
HEAT STRESS OF BEEF CATTLE

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DOI <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-389-7-6>

INTRODUCTION

Meat is considered a rich food product and one of the main components of the diet and grub culture of people, since it will provide all the necessary food products. The effectiveness of beef cattle farming largely depends on the correct selection of breeds for one or another breeding area. However, global climate change is having a significant impact on agroecosystems, their botanical warehouse and the availability of a sufficient amount of acidic pastures for grazing animals. A comprehensive assessment of the productivity of lean meat in different agroecological regions with different climatic minds can be used to develop regional sustainability strategies and system optimization production of animal products^{1,2}.

Demand for grass-fed beef is growing as consumers become increasingly interested in animal health and welfare, environmental sustainability and meat products with an altered nutritional profile and lower fat content. To maintain the functions of the body of cattle, two-thirds of the incoming energy is needed with feed. Energy expenditure increases in response to both low and high temperatures that differ from the thermal optimum of finishing animals³.

¹ Christopher Magona, Abubeker Hassen, Eyob Tesfamariam, Carina Visser, Simon Oosting, A. van der Linden, Evaluation of LiGAPS-Beef to assess extensive pasture-based beef production in three agro-ecological regions in South Africa. *Livestock Science*. Vol. 271. 2023. 105231. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.livsci.2023.105231> .

² Christine F Baes, Christina M Rochus, Kerry Houlihan, Gerson A Oliveira Jr, Nienke Van Staaveren, Filippo Miglior, 22 Sustainable Livenock Breeding: Challenges and Opportunities, *Journal of Animal Science* . Vol.100. Is. Supplement_3, October 2022. P.13. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1093/jas/skac247.023>

³ Korzekwa, Anna, et al. Prospects for traditional livestock breeding of polish red cattle with the agreement of biodiversity protection: Polish Red cattle breeding–animal welfare and the nutritional value of beef. *Polish Journal of Natural Sciences*. 2023. 38.1.

1. Feeding systems and animal welfare

Throughout the world, beef cattle are typically raised outdoors and exposed to natural climatic conditions, while only a small proportion are raised in closed housing systems⁴. To date, there is no consensus among researchers regarding which measures should be assessed when determining the welfare effects of beef cattle⁵.

However, a document prepared in 2001 by the Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Welfare of the European Commission for Health and Consumer Protection identified the main reasons for inadequate levels of welfare in various cattle production systems in Europe.

In total, there are three main beef production systems: pasture-raised (mostly breeding cows), outdoor feedlot finishers, and indoor finishers. Depending on the production system, various factors can influence the occurrence of heat stress in beef cattle. For this, ensuring animal welfare is extremely important, which significantly reduces the risk of various pathologies⁶.

The pasture system is usually adopted for raising cows kept in semi-natural conditions, being on pasture from at least spring to autumn. Specific protocols have been developed to assess animal welfare in grasslands. The protocol evaluates indicators for animal, resource and livestock management⁷.

Providing an adequate source of cold, clean drinking water is essential to maintaining the animal's core body temperature within normal limits. Water temperature is thought to influence rumen temperature and thus blood temperature, which influences the brain centers that control feed intake. Above ground water pipes should be shaded by covering them with tall grass. The manager should at least check the temperature of the water in the trough. Increasing temperatures from 70 °F to 95 °F can increase total water requirements by approximately 2.5 times⁸.

⁴ Ronchi, B., Lacetera, N., Ranieri, M. S., & Bernabucci, U. Effects of climate changes on animal production and sustainability of livestock systems. *Livestock Science*, 2010, 130(1–3), 57–69.

⁵ Park RM, Foster M, Daigle CL. A Scoping Review: The Impact of Housing Systems and Environmental Features on Beef Cattle Welfare. *Animals*. 2020; 10(4):565. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani10040565>.

