

I2. Effects of supplementation with climate-smart feeds on camel weight gain during drought

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Abstract

Camels are very resilient and can survive up to 14 days without water. They can also keep producing milk when other livestock succumb during drought. This makes camel the suitable animal to harness for climate change. Currently, there are no formulated camel feeds for feeding camels during the drought when the shrubs and vegetation dries up. This has led to conflicts between camel herders and crop farmers. In the recent past as recent as this year, 2022, it has resulted to loss of human lives and camels in an alarming rate. It is estimated that during drought there is loss of at least 100 lives per annum as a result of this conflict. The loss of camels due to drought is hundreds of thousands. This study aimed at formulating and processing camel feeds with locally available ingredients which can be stored to be used during drought. The study was carried out at Garemara, Isiolo. The feeds were formulated with locally available materials including acacia pods and local grass. The feeds were analysed for the crude protein content and nutrient content. The camels were supplemented at a rate of 1.5 % of the body weight. Ten camels were purchased for the study. Five camels were supplemented while the other five camels were un-supplemented. The camels were weighed fortnightly to monitor weight changes. The formulated camel feed has a crude protein of 17%. The camels supplemented with climate-smart feed increased the weight at a rate of 15% while those un-supplemented increased the weight at 10%. Climate smart feeds can be formulated and used to supplement camel feeds during drought and avert loss of camels and human conflicts.

Keywords: *Camels, Camel feeds, climate smart camel feeds, Acacia pods*