

Ruminant energy expenditure in harsh environments estimated by heart rate measurements

Dr. AHMED R. ASKAR

Animal and Poultry Production Division.
Desert Research Center (DRC). Cairo. Egipto.

Facultad de Veterinaria. Aula de Grados
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Brief outline: It is speculated that ruminants maintained in free range condition will experience a considerable increase in energy expenditure due to grazing activity and the influence of climate on thermoregulation. However the extent of this cost is largely ignored due to lack of appropriate methods to quantify heat losses in outdoor conditions. Recent facilities on heart rate measurement offer a chance to develop a new method of energy expenditure estimation of easy implementation in free range conditions. Constraints and usefulness of this methodology will be discussed with examples of application to several species of ruminants and harsh environmental conditions.

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