⁶ Tucker, C., Coetzee, J., Stookey, J., Thomson, D., Grandin, T., & Schwartzkopf-Genswein, K. Beef cattle welfare in the USA: Identification of priorities for future research. *Animal Health Research Reviews*, 2015, 16(2), 107–124. doi:10.1017/S1466252315000171.

⁷ Romero, M. H.; Barrero-Melendro, J.; Sanchez, J. A. Validation of an Animal Welfare Assessment Protocol for Zebu Beef Farms within Pasture-Based Systems under Tropical Conditions. *Preprints* 2023. URL: <https://doi.org/10.20944/preprints202310.0555.v1>.

⁸ Boyles S. Heat stress and beef cattle. *Ohio State University Extension*. 2008. Available at <http://beef.osu.edu/library/heat.html>.

A feedlot is an intensive environmental system in which exacerbating factors for heat stress include keeping cattle in confined areas that interfere with some of their natural ways of coping with heat stress (for example, migrating to cooler areas, seeking shelter in the shade, etc.) and a high-energy feeding plan. Cattle in feedlots engage in aggressive interactions (for example, head banging, pushing, moving) more often and for longer periods of time compared to animals that use pastures⁹.

The indoor finishing system involves young beef cattle coming from grazing systems being transported by truck and housed in roofed buildings where they are housed until finishing is complete¹⁰.

The effectiveness of some technological solutions in combating the manifestations of heat stress may have different effectiveness depending on the sex of the animal. Thus, there is evidence that cooling a cattle feeding complex with a sprinkler-fan cooling system significantly increased the rate of weight gain in heifers, but not in bulls¹¹.

High quality feed generates less heat from rumen digestion than low quality feed, and hot weather diets require close inspection⁸.

The main problems of welfare of beef calves when using intensive technologies are: high density of animals in groups; unsatisfactory, from a welfare point of view, type of flooring; diets high in starch; limited space at feeders and drinkers. In European technologies for raising beef calves, it is mandatory to introduce a new production system in accordance with European Council Directives 91/629/EEC and 97/2/EC.

The welfare and stress resistance of beef calves is influenced by many factors, some of them are related to the housing system (type of floor, temperature, air quality, equipment for supplying feed and water, lack of loading facilities), and others are related to animal feeding (type and quantity roughage, quality of milk substitutes). Recent research has shown that the welfare of beef cattle calves can be seriously affected by the quality of animal husbandry and particularly by negative human-animal interactions¹².

Moreover, improving the welfare of animals contributes to an increase in their productivity. Feeding systems that fed animals between 3.0 and 4.5 m²

⁹ Blumetto, O., Ruggia, A., Morales Pyñeyría, J. T., & Villagrà García, A. Social behavior and productive and stress parameters in Holstein steers fattened in three contrasting production systems. *J. Agric. Sci.*, 2017, 9, 54–64.

¹⁰ Andrea Summer, Isabella Lora, Paolo Formaggioni, Flaviana Gottardo, Impact of heat stress on milk and meat production, *Animal Frontiers*. Vol. 9. Is. 1, January 2019. P. 39–46. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1093/af/vfy026>.

¹¹ Garner, J. C., Bucklin, R. A., Kunkle, W. E., & Nordstedt, R. A. Sprinkled water and fans to reduce heat stress of beef cattle. *Applied Engineering in Agriculture*, 1989, 5(1), 99–101.

¹² Giulio Cozzi, Marta Brscic & Flaviana Gottardo. Main critical factors affecting the welfare of beef cattle and veal calves raised under intensive rearing systems in Italy: a review, *Italian Journal of Animal Science*, 2009, 8, 67–80, DOI: 10.4081/ijas.2009.s1.67.

per head increased live weight gain, as well as higher average daily gain and lower feed conversion ratio (kg dry matter intake/kg carcass gain)¹³. These animals performed more positive social behaviors, spent a greater percentage of their day lying down, and performed fewer aggressive interactions^{14, 15}.

There are many aspects of the welfare of beef cattle that must be carefully studied: animal management, processing, feeding and climatic stress, social hierarchy, weaning effects, acclimatization, habituation and temperament¹⁶.

