



Semina: Ciências Agrárias

ISSN: 1676-546X

ISSN: 1679-0359

Universidade Estadual de Londrina

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Semina: Ciências Agrárias, vol. 39, no. 1, 2018, January-February, pp. 241-251
Universidade Estadual de Londrina

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5433/1679-0359.2018v39n1p241>

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Energy and protein requirements during the growing phase of indigenous goats

Exigências de proteína e energia durante a fase de crescimento de caprinos sem padrão racial definido

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to investigate both energy and protein requirements for the maintenance and growth of indigenous goats, based on data from two separate studies. Goats were weaned at 79 ± 4.4 days of age, with milk and solid diet intake recorded daily. To determine energy maintenance requirements, 32 kids of 4.90 ± 0.302 kg initial body weight (BW) were used. Ten kids were slaughtered at 5.40 ± 0.484 kg BW to estimate initial body composition, with the remaining kids randomly assigned to one of two DM intake levels: ad libitum and restricted-fed (1.2-times maintenance level). Heat production (HP) was calculated as the difference between ingested metabolizable energy (MEI) and retained energy. Net energy requirement for maintenance (NE_m) was estimated as the β_0 parameter of the relationship between HP and MEI [$HP = \beta_0 \times \exp^{(\beta_1 \times MEI)}$]. Metabolizable energy required for maintenance (ME_m) was calculated iteratively, as $HP = MEI$. Efficiency of energy utilization for maintenance (k_m) was calculated as NE_m/ME_m . The intercept of the linear regression of retained CP on CP intake was used to calculate net protein requirements for maintenance (NP_m). Net energy and protein requirement for gain (NE_g and NP_g , respectively) were obtained using 26 kids fed ad libitum and randomly slaughtered at 5.40 ± 0.484 kg BW ($n = 10$), 15.8 ± 0.655 kg BW ($n = 10$), and 26.3 ± 1.27 kg BW ($n = 6$). The first derivative of the allometric equation (used to calculate energy and protein contents in empty body weight (EBW)) with respect to EBW yielded estimates of NE_g and NP_g . A Monte Carlo-based method was employed to simulate variation in ME_m , NE_g , and NP_g . This study indicated that the net energy required for maintenance is 310.1 ± 36.7 kJ $kg^{-0.75}$ EBW, with ME_m estimated at 499.1 ± 52.1 kJ $kg^{-0.75}$ EBW and k_m equal to 0.62. This study indicated that 1.246 g CP $kg^{-0.75}$ EBW is required by indigenous kids weighing from 5 to 25 kg BW to meet their NP_m . In addition, indigenous goats require between 186.6 ± 2.97 and 214.3 ± 12.9 g CP, and between 5.39 ± 1.49 and 9.74 ± 2.57 MJ to gain one kilogram of EBW. This study may contribute to future adjustments in feeding system energy and protein recommendations for indigenous kids.

Key words: Body composition. Comparative slaughter. Gain. Maintenance

Resumo

Objetivou-se com o presente estudo, investigar as exigências de proteína e energia para manutenção e ganho de caprinos sem padrão racial definido. Para tal, foram utilizados dados individuais de caprinos

