

A study into Milk Yields of Jordanian Awassi sheep in Bedouin flocks studied in the North Badia from February to July 1995.

by
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Abstract.

Ten milking ewes from ten flocks were selected to provide the population from which data would be collected. However, only six flocks remained for evaluation at the end of the study.

Three volumetric milk yields were collected from each ewe at monthly intervals from the onset of weaning to provide data to calculate their total lactation yield. Information on health, nutrition, management, Condition Score and age was also collected to aid analysis of the overall Lactation yield, as these are the main factors affecting productivity.

The mean lactation yield was 77 kg, standard deviation (sd) 35.4, with an overall range of 17 to 203 kg. The modal lactation yield was 50 to 59 kg. There did not appear to be any correlation between age and lactation yield, however higher lactation yields were obtained from those animals with lower condition scores, and lower yields obtained from ewes with higher condition scores. Nutrition, health and management were all relatively similar between flocks; however, for individual sheep, there are many factors influencing daily milk yield.

Background.

The Jordan Badia region comprises 81.3% of the total area of Jordan. It is an arid zone, with less than 200mm of rainfall annually, and generally no rain between April and September. In 1994 there was an exceptionally high rainfall in October, consequently, this year there has been an abundance of grazing, especially in the North. This has resulted in a large migration of sheep from the South of Jordan to the North for the duration of the grazing season. The main pasture grasses are *Bromus tectorum*, *Poa annua*, *Lolium* species, legumes *Medicago rigidula*, *Lathyrus cicrea* and *Trifolium* species. (Bhattacharya and Harb, '73)

The daily temperature ranges from a Winter average of 5 - 10°C to a Summer average of 30 - 35°C. Extremes of these temperatures are usual.