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Using RAMP® for Receiving Cattle Compared to Traditional Receiving Diets

Cody J. Schneider  
*University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

Brandon L. Nuttelman  
*University of Nebraska-Lincoln, bnuttelman2@unl.edu*

William A. Griffin Griffin  
*University of Nebraska-Lincoln, wgriffin2@unl.edu*

Dirk Burken  
*University of Nebraska–Lincoln, dirk_burken@hotmail.com*

David R. Smith  
*University of Nebraska-Lincoln, dsmith8@unl.edu*

*See next page for additional authors*

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Authors
Cody J. Schneider, Brandon L. Nuttelman, William A. Griffin, Dirk Burken, David R. Smith, Terry Klopfenstein, and Galen E. Erickson

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Using RAMP® for Receiving Cattle Compared to Traditional Receiving Diets

Cody J. Schneider  
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Galen E. Erickson

Introduction

RAMP is a complete starter ration developed by Cargill, which contains a high level of Sweet Bran and a minimal amount of forage. RAMP is intended to serve as an alternative to a mixture of grain and forage for receiving cattle or adapting cattle to a feeding program. Feeding RAMP to newly arrived calves improved feed efficiency and the first three weeks cattle were in the feedlot.

Procedure

Two receiving trials were conducted in October of 2010 and 2011 at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Agricultural Research and Development Center (ARDC) near Mead, Neb., to evaluate effects of feeding RAMP on cattle performance during the receiving period. Crossbred steers (year 1: n=642; BW= 582±27.1 lb, year 2: n=758; BW= 567±33.7 lb) were received over two consecutive days in 2010 and 2 days, one week apart in 2011. Steers were blocked by arrival date and location within the feedlot yielding 2 blocks in year 1 and 3 blocks in year 2. Cattle were allocated randomly based on processing order to 34 pens in year 1 and 44 pens in year 2. DMI in year 1 was 15 to 20 steers per pen balanced within replications. During processing in year 1, steers were identified with an individual ear tag, individually weighed, vaccinated with Bovishield™ Gold 5, Somubac®, and Dectomax® Injectable, and orally drenched with Safe-Guard. Thirteen days after initial processing, cattle were revaccinated with Bovishiel Gold 5, Ultrabac® 7/Somubac, injected with Micotil and weighed. Processing in year 2 was the same as year 1 with the following exceptions: Safe-Guard was not administered and cattle were not revaccinated until the end of the trial and were not given Micotil. Treatments included a control receiving diet (CON;35% alfalfa hay, 30% Sweet Bran, 30% dry rolled corn, and 5% supplement; DM basis) and RAMP, a complete starter ration (formulated and provided by Cargill Inc, Blair, Neb.) that contained a high level of Sweet Bran with a minimal amount of forage. All diets contained 25 g/ton Rumensin and 12 mg lb thiamine. Steers were offered ad libitum access to treatment diets for 30 or 31 days in year 1 and 21, 24, or 28 days in year 2 (by block). Following the feeding period, cattle were limit-fed a common diet (47.5% Sweet Bran, 23.75% grass hay, 23.75 alfalfa hay, and 5% supplement; DM basis) at 2% of BW for five days before collecting ending BW to minimize variation in gut fill. Ending BW were averages of two-day weights. Initial BW was not shrunk because steers were weighed within 12 hours of arrival and had no access to feed before weighing.

Performance data for both years were analyzed using the MIXED procedure of SAS (Sas Inst. Inc., Cary, N.C.) with pen as the experimental unit. Treatment, year, and treatment × year were treated as fixed effects and block as a random effect. Incidence of Bovine Respiratory Disease (BRD) was calculated as the rate of respiratory illness or the number of steers treated for BRD in a pen divided by the number of steers in that pen. Incidence of BRD was then analyzed using the GENMOD procedure of SAS. Incidence of BRD was affected by year and DMI, consequently the final model contained DMI, treatment, and year. No significant effect of block or treatment × year existed so they were removed from the model. Treatment means for BRD incidence were calculated using the PROC MEANS function of SAS.

Results

There was a year × treatment interaction for ADG (P = 0.05) and DMI (P < 0.01), therefore performance data are presented by year in Table 1. Feeding RAMP increased ADG (P < 0.01) compared to CON in year 1, but in year 2 ADG was not different (P = 0.93). In year 1, DMI was not different (P = 0.11). However in year 2, CON cattle had greater DMI...
Starting cattle on RAMP® improves F:G early in the feeding period when compared to a traditional receiving diet. (P < 0.01) compared to cattle fed RAMP®. No year × treatment interaction was observed for F:G or incidence of BRD. Across both years, RAMP improved (P < 0.01) F:G compared to CON (4.39 and 4.05, respectively). Incidence of BRD was not different (P = 0.27) due to treatment across years (9.6 and 12.4% for CON and RAMP, respectively). Starting cattle on RAMP improves F:G early in the feeding period when compared to a traditional receiving diet.

Table 1. Performance of cattle fed RAMP® or a control receiving diet in 2010 or 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>P-values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>RAMP</td>
<td>Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial BW, lb</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ending BW, lb</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>686</td>
<td>658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMI, lb/day</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADG, lb</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>3.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed:Gain²</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>3.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incidence of BRD, %</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Main effect of treatment across years.
2Data analyzed as G:F with the inverse presented as F:G.
abMeans within a row without a common superscript are different (P < 0.10).

1Cody J. Schneider, research technician; Brandon L. Nuttelman, research technician; Will A. Griffin, research technician; Dirk B. Burken, research manager; David R. Smith, professor, University of Nebraska– Lincoln (UNL) Department of Veterinary and Biological Sciences, Lincoln, Neb.; Galen E. Erickson, professor; Terry J. Klopfenstein, professor; UNL Department of Animal Science.