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## Evaluation of body parameters of lactating Murrah buffaloes on supplementation of bypass fatty acids and *Tinospora cordifolia*

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### Abstract

During early lactation high producing animals may undergo negative energy balance (NEB) which is having ill-effect on health of animal. Considering this, present investigation was undertaken to assess the effect of supplementation of bypass fatty acids and *Tinospora cordifolia* on body parameters of lactating Murrah buffaloes. Twenty freshly calved and healthy buffaloes were selected from institutional herd of NDRI, Karnal and divided into four groups having five buffaloes each on the basis of their previous milk yield, body weight and parity. Four groups were treated as T0 (control), T1 (fatty acid), T2 (*Tinospora*) and T3 (mix) and were fed with specific amount of supplements for 90 days. T0 was kept without any supplementation and given standard feed (ICAR-2013 standards) whereas T1, T2 and T3 were supplemented with 150gm of bypass fatty acids, 150gm of *Tinospora* and combination of 150gm bypass fatty acids and 150gm *Tinospora*, respectively. Results showed significant ( $P<0.05$ ) improvement in BCS of buffaloes and decreased rate of reduction of body weight in treatment group buffaloes as compared to control group. On the basis of results, it was concluded that bypass fatty acids and *Tinospora cordifolia* supplementation helps in attaining good body conditions in lactating Murrah buffaloes.

**Keywords:** Buffaloes, bypass fatty acid, health, supplementation, *tinospora*

### Introduction

A healthy animal herd is first and foremost requirement for maintaining productive and economic livestock venture. After parturition the health and immune system of animals gets compromised [1]. This is mainly due to negative energy balance (NEB), which occurs due to the gap between the energy requirements and availability [2]. The demand of energy during early lactation gets increased due to increased requirement for milk production and dry matter intake of the animal gets lowered because of physiological stress [3, 4]. The incidences of metabolic diseases like ketosis and milk fever during early lactation are the evidences of the animal's inability to meet the elevated metabolic demands and such health concerns further elicit economic losses in dairy farming and also related to animal welfare issue [5]. Hence care and management of dairy animals during early stage of lactation plays a crucial role in coping the negative impacts of NEB and maintaining sound health of the animals.

Supplementation involves adding specific quantity of feed additives into animal feed and expected to give desired effect. NEB energy balance and its ill effect on dairy animals can be prevented by the supplementation of high energy density feed along with immunomodulator [6]. Bypass fat is considered as high energy supplement and used in ruminant feeding since ages [2, 6-10]. Similarly, herbal supplements were popular among farmers and also used in animal feeds [11-13]. Use of specific bypass fatty acids in place of bypass fat is recently developed technique and it ensures higher energy and better health of animals in comparison to bypass fat. *Tinospora cordifolia* is an herbal immunomodulator having multidimensional properties which aids to health of animal. Previous reports on individual feeding of bypass fat [14-17] and *Tinospora* [18-20] revealed positive effect on health of dairy animals and improved body parameters. However, no systematic information is available on the use of bypass fatty acids along with combination of *Tinospora* in lactating Murrah buffaloes. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to evaluate the influence of supplementation of bypass fatty acid and *Tinospora cordifolia* on body parameters of lactating Murrah buffaloes.

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## Material and methods

### Description of the study area

Present study was carried out at Livestock Research Centre of National Dairy Research Institute (N.D.R.I.), Karnal, Haryana, India which is located on 29°42" N and 79°54" E longitudes at an altitude of 245 meters above the mean sea level in the beds of Indo-Gangetic alluvial plain. The minimum temperature falls to near freezing point in winter and maximum goes approximately up to 45°C in May/June months of summer. The annual rainfall is close to 700 mm, most of which is received from July to September. A subtropical climate prevails in the area.

### Selection of animals and design of experiment

Twenty freshly calved Murrah buffaloes were selected from Livestock Research Center of NDRI, Karnal and further divided into four groups of 5 buffaloes each on the basis of previous milk yield, parity, and body weight. It was ensured that the selected animals for study were free from any anatomical, physiological and infectious disorders. The experiment was conducted as per the guidelines of institutional ethical committee. Four groups of animals were assigned as T0, T1, T2 and T3. T0 was taken as control whereas T1, T2 and T3 were given supplementations. T0 was kept without any supplementation and given standard feed (ICAR-2013 standards) whereas T1, T2 and T3 were supplemented with 150gm of bypass fatty acids per animal per day, 150gm of *Tinospora* per animal per day and combination of 150gm bypass fatty acids and 150gm *Tinospora* per animal per day, respectively. Supplementations were given for a period of 90 days after calving in buffaloes and each buffalo was kept under observations. Buffaloes were kept in loose housing system and given enough space as per BIS requirements but they were tied for 1 hour for individual feeding of supplements. The daily feeds of buffaloes include green fodders like oats, maize, jowar, sugar graze and berseem depending on their availability and mixture of maize silage and wheat straw. Supply of clean and fresh drinking water was available to buffaloes for whole day.