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de 2 estudos. Os caprinos foram desmamados com $79 \pm 4,4$ dias de idade. Ingestão de leite e dieta sólida foi tomada diariamente. Utilizou-se 32 cabritos de $4,90 \pm 0,302$ kg de peso corporal (PC) inicial. Nesse momento, 10 cabritos foram abatidos para estimativa de composição corporal inicial. Os cabritos remanescentes foram distribuídos aleatoriamente em dois níveis de ingestão: ad libitum ou com ingestão de 20% acima do nível de manutenção. A produção de calor (C) foi calculada pela diferença da energia metabolizável (IEM) ingerida e energia retida. A energia líquida para manutenção (EL_m) foi estimada pelo parâmetro β_0 da relação entre C e IEM [$C = \beta_0 \times \exp^{(\beta_1 \times IEM)}$]. A exigência de energia metabolizável para manutenção (EM_m) foi calculada quando $C = IEM$. A eficiência de utilização de energia para manutenção (k_m) foi calculada por EL_m/EM_m . Utilizou-se o intercepto da regressão linear da proteína retida pela proteína bruta (PB) ingerida para estimativa da proteína líquida exigida para manutenção (PL_m). A exigência líquida de proteína e energia para ganho (EL_g e PL_g , respectivamente) foram obtidas utilizando-se 26 cabritos alimentados à vontade e abatidos aos $5,40 \pm 0,484$ kg PC ($n = 10$), $15,8 \pm 0,655$ kg PC ($n = 10$) e $26,3 \pm 1,27$ kg PC ($n = 6$). A EL_g e PL_g foram estimadas pela derivada parcial da equação alométrica (i.e., gerada para estimar o conteúdo de energia e proteína no corpo vazio). A simulação de Monte Carlo foi empregada para simular a variação das estimativas da EM_m , EL_g e PL_g . Os resultados do presente estudo indicam que a energia líquida necessária para manutenção é $310,1 \pm 36,7$ kJ kg^{-0,75} PC vazio, e que a EM_m é igual a $499,1 \pm 52,1$ kJ kg^{-0,75} PC vazio, com k_m de 0,62. Este estudo indicou que 1,246 g PB kg^{-0,75} PCV é exigido por cabritos sem padrão racial definido entre 5 a 25 kg PC para atender a PL_m . Adicionalmente, cabritos sem padrão racial definido entre 5 a 25 kg PC requerem entre $186,6 \pm 2,97$ a $214,3 \pm 12,9$ g de proteína, e $5,39 \pm 1,49$ a $9,74 \pm 2,57$ MJ de energia para ganhar um quilo de PC vazio. O presente estudo pode contribuir para futuros ajustes nas atuais recomendações de energia e proteína para cabritos sem padrão racial definido pelos sistemas de alimentação.

Palavras-chave: Composição corporal. Abate comparativo. Ganho. Manutenção.

Introduction

The world goat population increased by 18.3% (from 849 million to over one billion heads) between 2004 and 2014 (FAO, 2014). In least developed countries (according to FAO classification), the goat stock in heads increased by 35% during the same period, from 237 million heads in 2004 to 319 million heads in 2014; (FAO, 2014), indicating that goat production may play an important role in alleviating poverty.

For instance, indigenous goats demonstrate strong adaptability depending on the local conditions in which they were raised and selected. In this sense, energy and nutrient requirements may be affected by genetic selection and crossbreeding (FERNANDES et al., 2007). Thus, the production efficiency of indigenous goats is expected to be lower than that observed in highly productive breeds. Variation in adaptability, driven by genotype, is one of the major reasons behind the lack of precise knowledge regarding these animals' energy and nutrient requirements, which may limit the profitability and efficiency of the feeding program in a herd.

Moreover, the guidelines most commonly used to formulate diets for goat production are currently based on recommendations from the NRC (2007), which guide for corrections in energy requirements but not in protein. Furthermore, feeding systems such as those of the CSIRO (2007) and AFRC (1993) do not take into account any differences among genotypes. Because net requirements for gain are dictated by the tissue deposited in the body at any given point on the growth curve, we hypothesize that net requirements will follow the pattern of energy and protein deposition in indigenous goat kids.

Therefore, the objective of this study was to estimate energy and protein requirements for the maintenance and gain of indigenous goats. This information should support producers in formulating diets for growing indigenous goats, improving feeding program suitability in a herd.

Materials and Methods

Individual records of 38 indigenous male kids from two studies conducted at the *Universidade*

Federal de Viçosa, Minas Gerais, (20°45'S; 42°52'W, 649 m altitude) in collaboration with UNESP – Univ Estadual Paulista, Jaboticabal, São Paulo, (21°14'S; 48°17'W, 595 m altitude), were used. The field phase was carried out at the Universidade Federal de Viçosa. This database combined data from two studies in which the body weight (BW) of kids ranged from 5 to 25 kg (study 1), and from 5 to 15 kg (study 2).

General procedures

From birth to their 10th day of life, kids were allocated to individual 1 m² pens. Afterwards, towards the end of the experiment, they were allocated to individual 1.5 m² pens. Male kids were weaned at 79 ± 4.4 days of age. Milk was supplied at 07h00 and 17h00 in such a way that ad libitum kids received 123.8 ± 6.42 g DM, and restricted kids 34.7 ± 3.09 g DM, daily. Kids in both studies were fed similar solid diets (Table 1), with food provided daily at 08h00 and 16h00.

Table 1. Ingredient and chemical composition of the diet.

