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Differences behavioural in Nelore cows before and after use of intravaginal device of progesterone

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The use of progesterone-releasing intravaginal devices (PRID) is growing due to its application for fixed-time artificial insemination and embryos transfer techniques, but it remains unclear the effect of this device on cow comfort. The aim of this study was to assess the effect of PRID on the behavior beef cows, testing the hypothesis that the device has a negative effect on cow welfare. The study was carried out with 35 Nelore multiparous cows (without calves), which were habituated to the corral and handling procedures. The PRID insertion was done after restraining each cow in a squeeze chute. Behavioral data were recorded during 30 minutes for six consecutive days, three of them before and three after the device insertion. The cows were kept on pasture, and drove once a day to the corral, maintaining them in a corral pen with 420m²(with free access to water) from 9:00 to 10:00h, when the observations were done. Four behavioral categories were recorded, two postures (standing - ST or lying - LY) and two activities ruminating (RU) or idling (ID). Data was recorded using instantaneous record (one minute interval) and scan sampling, with individual identification. Wilcoxon test was used to compare the effect of the device insertion on the time spend by cows' in each posture and activity. Data are presented as means \pm SD. There were statistical differences ($P < 0.01$) in all variables, with reduction of ST (29.28 ± 1.69 min to 26.34 ± 3.91 min, $Z = -3.85$) and ID (26.48 ± 4.48 min to 23.90 ± 3.80 min, $Z = -3.28$) and increase of RU (3.42 ± 4.41 min to 5.83 ± 3.84 min, $Z = -3.04$) and LY (0.66 ± 1.67 min to 3.57 ± 3.69 min, $Z = -3.90$) when comparing the situation before and after the device insertion. These results suggested that the intravaginal device insertion did not affect cows' behavior in a negative way; instead of it, after the device insertion the animals seemed to be more relaxed, probably due to an extra habituation to the handling procedures for data collection.