

The effect of lactation number on motor activity in dairy cows

Summary

Comprehensive knowledge of behavioural activity is one of the bases for improving the quality of animal welfare, health and production. The aim of the study was to evaluate the influence of parity (1st, 2nd, 3rd and later) on the activity of dairy cows. The activity of the animals was continuously monitored between April 2011 and August 2012 using IceQube Sensors. The study involved 132 Polish Holstein-Friesian cows kept in a loose-housing barn. The parameters investigated included total lying time, number of lying bouts, average length of lying bout, maximal length of lying bout, motion index, and total number of steps per day. The results of the study show that parity has a significant impact on the activity of dairy cows. Activity was found to decrease as the age of the cow increased.

KEY WORDS: dairy cows, activity, behaviour, systems for automatic recording of activity