Monitoring points include: animal factors (genetics, temperament, previous health status, ethological factors) and management factors (diet, unit design, resource provision, pregnancy management, herd structure, husbandry attitudes and skills). While current industry and producer initiatives exist to address some of these challenges, continuous improvement of well-being requires clear, reliable and repeatable measures that quantify current and future states of well-being. Existing indicators of well-being are examined, as well as proxy indicators that can signal the presence of improved or decreased well-being¹⁷.

2. Livestock monitoring models for animal welfare and productivity

LiGAPS-Beef (Livestock Production Simulator for General Analysis of Livestock Production Systems – Cattle Beef) is a general mechanical model designed to quantify growth potential and feed-limited growth, providing insight into the biophysical capabilities of increasing beef production. The LiGAPS-Beef model combines three submodels that jointly simulate the production and growth of beef cattle. Overall, the model simulates the interactions between cattle genotype, climate, feed quality and feed availability. The modeled factors corresponded well with the reported

¹³ Keane, M., McGee, M., O’Riordan, E., Kelly, A., & Earley, B. Effect of space allowance and floor type on performance, welfare and physiological measurements of finishing beef heifers. *Animal*, 2017, 11(12), 2285–2294. doi:10.1017/S1751731117001288.

¹⁴ Hickey, M. C.; Earley, B.; Fisher, A. D. The effect of floor type and space allowance on welfare indicators of finishing steers. *Ir. J. Agric. Food Res.* 2003, 42, 89–100.

¹⁵ Park RM, Foster M, Daigle CL. A Scoping Review: The Impact of Housing Systems and Environmental Features on Beef Cattle Welfare. *Animals*, 2020, 10(4), 565. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani10040565>.

¹⁶ Fernandez-Novo A, Pérez-Garnelo SS, Villagrà A, Pérez-Villalobos N, Astiz S. The Effect of Stress on Reproduction and Reproductive Technologies in Beef Cattle – A Review. *Animals*. 2020, 10(11), 2096. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani10112096>.

¹⁷ Salvin Hannah E., Lees Angela M., Cafe Linda M., Colditz Ian G., Lee Caroline Welfare of beef cattle in Australian feedlots: a review of the risks and measures. *Animal Production Science*, 2020, 60, 1569–1590.

occurrence of heat stress, energy deficiency, and protein deficiency at specific periods during the experiments¹⁸.

In total, the input data to the LiGAPS-Beef model are 89 general cattle parameters, 27 breed-specific parameters, 24 diet or feed composition parameters and daily weather data¹⁹.

However, modeling shows how much meat products we can get under certain feeding and housing conditions, but the economic feasibility of meat animal husbandry is also affected by the quality of the products. Thus, under the influence of chronic heat stress in ruminants, a decrease in the concentration of glycogen in muscles is observed, which leads to an increase in final pH and WHC, prolonged oxidation of proteins and lipids, oxidative stress and reducing the shelf life of meat²⁰.

A high reliable relationship was revealed between the indicators of the temperature-humidity index (THI) outside and inside the lightweight structure, which allows us to build a linear regression model with a high level of prediction ($R^2 = 0.9932$)²¹.

For beef cattle, the calculation of daily grass growth (DHGgDM $m^{-2} d^{-1}$) is very important, which was calculated from the difference between the grass mass before grazing and the grass mass without grazing during the grazing period using the equation ²²:

$$DHGgDM m^{-2} d^{-1} = \frac{ECHM [gDM m^{-2}] - PreHm [gDM m^{-2}]}{D [d]},$$

where ECHM is the mass of grass on the pasture, PreHM – mass of grass before grazing, a D – duration of grazing period in days.

¹⁸ Van der Linden, A., Van de Ven, G. W. J., Oosting, S. J., Van Ittersum, M. K., & De Boer, I. J. M. LiGAPS-Beef, a mechanistic model to explore potential and feed-limited beef production 3: model evaluation. *Animal*. 13(4). 2019. 868–878.