Ingredient	Composition (%, DM basis)	Ingredient composition* (%, DM basis)			
		GE	CP	NDF	ADF
Oat hay	58.7	17.1	10.5	73.9	43.5
Ground corn	29.3	18.0	9.58	28.5	4.00
Soybean meal	10.3	19.1	52.5	22.3	11.7
Limestone	0.750	-	-	-	-
Mineral supplement [‡]	0.600	-	-	-	-
Dicalcium phosphate	0.350	-	-	-	-
Total diet	100	17.3	14.4	54.0	27.9

*DM = dry matter; CP = crude protein; NDF = neutral detergent fiber; ADF = acid detergent fiber; GE = gross energy (MJ/kg DM).

[‡]98.4% NaCl; 0.593% FeSO₄; 0.593% ZnSO₄; 0.273% CuSO₄; 0.07% CoSO₄; 0.018% KI O₃.

Slaughter procedures and chemical analyses

Both studies adopted similar slaughter procedures and chemical analyses. BW was measured immediately before feed and water were withdrawn for 16 h. Shrunk BW was measured immediately before slaughter, after 16 h fasting. At slaughter, kids were stunned and slaughtered by exsanguination. The digestive tract was weighed before and after it was emptied. Empty BW (EBW) was computed as shrunk BW minus the weight of the contents of the digestive tract, bladder, and biliary vesicle. The empty whole body was then ground, homogenized, and sampled for further chemical determination. Sub-samples were dried for 72 h at 55 to 60°C, and ground using a ball mill. All sub-samples were then analyzed for moisture, ash, fat and protein according to AOAC (1980), and energy (using a “Parr” calorimetric bomb).

Trial 1 – Maintenance requirements

A total of 32 kids (18 from study 1 and 14 from study 2) were used. From this group, 10 goats were randomly selected for slaughter at the beginning of the trial (6 from study 1 and 4 from study 2). These animals, hereafter referred to as the baseline (BL) group, were used to estimate the initial body composition of the animals in the maintenance trial, as described by Lofgreen and Garret (1968). The remaining goats (12 goats from study 1 and 10 from study 2) were randomly allocated to one of two treatments based on intake level: ad libitum or restricted-fed, who consumed 20% more feed on top of maintenance requirements (i.e., $1.2 \times$ maintenance level, namely $1.2 \times L$), forming blocks of 2 goats. Thus, the intake goat fed at maintenance level within a block was calculated based on the dry matter intake (DMI) of the ad libitum goat during

the previous day. Kids were slaughtered when the animal fed ad libitum reached the targeted final BW (26.3 ± 0.550 kg at 178 ± 32 days in study 1, and 15.6 ± 0.356 kg at 71 ± 49 days in study 2). Ad libitum rationing was adjusted daily based on the DMI for the previous day plus 20%.

Heat production (HP, $\text{kJ kg}^{-0.75}$ EBW daily) was calculated as the difference between ME intake (MEI, $\text{kJ kg}^{-0.75}$ EBW daily) and retained energy (RE, $\text{kJ kg}^{-0.75}$ EBW daily). A non-linear model was used to describe the relationship between HP and MEI, and was performed according to Eq. [1]. Net energy requirement for maintenance (NE_m) was estimated as the β_0 parameter in Eq. [1]. The ME required for maintenance (ME_m , $\text{kJ kg}^{-0.75}$ EBW) was calculated iteratively, with the maintenance requirement equal to the value at which HP is equal to MEI.

$$\text{HP} = \beta_0 \times \exp^{\beta_1 \times \text{MEI}} + \varepsilon \quad [1]$$

where *HP* is daily heat production ($\text{kJ kg}^{-0.75}$ EBW), β_0 and β_1 are the parameter estimates, *MEI* is daily ME intake ($\text{kJ kg}^{-0.75}$ EBW), and ε is the residual.

The efficiency of energy utilization for maintenance (k_m) was calculated as NE_m/ME_m . The partial efficiency of ME utilization for growth (k_g) was assumed to be the slope of the linear regression of RE on MEI above the maintenance level (MEI_g), assuming that RE is null when $\text{MEI}_g = 0$ (model intercept equal to 0), according to Galvani et al. (2014).

Linear regression of retained crude protein (CP; g CP $\text{kg}^{-0.75}$ EBW daily) on CP intake (CPI; g CP $\text{kg}^{-0.75}$ EBW daily) was carried out to calculate net protein requirements for maintenance (NP_m). The intercept of regression (where retained CP = 0) was assumed to represent endogenous and metabolic losses of protein, which are in turn assumed to represent the net protein requirement for maintenance.

