

INTRODUCTION

In most tropical areas very little information is available regarding the extent to which breed and climate, and the interaction of these factors, affect potential productivity. Although it is realised that in many of these areas climate has an adverse effect on unadapted 'temperate' breeds, the full potentialities of the adapted 'indigenous' breeds have yet to be determined.

Productivity is obviously related to the availability of herbage, and the consumption of available herbage to the grazing behaviour of the animal.

If the livestock production of a particular area is to be increased, information must be made available on the chief factors limiting potential production. These are generally a combination of heredity, nutrition, disease and management. Following from this an assessment must be made as to the extent to which improvements in these limiting factors can increase the total productivity of a particular breed.

The main object in studying grazing behaviour, therefore, is to assess the animal's reaction to its environment and to changes in that environment. Within certain limits an animal can adapt itself to changing conditions (which may be natural or improved by management), but individual and breed variations in potential for adaptability exist.