¹⁹ Van der Linden, A., Van de Ven, G. W. J., Oosting, S. J., Van Ittersum, M. K., & De Boer, I. J. M. LiGAPS-Beef, a mechanistic model to explore potential and feed-limited beef production 1: model description and illustration. *Animal*. 13(4). 2019. 845–855.

²⁰ Warner, R. D., Hastie, M., Gonzalez-Rivas, P. A., Chauhan, S. S., Ha, M., Pfeiffer, C., ... & Cowled, B. Effects of Heat Stress and Climate Change Induced Bushfires on Beef Meat Quality. In *Climate Change and Livestock Production: Recent Advances and Future Perspectives* (pp. 15–26). Singapore: Springer Singapore. 2022.

²¹ Vysokos M. P. Mylostiviy R. V. Use of the temperature-humidity index to assess the state of comfort in rooms of light construction. Ecological problems of the environment and rational nature management in the context of sustainable development: II International. science and practice conf. to the day of memory of Dr. S.-G. Sciences, Prof. Yu. V. Pylypenko (Kherson, October 24–25, 2019). Kherson, 2019, pp. 48–51.

²² Mantino, A., Alice, C., Francesco, A., Iride, V., Enrico, B., Enrico, B., & Mele, M. An on-farm rotational grazing trial: restricting access time to pasture did not affect the productivity of a dairy sheep flock in spring. *Italian Journal of Agronomy*. 16(1). 2021.

Potential grass consumption per animal and kg body weight is calculated using the equation:

$$PHS [gDM d^{-1}] = \frac{(ECHM [g m^{-2}] - PostHm [g m^{-2}]) \times A [m^2]}{D [d] \times BW [kg]},$$

where ECHM – mass of herbal cover cell, PostHM – mass of herbal cover after grazing, A – area of animal pen, D – length of grazing period in days, a BW – average body weight of the entire grazing group.

Under physiological conditions, the following factors have been established that influence the level of consumption of grass mass: body size and condition, physiological condition of animals, quantity and quality of concentrated additives, feed advantages, feed availability and grazing system²³.

It is important to identify critical points and manage risks. Management largely regulates the effects of heat stress. Control factors can be divided into four different categories: feed, water, environmental influences and behavior. Understanding these risk factors and how each affects animal stress will help develop risk management strategies and how to implement them. Management strategies that can be applied at the right time and to the right groups of animals will increase benefits to animals and limit costs to producers²⁴.

3. Biological mechanisms of heat stress development in beef cattle

The ability of animals to withstand severe thermal stress during heat waves was examined physiologically by assessing fluctuations in skin, rectal and body temperatures, as well as respiratory and pulse rates²⁵.

THI was developed at the University of Missouri in the 1950s. THI is calculated based on the temperature and humidity in the animal's habitat. It indicates the temperature and humidity at which cows show symptoms of

²³ Ripamonti, A., Mantino, A., Anecchini, F. *et al.* Outcomes of a comparison between pastoral and silvopastoral management on beef cattle productivity, animal welfare and pasture depletion in a Mediterranean extensive farm. *Agroforest Syst* 97, 2023. 1071–1086. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10457-023-00848-w>.

²⁴ Brandl T. M. Understanding heat stress in beef cattle. *Revista Brasileira de Zootecnia*, 2018. T. 47.

²⁵ Sayed Haidar Abbas Raza, Sameh A. Abdelnour, Aya I. M. Dhshan, Abdallah A. Hassanin, Ahmed E. Noreldin, Ghadeer M. Albadrani, Mohamed M. Abdel-Daim, Gong Cheng, Linsen Zan. Potential role of specific microRNAs in the regulation of thermal stress response in livestock. *Journal of Thermal Biology*. Vol. 96, 2021, 102859. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtherbio.2021.102859>.

stress. The darker the color, the greater the stress – even death of livestock (THI above 99).