Determination of diet digestibility

A metabolism assay was carried out at the midpoint of the maintenance trial of study 1. The BW of ad libitum-fed goat kids dictated the beginning of the assay. In this sense, all animals were sampled when goats fed ad libitum weighed, on average, 18.2 ± 0.684 kg BW. Total feces and urine collection was carried out to determine DE, ME and the metabolizability of energy (*q*) of the diet on each level of intake.

During the metabolism assay, animals were housed in individual metabolic cages. Feeds, orts, feces, and urine were collected during 5 d after a 3-d adaptation period to the cage. Urine was acidified daily with 20 mL of 20% sulfuric acid. Feeds and orts were sampled daily and immediately stored at -20°C . Feces and urine were weighed daily. A representative sample of feces and urine, approximately 10% of the daily mass, were taken and stored at -20°C .

Nutrients and energy was determined for feeds, orts, feces and, urine. Digestible nutrients and energy was computed from their content in feeds, orts and feces. The metabolizable energy was determinate from GE of feeds, orts, feces, urine, and the energy from gaseous products was estimated as reported by Blaxter and Clapperton (1965).

Trial 2 – Growth requirements

Net energy and protein requirements for gain were estimated using 26 indigenous intact males (12 kids from study 1 and 14 from study 2). The animals were fed ad libitum and slaughtered at targeted BW values of 5 or 25 kg (study 1), and 5 or 15 kg (study 2). From the body composition of these goats, allometric equations (Eq. [2]) were fitted to estimate body composition (protein, fat, energy, and ash contents) from EBW (kg) according to ARC (1980).

$$Y = \beta_0 \times EBW^{\beta_1} + \varepsilon \quad [2]$$

where Y is the amount of protein, fat, and ash (g), or energy (MJ) in EBW, β_0 and β_1 are the parameter estimates, EBW in kg, and ε is the residual.

The first derivative of Eq. [2] with respect to EBW yields an estimate of NE_g and NP_g at various EBW values (Eq. [3]):

$$Y' = \beta_1 \times \beta_0 \times EWG^{(\beta_1 - 1)} + \varepsilon \quad [3]$$

where Y' is energy (KJ kg⁻¹) or protein (g kg⁻¹) concentration per unit of EBW (EWG, kg); β_0 and β_1 are the parameter estimates of the allometric equation (Eq. [2]) and ε is the residual.

Statistical analyses

Data from the maintenance trial were analyzed in a completely randomized block design using a mixed model with the fixed effect intake level and the random effect of study, according to the model:

$$Y_{ij} = \mu + L_i + S_j + e_{ij}$$

where, Y_{ij} = expected outcome for the dependent variable Y ; μ = overall mean; L_i = fixed effect of the i^{th} level of intake; S_j = random effect of the j^{th} study; and e_{ij} is the random residual error, assumed to be $\sim N(0, \sigma_e^2)$.

The allometric equation was generated using the baseline animals to estimate initial body composition (energy and protein). These were fitted using the PROC NLIN and MARQUARDT methods available in SAS (SAS – Statistical Analysis System; Institute Inc., Cary, NC version 9.4). To fit the nonlinear model of HP on MEI, the PROC NLMIXED procedure (SAS Inst. Inc., Cary, NC; version 9.4) was employed. Linear regression analyses (i.e., retained N on N intake, and EBW on BW) were performed using the MIXED procedure.

Data from gain trial was analyzed as a completely randomized design with fixed effect slaughter BW, according to the model:

$$Y_{ij} = \mu + W_i + e_{ij}$$

where Y_{ij} = expected outcome for the dependent variable Y ; μ = overall mean; W_i = fixed effect of the i^{th} slaughter weight; and e_{ij} is the random residual error, assumed to be $\sim N(0, \sigma_e^2)$.

Allometric equations were fitted using the PROC NLMIXED procedure (SAS Inst. Inc., Cary, NC; version 9.4). After parameter estimation, the allometric equation ((Eq. [2]) was associated with Monte Carlo statistical method (Markov chain), to simulate the first derivative of allometric equation variation, and then net energy and protein requirements for gain variation. For that, it was considered mean and standard deviation of parameters estimates, and their correlation to generate the dataset. Bivariate Normal techniques were analyzed using Bivariate 4.6, SAS for Monte Carlo Studies (FAN et al., 2002). The effect of the level of intake slaughter weight (i.e., body composition data) was decomposed into two orthogonal polynomial contrasts (linear and quadratic) and significance was declared at $P \leq 0.05$.