### Parameters observed

Body parameters which were evaluated during experimental period includes body condition score (BCS) and body weight.

### Body condition score

Body condition Score (BCS) was assessed by 5-point scale

method as per Wattiaux [21]. Buffaloes having varying degrees of fat cover were scored a numerical value from 1 to 5. BCS was analyzed at 15 days interval depending on the fat cover in the brisket, on the ribs, back, hooks, pins and around the tail head regions.

### Body weight

Body weight of the buffaloes was measured with the help of electronic weighing machine at fortnightly intervals. Recording of body weight was done early in the morning around 7:30 A.M. before offering feed and water to animals and it was taken for two consecutive days and then the average value was considered.

### Statistical Analysis

Analysis of data was done by SPSS software using one way ANOVA. Mean and standard error were calculated and comparisons between different groups were made.

### Results

#### Body weight (Kg)

The differences in mean body weights of buffaloes of all the treatment groups and control group were non-significant. However numerical difference was there in the mean values of body weight of different groups (Table 1; Fig 1). The initial body weights of Murrah buffaloes at day-1 of trial after parturition in all the groups were in the range of  $539.36 \pm 40.67$  to  $484.98 \pm 23.77$  kg and were non-significant (Table 1; Fig 1). The overall body weight during postpartum period was numerically higher for all the animals in treatment groups than control group. During 90 days of lactation, the body weight for fatty acid (T1) group ranges between  $539.36 \pm 40.67$  to  $522.68 \pm 28.18$  kg, for *Tinospora* (T2) group the range was  $537.12 \pm 18.72$  to  $523.20 \pm 19.78$  kg, for mix (T3) group it was  $486.42 \pm 26.17$  to  $481.78 \pm 20.64$  kg and for control (T0) group the range was  $484.98 \pm 23.77$  to  $452.72 \pm 23.06$  kg. The finding of the study showed that body weight is not significantly affected by the supplementation of fatty acids and *Tinospora* in lactating Murrah buffaloes. As the lactation progress the body weight of the buffaloes decreases in all the groups. The rate of reduction of body weight from day 1 to day 90 was lowest in T3 (mix) group (0.95), followed by T2 (*Tinospora*) group (2.59) and then T1 (fatty acid) group (3.09) whereas it was highest in T0 (control) group (6.65). The values of body weight of buffaloes at fortnightly intervals were presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Effect of bypass fatty acid and *Tinospora* supplementation on body weight (kg)

Days	Control (T0)	Fatty Acids (T1)	<i>Tinospora</i> (T2)	Mix (T3)	P Value
1	$484.98 \pm 23.77$	$539.36 \pm 40.67$	$537.12 \pm 18.72$	$486.42 \pm 26.17$	0.366
15	$474.86 \pm 24.78$	$518.98 \pm 38.16$	$510.90 \pm 11.86$	$468.54 \pm 24.86$	0.460
30	$455.40 \pm 25.04$	$509.08 \pm 31.67$	$498.80 \pm 20.87$	$461.18 \pm 23.39$	0.378
45	$427.21 \pm 17.21$	$497.20 \pm 31.77$	$505.28 \pm 21.92$	$457.60 \pm 27.39$	0.143
60	$457.45 \pm 23.13$	$512.36 \pm 31.90$	$505.48 \pm 21.42$	$467.42 \pm 22.80$	0.350
75	$441.9 \pm 21.09$	$514.70 \pm 29.34$	$512.32 \pm 20.96$	$477.02 \pm 20.60$	0.131
90	$452.72 \pm 23.06$	$522.68 \pm 28.18$	$523.20 \pm 19.78$	$481.78 \pm 20.64$	0.129
Mean $\pm$ SE	$456.37 \pm 19.61$	$516.34 \pm 32.37$	$513.30 \pm 18.20$	$471.42 \pm 23.19$	0.235

The values are Mean  $\pm$  SE of seven observations on five animals in each group.