Table 1

Determination of temperature-humidity index

Temperature, °C	Relative humidity, %																	
	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	
20	63	63	64	64	64	65	65	65	66	66	66	66	67	67	67	67	68	
21	64	64	65	65	65	66	66	66	67	67	67	68	68	68	69	69	69	
22	65	65	66	66	67	67	67	68	68	69	69	69	70	70	70	71	71	
23	66	66	67	67	68	68	69	69	69	70	70	71	71	72	72	73	73	
24	67	67	68	68	69	69	70	70	71	71	72	72	73	73	74	74	75	
25	68	68	69	70	70	71	71	72	72	73	73	74	74	75	75	76	76	
26	69	69	70	71	71	72	72	73	74	74	75	75	76	76	77	78	78	
27	70	70	71	72	72	73	74	74	75	76	76	77	77	78	79	79	80	
28	71	71	72	73	73	74	74	75	76	76	77	78	78	79	80	80	81	
29	72	72	73	74	75	75	76	77	78	78	79	80	81	81	82	83	83	
30	73	73	74	75	76	77	77	78	79	80	81	81	82	83	84	84	85	
31	74	74	75	76	77	78	79	79	80	81	82	83	84	84	85	86	87	
32	75	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	
33	76	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	90	
34	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	
35	77	78	79	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	
36	78	79	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	94	95	96	
37	79	80	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	
38	80	81	83	84	85	86	87	89	90	91	92	93	94	96	97	98	99	
39	81	82	84	85	86	87	89	90	91	92	94	95	96	97	98	100	101	
40	82	83	85	86	87	89	90	91	92	94	95	96	98	99	100	101	103	

Compared with the autumn-spring period (THI = 61.84 ± 0.42), the winter group (THI = 42.97 ± 0.95) showed a significant increase in the level of malondialdehyde, and the summer group (THI = 86.09 ± 0.23) showed significant increases in cortisol, interleukin (IL)-10, IL-1β, and tumor necrosis factor-α levels²⁶. This indicates a seasonal threat of stress associated with temperature fluctuations.

Adverse effects of heat stress on beef cattle are observed at higher THI compared to dairy cattle. These differences are due to breed characteristics, production, metabolism, feeding plans and management systems. In fact, the higher temperature threshold for beef cattle production is 30 °C below 80 % and 27 °C above 80 %²⁷. Unlike dairy cows, the impact of heat stress on the

²⁶ Han Li, Yifeng Zhang, Rong Li, Yan Wu, Dingran Zhang, Hongrun Xu, Yangdong Zhang, Zhili Qi. Effect of seasonal thermal stress on oxidative status, immune response and stress hormones of lactating dairy cows, *Animal Nutrition*. Vol. 7. Is. 1, 2021. P. 216–223. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aninu.2020.07.006>

²⁷ SCAHAW (Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare) 2001. The welfare of cattle kept for beef production. European Commission, Health and Consumer Protection, Directorate C – Scientific Health Opinions, Unit C2 – Management of scientific

beef sector cannot be immediately measured as it is not reflected in daily production indicators such as milk and can vary depending on several factors (breed, stage of production (for example, beef cows against animals in cultivation/processing) and production system). Regardless of cattle category and production system, heat stress primarily affects animal welfare²⁸.

Assessing the impact of increasing or decreasing temperature from field monitoring is difficult due to the delayed effects on physiology. Indeed, the risk of mortality in feedlot cattle depends on the temperature of the current day, as well as on exposure to temperature in previous days. As with dairy cows, heat stress in beef cattle is associated with a higher risk of mortality²⁹.

The pooled mortality risk associated with 1°C above the heat threshold was estimated to be 5.6 % (5.0, 6.2) for dairy cattle and 4.6 % (0.9, 8.7) for beef cattle livestock. Knowledge of the thermoneutral zone and temperature impacts outside this zone is of primary interest to farmers as it can help determine when appropriate preventive and mitigation measures should be implemented³⁰.