Results and Discussion

During the metabolism trial, DMI, CPI, and MEI were greater ($P < 0.01$) in kids under the ad libitum regimen than in those fed $1.2 \times L$ (Table 2). However, these differences did not lead to differences in the digestibility coefficients of DM, CP, and GE, or metabolizability ($P \geq 0.12$). The DMI of goats fed ad libitum was on average 63.0% greater ($P < 0.01$) than for those fed $1.2 \times L$ (Table 3), throughout the entire experimental period. For instance, observed DMI (3% BW) was lower than the 4% BW predicted by the AFRC (1998), but similar to that reported previously for Saanen kids (FIGUEIREDO et al., 2017).

Table 2. Intake, digestibility coefficients and metabolizability of male indigenous kids during metabolism trial.

Item ¹	Level of intake ²		SEM ³	P-value ⁴
	AL	1.2× L		
<i>n</i>	6	6	-	-
BW, kg	18.2	10.0	0.238	<0.01
DMI, g/d	547.1	229.7	26.5	<0.01
CPI, g/d	95.3	33.2	3.74	<0.01
GEI, MJ/d	9.45	3.96	0.459	<0.01
MEI, MJ/d	5.54	2.35	0.261	<0.01
DDM, %	71.4	71.6	1.40	0.93
DCP, %	71.5	67.5	1.66	0.12
DGE, %	69.4	70.2	1.55	0.74
<i>q</i>	0.589	0.591	0.0145	0.76

¹ *n* = number of animals subjected to the metabolism trial; BW = body weight; DMI = dry matter intake; CPI = crude protein intake; GEI = gross energy intake; MEI = metabolizable energy intake; DDM = digestibility of dry matter; DCP = digestibility of crude protein; DGE = digestibility of gross energy and *q* = metabolizability (ME/GE).

² Ad libitum (AL) or 1.2× maintenance level (L).

³ Standard error of the mean.

⁴ P-value of the intake level effect.

As retained CP was regressed against CPI, the negative intercept (at CPI = 0) provided an estimate of minimum CP losses, as the sum of endogenous urinary CP and metabolic fecal CP (AFRC, 1998). This procedure indicated a value of 1.246 g CP kg^{-0.75} EBW of NP_m (Eq. [4]; $P < 0.01$; $\sigma^2_e = 0.922$). The daily CP intake required for maintenance (retained CP = 0) was calculated at 4.45 ± 1.24 g CP kg^{-0.75} EBW.

$$CP_{\text{retained}} = -1.25 \pm 0.517 + 0.280 \pm 0.0347 \times CP_{\text{intake}} \quad [4]$$

where CP_{retained} is daily protein retention in the body (g CP kg^{-0.75} EBW), and CP_{intake} is daily CP intake (g CP kg^{-0.75} EBW).

Table 3. Performance and body composition in male indigenous kids fed different levels of intake slaughtered at 15 or 25 kg of body weight.

Item ¹	Study (Level of intake) ²				SEM ³	P-value ⁴
	Study 1		Study 2			
	AL	1.2 × L	AL	1.2 × L		I
<i>n</i>	4	6	6	6	-	-
Days	93.8	100.8	163	181	-	-
DMI, g/d	440.7	167.2	581.9	209.9	24.3	<0.01
Initial BW, kg	4.99	4.80	4.91	5.04	0.246	0.34
Final BW, kg	15.6	7.10	26.3	10.3	0.550	<0.01
EBW, kg	12.4	5.73	20.5	7.55	0.711	<0.01
Water, g/kg EBW	651.6	737.2	661.6	744.2	15.7	<0.01
Protein, g/kg EBW	178.7	178.9	206.5	184.4	9.19	0.24
Fat, g/kg EBW	130.3	40.8	90.8	29.5	12.5	<0.01
Energy, MJ/kg EBW	9.64	6.26	8.53	6.06	0.368	<0.01
Ash, g/kg EBW	39.3	43.0	41.4	41.9	0.873	0.08

¹ *n* = number of animals; BW = body weight; DMI = dry matter intake; EBW = empty body weight;

² Study (targeted slaughter weight of 15 kg – study 1 or 25 kg study 2 of body weight; was not considered as random effect because the purpose of this table is also to provide a description of each study; slaughter weights were dictated by ad libitum – AL goats. Those goats fed 1.2 × L – maintenance level were slaughtered with the same number of days of their pair-fed ad libitum goat.

³ Standard error of the mean. ⁴ P-value for level of intake (I).