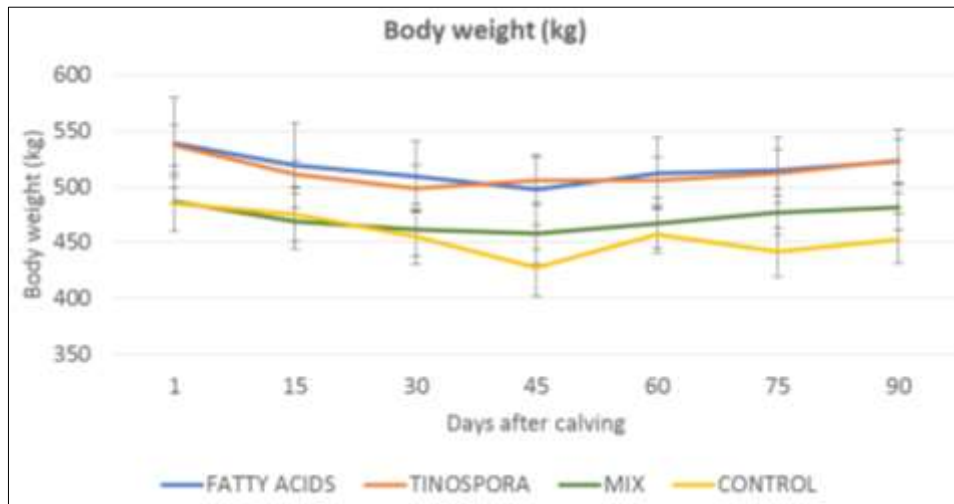


Fig 1: Mean body weights (kg) of buffaloes during different fortnights of experimental period.

**Body condition score (BCS)**

The BCS of buffaloes differs significantly ( $P < 0.05$ ) between groups and within group (Table 2; Fig 2). During experimental period BCS range for fatty acid (T1) group was  $2.75 \pm 0.11$  to  $3.30 \pm 0.25$ , for Tinospora (T2) group the range was  $2.80 \pm 0.12$  to  $3.20 \pm 0.20$ , for mix group (T3) it was  $2.75 \pm 0.11$  to  $3.05 \pm 0.25$  and for control (T0) group the range was  $2.45 \pm 0.05$  to  $3.15 \pm 0.27$  (Table 2; Fig 2). Overall average BCS at the end of feeding trial was significantly ( $P < 0.05$ )

highest for fatty acid (T1) group ( $2.91 \pm 0.11$ ) followed by Tinospora (T2) group ( $2.90 \pm 0.13$ ) and mix (T3) group ( $2.86 \pm 0.10$ ) whereas control (T0) group ( $2.56 \pm 0.07$ ) is having least BCS value. The results of body condition score (BCS) revealed that BCS of the supplemented buffaloes was better in comparison to control group. In fatty acid (T1) and mix (T3) group the loss in BCS of animals is significantly lower than the Tinospora (T2) and control (T0) groups.

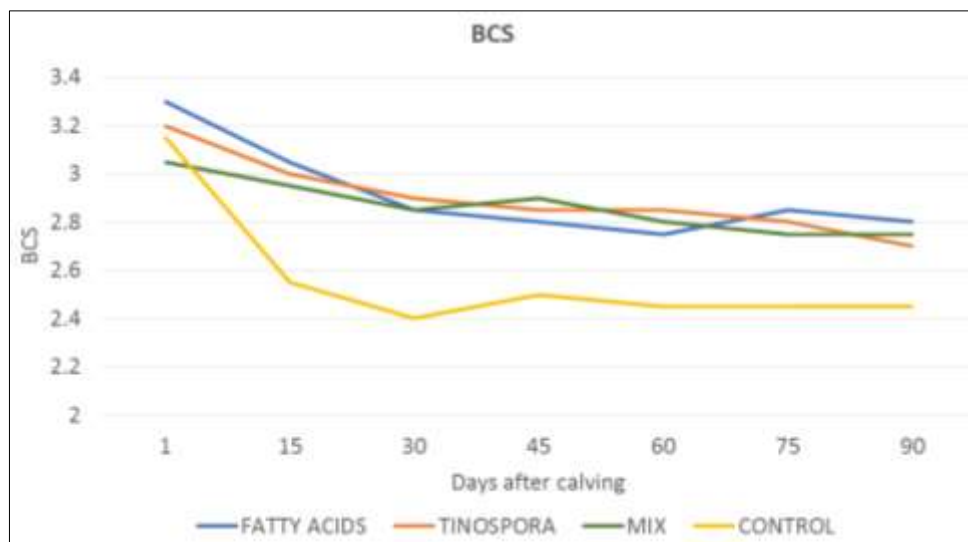


Fig 2: Mean BCS during different fortnights of experimental period in buffaloes

Table 2: Effect of bypass fatty acid and Tinospora supplementation on BCS (5-point scale)