In such conditions, the need to ensure the welfare of beef cattle increases enormously; if animals become inactive, spend less time eating (especially during the daytime) and less time for social interactions, appropriate measures should be taken immediately to restore their welfare.

Thyroid hormone-mediated cell signaling plays a key role in the regulation of body temperature, energy consumption, and metabolic adaptation to heat. Heat stress in cows regulates the level of thyroid hormones³¹.

Bovine skeletal muscle, including the longest dorsi muscle, is primarily composed of skeletal muscle fibers (myofibrils), but also contains fat cells, connective tissue or extracellular matrix, and various other cell types, including satellite cells, immune cells and blood vessels. The ratio of muscle to fat cells changes depending on the amount of fat deposited. Growth of

committees. Sanco.C.2/AH/R22/2000. Brussels (Belgium): European Commission. Available from <http://orgprints.org/00000742>

²⁸ Andrea Summer, Isabella Lora, Paolo Formaggioni, Flaviana Gottardo, Impact of heat stress on milk and meat production, *Animal Frontiers*. Vol. 9. Is. 1, January 2019. P. 39–46. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1093/af/vfy026>.

²⁹ Thornton P. K., J. van de Steeg, Notenbaert A., Herrero M., The impacts of climate change on livestock and livestock systems in developing countries: A review of what we know and what we need to know. *Agricultural Systems*. Vol. 101. Is. 3, 2009. P. 113–127. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.agsy.2009.05.002>.

³⁰ Eric Morignat, Emilie Gay, Jean-Luc Vinard, Didier Calavas, Viviane Hénaux, Quantifying the influence of ambient temperature on dairy and beef cattle mortality in France from a time-series analysis. *Environmental Research*. Vol. 140, 2015. P. 524–534. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envres.2015.05.001>.

³¹ Weitzel, J. M., Viergutz, T., Albrecht, D., Bruckmaier, R., Schmicke, M., Tuchscherer, A., ... & Kuhla, B. Hepatic thyroid signaling of heat-stressed late pregnant and early lactating cows. *Journal of endocrinology*, 2017, 234(2), 129–141.

muscle and fat cells typically occurs when mass increases due to both hyperplasia (increase in cell number) and hypertrophy (increase in cell size)^{32,33}.

The molecular events of microRNA alterations associated with heat stress cause disruption of cellular homeostasis and molecular function, and impair the functions of micro- or macromolecules, such as protein and lipid synthesis and DNA/RNA stability, involved in the stress response^{34,35}.

Heat stress can be classified into two main classes: chronic heat stress, in which the increase in environmental temperature continues for a long period of time (days to even weeks), allowing adaptation to the environment, and acute heat stress, in which there is a rapid and short-term increase in ambient temperature. Both of these two types of heat stress are capable of stimulating numerous physicochemical reactions, such as suppression of immune and endocrine functions, changes in blood amino acids, decreased bioavailability of cellular energy, increased expression of HSP mRNA, and upregulation of inflammatory genes (NF- κ B and TNF- α) and PMEL and MC1R, increased oxidative stress and decreased antioxidant enzymes (superoxide dismutase (SOD), glutathione peroxidase (GPx) and malondialdehyde (MDA)), which subsequently impairs intestinal cell function and structure^{36,37}.

Given the challenges and limitations in identifying heat stress in grassland animals, some researchers are proposing the use of unmanned aerial vehicles

³² Hood R. L., Allen C. E. Cellularity of bovine adipose tissue. *Journal of Lipid Research*. 1973. T. 14. №. 6. C. 605–610.

³³ Owens F. N., Dubeski P., Hanson C. F. Factors that alter the growth and development of ruminants. *Journal of animal science*. 1993. T. 71. №. 11. C. 3138–3150.

³⁴ Sayed Haidar Abbas Raza, Sameh A. Abdelnour, Aya I. M. Dhshan, Abdallah A. Hassanin, Ahmed E. Noreldin, Ghadeer M. