoliation intensities on a Fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*) based pasture on the animal's displacement at FS scale.

Material & Methods

- ✓ Thirty six Holstein mid lactation dairy cows;
- ✓ Parity 2.6 ± 0.8; Body weight 618 ± 48 kg; Body condition score 2.8 ± 0.2;
- ✓ Grazing access: 8am to 2pm and 5pm to 3am;
- ✓Paddock of 0.2ha – 3 cows each one;
- ✓ No supplementation;
- ✓ Number of FS visited and the number of steps between FS were recorded;

Results & Conclusions

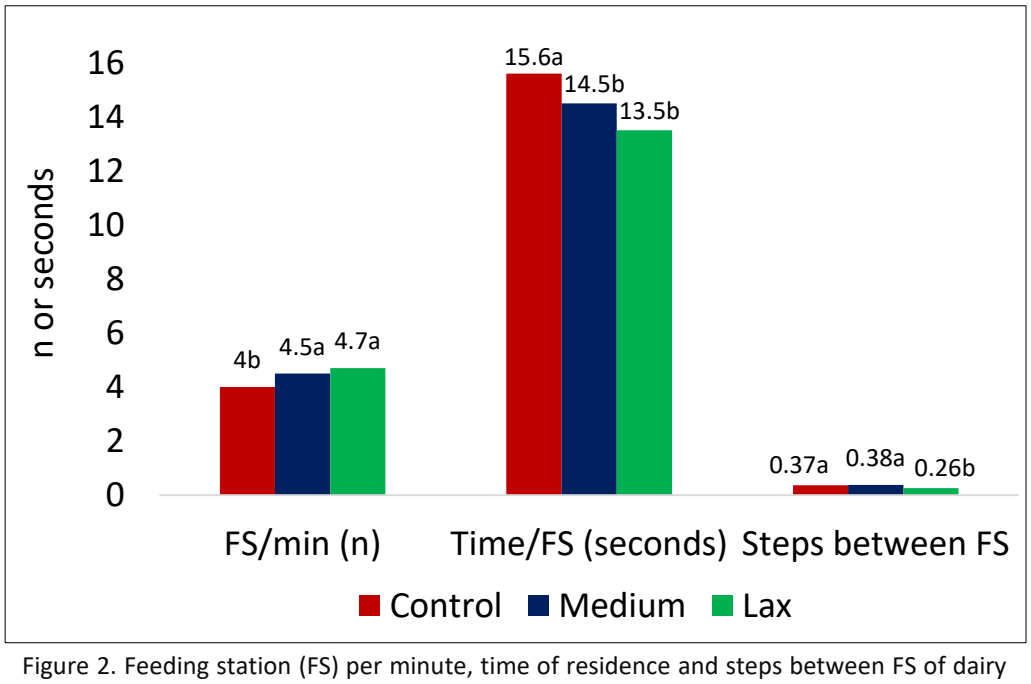


Figure 2. Feeding station (FS) per minute, time of residence and steps between FS of dairy cows grazing fescue.

- ✓ Feeding station per minute
  - ❖ Beggining 4.6 vs Finish 4.3 (p=0.0006);
  - ❖ AM 4.2 vs PM 4.7 (p=<.0001);
- ✓ Time (seconds) per feeding station
  - ❖ Beggining 13.9 vs Finish 15.2 (p=0.0015);
  - ❖ AM 14.7 vs PM 13.4 (p=<.0001).

The number of FS visited, the time at each FS and the steps between FS changed according to residual sward height, parcel occupation period (initial *vs.* final) and grazing session (am *vs.* pm).