The estimated NP_m was 54.1% lower than that reported by the AFRC (1998); i.e., 2.2 g CP $kg^{-0.75}$ BW, and 67.1% lower than that recommended by the NRC (2007); i.e., 3.07 g CP $kg^{-0.75}$ BW, respectively, considering an efficiency of use of metabolizable protein for maintenance equal to 1. On the other hand, the digestible CP maintenance requirement estimated by Salah et al. (2014) for goats under warm climates is similar to that found in the present study (2.38 g $kg^{-0.75}$ BW vs. 2.57 g $kg^{-0.75}$ BW). When ruminants are subjected to hot environments, several physiological mechanisms may be affected in the digestive system, including acid-base status and blood hormone levels (WEST, 2003; YAZDI et al., 2016), as the animal attempts to maintain a stable body temperature. This effect may help to explain the disparity between recommended feeding systems that are based largely on information obtained from animals kept under temperate climates (AFRC, 1998; NRC, 2007), and results generated using animals studied under tropical conditions. Besides, it is likely that the efficiency of use of metabolizable protein for maintenance is less than 1, as previously stated by the AFRC (1998), and may also vary with diet. In addition, the CP required for maintenance estimated in the present study was 69.3%, 47.6% and 28.8% lower than that reported by Almeida et al. (2015b), Fernandes et al. (2007), and Ferreira et al. (2015), respectively, for dairy and crossbred goats. This discrepancy indicates that indigenous goats may lose less protein (i.e., via endogenous urinary N, metabolic fecal N, and dermal N losses) than goats of specialized breeds; in other words, differences across genotype may affect the animals' ability to recycle N.

NE_m was estimated at 310.1 ± 36.7 kJ $kg^{-0.75}$ EBW (Eq. [5]; $P < 0.01$; $\sigma^2_e = 4028$), or 251.2 kJ $kg^{-0.75}$ BW. Estimated ME_m was thus equal to 499.1 ± 52.1 kJ $kg^{-0.75}$ EBW or 404.3 kJ $kg^{-0.75}$ BW daily (calculated iteratively assuming HP was equal to MEI), with k_m estimated at 0.621.

$$HP = 310.0 \pm 36.7 \times \exp^{MEI \times 0.000954 \pm 0.000031} \quad [5]$$

where HP is daily heat production (kJ $kg^{-0.75}$ EBW) and MEI is daily ME intake (kJ $kg^{-0.75}$ EBW).

The value of estimated ME_m in the present study (404.3 kJ $kg^{-0.75}$ BW) is 17% lower than that recommended by the NRC (2007), 21% lower than values reported by the AFRC (1998), and 14% lower than values reported by the CSIRO (2007). These differences may be due to the different methodologies applied and/or genotype. For example, the recommendations of the NRC (2007) are based on dose-response trials, while the requirements estimated by the AFRC (1998) and CSIRO (2007) do not account for genotype differences. Rearing conditions and feed quality (i.e., digestibility) may also play an important role in dose-response trial outcomes (CSIRO, 2007). Furthermore, AFRC (1998) guidelines are based on respirometry trials, which have been reported to differ in terms of heat production (i.e., respirometry vs the comparative slaughter technique) and thus also in ME_m (MCCRACKEN; RAO, 1989; WEBSTER, 1989).

Prieto et al. (1990) estimated similar ME_m values for indigenous male goats (443 kJ $kg^{-0.75}$ BW), indicating that genotype may also affect ME_m . In cattle, studies have found lower ME_m for more rustic compared to specialized beef cattle breeds (i.e., *Bos indicus* vs *Bos taurus*); this difference is allegedly due to differences in visceral organ mass and activity, protein turnover, internal fat and/or thermoregulation efficiency under tropical conditions (MARCONDES et al., 2013; OLIVEIRA, 2015). Although such phenomena have not yet been defined for goats, they may help to explain the findings of the present study. In goats, Bompadre et al. (2014) reported ME_m values 69% lower (499.1 vs 294.3 kJ $kg^{-0.75}$ EBW) and k_m values 13% greater in Saanen goats than those obtained here. In addition, Souza et al. (2014) reported ME_m values for indigenous goats 37.6% lower than those

presented here. This variation may also be due to putative differences in maturity degree (ALMEIDA et al., 2016), supporting the genotype effect on maintenance requirements (NRC, 2007), even within indigenous goats.