Days	Control (T0)	Fatty Acids (T1)	Tinospora (T2)	Mix (T3)	P value
1	$3.15^{ay} \pm 0.27$	$3.30^{ay} \pm 0.25$	$3.20^{ax} \pm 0.20$	$3.05^{ax} \pm 0.25$	0.909
15	$2.55^{ax} \pm 0.05$	$3.05^{axy} \pm 0.20$	$3.00^{ax} \pm 0.21$	$2.95^{ax} \pm 0.22$	0.234
30	$2.40^{ax} \pm 0.17$	$2.85^{axy} \pm 0.10$	$2.90^{ax} \pm 0.17$	$2.85^{ax} \pm 0.23$	0.185
45	$2.50^{ax} \pm 0.08$	$2.80^{ax} \pm 0.12$	$2.85^{ax} \pm 0.19$	$2.90^{ax} \pm 0.19$	0.275
60	$2.45^{ax} \pm 0.05$	$2.75^{bx} \pm 0.11$	$2.85^{bx} \pm 0.10$	$2.80^{bx} \pm 0.09$	0.031
75	$2.45^{ax} \pm 0.05$	$2.85^{bxy} \pm 0.10$	$2.80^{bx} \pm 0.12$	$2.75^{bx} \pm 0.11$	0.050
90	$2.45^{ax} \pm 0.05$	$2.80^{bx} \pm 0.12$	$2.70^{abx} \pm 0.12$	$2.75^{abx} \pm 0.11$	0.134
Mean $\pm$ SE	$2.56^{ax} \pm 0.07$	$2.91^{bxy} \pm 0.11$	$2.90^{abx} \pm 0.13$	$2.86^{abx} \pm 0.10$	0.105
P value	0.004	0.220	0.545	0.927	

- The values are Mean  $\pm$  SE of seven observations on five animals in each group.
- Values with different superscripts a,b and w,x,y,z differ significantly ( $P < 0.05$ ) in a row and column respectively.

## Discussion

### Body weight

The finding of the study showed that body weight is not significantly affected by the supplementation of fatty acids and *Tinospora* in lactating Murrah buffaloes. As the lactation progresses loss of body weight is there in all the groups. The present findings were in accordance with results were shown by Katiyar<sup>[22]</sup> who supplemented Murrah buffaloes with 15g rumen protected fat (Ca salt of long-chain fatty acids) per kg milk yield and found no effect on body weight of buffaloes. Tyagi<sup>[6]</sup> also reported non-significant difference in body weight of supplemented dairy cows. Purushothaman<sup>[23]</sup> and Ranaweera<sup>[24]</sup> also reported similar results whereas in contrary to this some researchers showed significant improvement in body weight on supplementation of bypass fat<sup>[14, 25]</sup>.

### Body condition score

The results of body condition score (BCS) revealed that as the lactation progresses decrease in BCS of buffaloes in all the groups were there but significant differences were found between the groups. In fatty acid (T1) and mix (T3) group the loss in BCS of animals is significantly lower than the *Tinospora* (T2) and control (T0) groups. Sharma<sup>[26]</sup> reported similar results and suggest that additional dietary fat could result in better energy partitioning and improved energy balance in dairy animals. Naik<sup>[27]</sup> and Singh<sup>[25]</sup> also reported improvement in BCS through supplementation of bypassfat whereas, Harrison<sup>[28]</sup> and Ganjkanlou<sup>[29]</sup> did not find any influence on body condition scores of cows supplemented with bypass fat.

## Conclusions

From the present study it may be concluded that supplementation of bypass fatty acid and *Tinospora cordifolia* in early lactating Murrah buffaloes improve the BCS and decrease the rate of body weight reduction. Hence, in lactating Murrah buffaloes supplementation of bypass fatty acids and *Tinospora cordifolia* is beneficial for maintaining good body parameters.

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