

Effect of castration on the performance of Italian Brown steers

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In Southern Italy, particularly in Apulia region, cattle breeding is mainly directed towards dairy performance utilizing chiefly Italian Brown breed, which helps by a remarkable rate to satisfy the higher and higher meat demand of the consumer market. This trial was carried out to investigate the effects of castration on the performances of Italian Brown young steers (ageing 13-14 months) as a substitute for light fattened calves. Italian Brown male calves (n=24), homogeneous as concerns age and live weight, were subdivided in two groups (12 calves for each group): the calves of the first group (test) were left entire up to the slaughter while those of second group were castrated according to Burdizzo when aged 200 days. Castrated animals showed better carcass conformation but lower daily gains than entire subjects, leading to the conclusion that 14-15 months can be considered the suitable age for steer production according to the utilized techniques.

KEY WORDS: steer production / calf castration / veal