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Effects of PGF2α Administration at the Onset or the End of a Short-Term Progestagen Treatment in Serrana Goats
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INTRODUCTION

The control of the reproduction activity plays an essential role in modern animal production systems allowing higher management flexibility and profitability. Short-term progestagens treatments are becoming increasingly popular. Nevertheless the best moment to administrate Prostaglandin F$_{2\alpha}$ (PGF$_{2\alpha}$) is still in debate. The current study aims to assess the reproductive effects of PGF$_{2\alpha}$ injected at the onset or the end of a short-term progestagen treatment in Portuguese Serrana goats.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Date: May (beginning of the breeding season).

Location: Bragança – Portugal (latitude 41° 19' N, longitude 6° 40' W, altitude 720 meters).

Animals: 44 Serrana goats (5 were later rejected) – 3 to 7 years old.

Treatment:
- 20 mg of Fluorogestone Acetate (FGA) for 5 days (intravaginal sponge);
- 300 IU of equine Chorionic Gonadotrophin (eCG) at sponge withdraw;
- 100 ug of cloprostenol (PGF$_{2\alpha}$) at sponge insertion time (n = 17);
- 100 ug of cloprostenol (PGF$_{2\alpha}$) at sponge removal time (n = 22).

Oestrus detection: 4 intact bucks with harness marker.

Ovarian activity assessment:
- Blood samples for progesterone (P$_4$) determinations:
  • twice a week for two weeks before sponge insertion;
  • daily for 5 days after eCG injection.
- Transrectal ultrasound scanning for pregnancy diagnosis (41 days after eCG administration).

RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Sponge Insertion Time</th>
<th>Sponge Removal Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goats in estrus (%)</td>
<td>100.0%*</td>
<td>90.9%a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Ovulated” goats (%)</td>
<td>100.0%*</td>
<td>95.5%b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(P$_4$$&gt;$0.5 ng/ml)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy rate</td>
<td>100.0%*</td>
<td>90.9%b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fertility rate</td>
<td>100.0%*</td>
<td>72.7%c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prolificacy rate</td>
<td>2.1±0.8</td>
<td>2.2±0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a = a, for P$>0.05$; a $\neq$ b, for P$<0.01$; a $\neq$ c, for P$<0.001$.

CONCLUSION

Short-term FGA treatments may be used to synchronise the reproductive activity in Serrana goats and PGF$_{2\alpha}$ should be preferentially administrated at sponge insertion time.