

A NOTE ON YIELD AND CARCASE CHARACTERISTICS OF REEDBUCK (*Redunca redunca*) IN THE SUDAN

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In view of the ever increasing demand for animal protein the exploitation of wildlife has become a necessity. In parts of Africa, antelopes and other forms of wildlife provide a rich supply of meat for the local population. In south Africa antelope ranching is a successful commercial enterprise while in Kenya game is exploited both for meat and income. Wildlife can survive and produce under adverse climatic conditions unsuitable for conventional domestic stock. Talbot (1966) reported that the average liveweight gain and dressing percentage of some wild ungulates were superior to those of cattle and sheep on moderately well managed East African rangeland. The eland for example will grow and reproduce at rates which compare favourably with cattle and yield quality meat having a dressing percentage of 59 (Kyle, 1972). When ranched together with Boran - cattle, oryx were found to produce a leaner carcass which dressed 57 percent compared with a dressing percentage of 52 for Boran cattle (King and Heath, 1975). A diverse population of wildlife species inhabit Sudan, yet accurate statistics of total population of species are lacking. Sudan's Wildlife Research Centre claims that the population of wildlife ruminants such as reedbuck, buffalo and roan antelope is increasing. The meat of wild ruminants is consumed by local population and a small proportion is sun dried and sold as biltong (locally known as sharmoot). Wild animal by-products such as hides and various other trophies are sold for speciality markets. The purpose of this article is to highlight the need for study and utilization of wild ungulates for meat production in African countries such as Sudan. Source of animals: In this preliminary study four reedbucks of mixed sex were shot in the Dinder National Park situated 320 miles south-east of Khartoum. Animals were then bled by severance of carotid arteries and jugular veins and weighed to give dead weight (slaughter weight). The weights of carcasses and their components were recorded separately. The carcasses were then cut

according to Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC, 1977) into neck, leg and chump, single short forequarter, best end of neck and breast. The leg and chump joint was then dissected into meat and bone. Carcase characteristics: As can be seen in table 1, the dressing percentage and the proportions of the superior wholesale cuts such as the leg, chump loin and best end of neck as well as total lean were greater in reedbuck than in fattened desert goat and sheep. Total bone was low in reedbuck although muscle : bone ratio was greater in the reedbuck than in sheep and goat.

Table 1: Carcase characteristics of reedbuck compared with that of desert sheep and goats.

Parameter	Reedbuck	Desert goats**	Desert sheep**
Slaughter weight (Kg)	41.7 ± 8.3	35.0	35.0
Hot carcase weight (Kg)	25.1 ± 5.4	18.0 ± 0.5	16.5 ± 0.8
Dressing% (hot carcase)	60.0 ± 3.3	53.6 ± 1.5	47.7 ± 2.2
Yield of wholesale cuts *			
Leg and chump	45.1 ± 4.5	31.2 ± 2.2	32.5 ± 2.3
Single short forequarter	15.3 ± 1.7	37.6 ± 1.5	34.9 ± 1.9
Loin	12.0 ± 2.8	10.5 ± 1.2	11.0 ± 1.4
Best end of neck	15.8 ± 1.2	7.2 ± 1.6	7.5 ± 8.3
Breast	6.5 ± 1.9	5.7 ± 7.3	5.7 ± 4.9
Neck	7.5 ± 2.1	8.2 ± 1.8	7.9 ± 8.5
Total lean (%)	73.3 ± 4.8	61.9 ± 3.4	59.9 ± 3.4
Total bone (%)	7.6 ± 0.9	20.5 ± 1.3	22.4 ± 3.1
Muscle : bone ratio	5.0	3.0	2.7

* % of carcase weight

** El Khidir et al (1989).

Slaughter by-products: The percentage of non-carcase components are given in table 2. Generally non-carcase components such as head, skin and feet, liver and alimentary tract were lighter in reedbuck compared with corresponding values in desert goats reported by Bello and Babiker (1988). The difference in the proportions of non-carcase components could account for the difference observed earlier in the dressing percentage.

Table 2: Proportion of non-carcase components of reedbucks.

Parameter	Range	Mean* \pm SD
Head	4.2 - 6.8	5.5 \pm 1.1
Skin and feet	6.7 - 9.5	7.9 \pm 1.2
Liver	1.0 - 1.6	1.3 \pm 0.3
Lung and trachea	2.0 - 2.5	2.2 \pm 0.2
Alimentary tract (full)	11.4 - 22.6	18.3 \pm 5.3
Spleen	0.2 - 0.5	0.4 \pm 0.1
Kidneys	0.2 - 1.3	0.8 \pm 0.5
Heart	0.8 - 1.0	0.9 \pm 0.1
Reproductive organs	0.2 - 0.6	0.5 \pm 0.2

* Means are percentage of slaughter weight

Conclusion: Reedbuck killed at an average weight of 40 Kg produced a carcase weighing 25 Kg and dressing 58.10 percent. The proportion of superior cuts such as leg churnp, loin and best end of neck were 45.1 percent, 12 percent and 15.8 percent of dressed respectively.

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