Fasting heat production (NE_m) is also generally assumed to be directly related to ME_m , as $ME_m = NE_m/k_m$. Thus, sources of variation in ME_m may be due to NE_m and k_m estimates. The estimated value of k_m in the present study is within theoretical values for ruminants, from 0.60 up to 0.85; (ALMEIDA et al., 2015a; BOMPADRE et al., 2014; FERREIRA et al., 2015; FIGUEIREDO et al., 2016, 2017; LACHICA; AGUILERA, 2003; REID et al., 1980; SOUZA et al., 2014). This wide range of variation may be due to the fact that efficiencies of energy use (k_m and k_g) may change according to many factors related to environmental conditions, animal traits, and diet quality (AFRC, 1998; BIRKETT; DE LANGE, 2001; CORBETT; FREER, 2003). For example, volatile fat acids production has both distinct heat production (BALDWIN et al., 1980) and efficiencies of ME use (TEDESCHI et al., 2010). Thus, when comparing ME_m across different scenarios, researchers should focus on explaining factors that may affect k_m as well as fasting heat production.

The value of k_g was estimated at 0.31, assumed as the slope of Eq. [6], the regression equation of MEI_g on RE (Eq. [6]; $P < 0.01$; $\sigma_e^2 = 1652.8$), further assuming zero RE when MEI_g is equal to ME_m . As expected, the intercept estimate did not differ from zero ($P = 0.67$). The same value was reported by Figueiredo et al. (2017) and is within the wide range of values for k_g reported in the literature; i.e., 0.30 to 0.65 (REID et al., 1980). Because protein deposition efficiency is lower than that reported for fat, varying from 0.1 to 0.40 for protein and from 0.60 to 0.84 for fat (ARC, 1980), goats depositing more protein

than fat (e.g., intact males, growing animals) have lower k_g . For instance, k_g in ruminants depends on both animal genotype and maturity degree.

$$RE = -6.14 \pm 10.1 + 0.3108 \pm 0.0121 \times MEI_g \quad [6]$$

where RE is daily retained energy ($\text{kJ kg}^{-0.75} \text{EBW}$), and MEI_g is daily metabolizable energy intake above maintenance ($\text{kJ kg}^{-0.75} \text{EBW}$).

In the present study, total protein content in EBW increased at increasing rates for kids ranging from 5 to 25 kg BW ($P < 0.01$; Table 4). As a result, the allometric equation fitted to describe EBW protein content had an allometric coefficient greater than one ($P < 0.01$; Table 4). Similarly, fat content increased linearly for kids from 5 to 25 kg BW ($P < 0.01$; Table 4). In this sense, the allometric coefficient estimated for fat was also heterogonic and positive ($P < 0.01$; Table 4). Altogether, body energy content also increased at an increasing rate and had an allometric coefficient greater than one ($P < 0.01$; Table 4). This may indicate that the studied animals were not mature at 25 kg BW, which is expected since it is likely that indigenous goats exhibit late-maturing growth. Using the first derivative of the allometric equations of total body protein and energy, with respect to EBW, the yielded estimates of NP_g and NE_g are presented in Eqs. [7] and [8] as follows:

$$NP_g = 164.8 \times EBW^{-0.098} \quad [7]$$

$$NE_g = 3.24 \times EBW^{0.41} \quad [8]$$

where NP_g and NE_g are respectively the protein and energy concentration (g kg^{-1} and MJ kg^{-1}) per unit of EBW gain, and EBW is empty body weight (kg).

Table 4. Body composition and allometric equations of total body protein (g), fat (g), energy (MJ), or ash (g) content on the empty BW (EBW) to describe the net retention in intact in male indigenous kids.

Variable ¹	Parameter estimates ²					BW, kg ³				P-value ⁵	
	β_0	SE	β_1	SE	σ^2_e ($\times 1000$)	5	15	25	SEM ⁴	Lin	Q
Protein, g/kg EBW	151.2	16.4	1.09	0.0433	30132	177.6	190.3	206.6	3.91	<0.01	<0.01
Fat, g/kg EBW	6.65	4.97	1.85	0.209	485.4	94.8	117.5	154.0	9.87	<0.01	0.95
Energy, MJ/kg EBW	2.30	1.02	1.41	0.125	10.6	8.09	9.25	10.4	0.418	0.07	<0.01
Ash, g/kg EBW	85.3	37.6	0.935	0.126	604.9	66.9	71.8	66.7	3.62	0.33	0.62

¹ Empty BW (EBW) may be estimated by the linear regression equation: $EBW, kg = 0.508 \pm 0.117 + 0.770 \pm 0.0184 \times BW, kg$; $n = 26$; $\sigma^2_e = 1.53$.

