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31.08.2010 10:11

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to study the possibility of reducing weaning age in dairy calves, Brown Swiss calves were weaned at 30, 45 and 60 d of age. In the milk feeding period, the amount of daily milk given to calves in the groups was kept constant at 7 % of their birth weight. The body weight of 4-month calves fed milk for 30, 45 and 60 d were 82.6 +/- 2.0, 85.2 +/- 2.0 and 79.1 +/- 2.0 kg, respectively. The body weight of 6-month calves weaned at 30, 45 and 60 d of age were 127.8 +/- 2.9, 133.2 +/- 2.9 and 127.2 +/- 2.7 kg, respectively. The average weight gains determined between birth and six months of age for the calves weaned at 30, 45 and 60 d of age were 0.51 +/- 0.01, 0.55 +/- 0.01 and 0.52 +/- 0.01 kg, respectively. The differences among the groups were found to be non-significant. The effect of weaning age was non-significant for the total dry matter of feed consumed per kilogram of weight gain. The results of this study suggested that Brown Swiss calves could be weaned at 30 d of age without having any adverse effect oil their growth and feed conversion efficiency.