² Parameter estimates (β_0 and β_1) of allometric equation, standard errors of parameter estimates (SE) and residual variance of the model (σ^2_e).

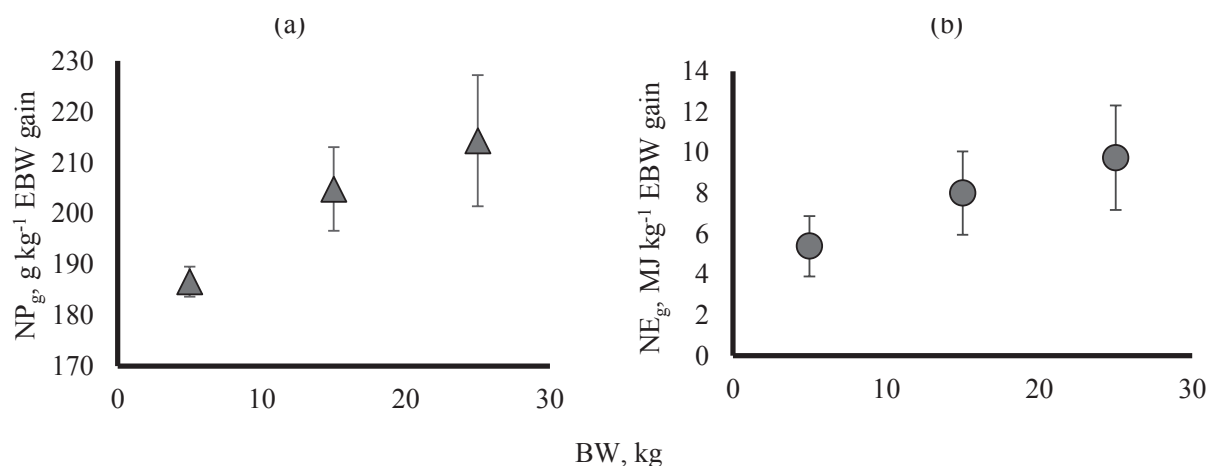
³ Observed body composition of male indigenous kids slaughtered at targeted BW of 5, 15 or 25 kg.

⁴ P-value of Linear (Lin) and quadratic (Q) effects of slaughter weight.

⁵ Standard error of the mean of observed body composition.

Daily NP_g increased from 186.6 ± 2.97 to 214.3 ± 12.9 g CP kg^{-1} EBW gain (Figure 1a), and NE_g ranged from 5.39 ± 1.49 to 9.74 ± 2.57 MJ kg^{-1} EBW gain (Figure 1b), as BW increased from 5 to 25 kg in male indigenous goats. Variation in mean NP_g increased more than 4-fold, while NE_g increased almost 2 times, as BW varied from 5 to 25 kg. Although such variation is expected to increase with

the mean, these results suggest that more uncertainty is associated with NP_g than NE_g estimates at greater weights. The estimates of the standard deviation in NP_g , NE_g , NP_m , and ME_m values were obtained using Monte Carlo simulations, which may indicate the expected variation in energy and protein requirements for maintenance and weight gain within the studied population of indigenous goats.

Figure 1. Relationship between NP_g (a) and NE_g (b) and BW (kg) of male indigenous kids between 5 and 25 kg BW.

Conclusions

The results obtained in this study indicate that the net energy required for maintenance in indigenous kids is $310.1 \pm 36.7 \text{ kJ kg}^{-0.75} \text{ EBW}$, with ME_m estimated at $499.1 \pm 52.1 \text{ kJ kg}^{-0.75} \text{ EBW}$ and k_m equal to 0.62. It is recommended that indigenous kids weighing from 5 to 25 kg BW should ingest $4.45 \pm 1.24 \text{ g CP kg}^{-0.75} \text{ EBW}$ to meet their protein requirements for maintenance. In addition, indigenous kids ranging from 5 to 25 kg BW require between 186.6 ± 2.97 to $214.3 \pm 12.9 \text{ g CP}$, and 5.39 ± 1.49 to $9.74 \pm 2.57 \text{ MJ}$ to gain one kilogram EBW. Overall, the obtained values are valuable information that may help researchers and producers to adequately formulate diets for growing indigenous kids, preventing losses due to over- or underfeeding.

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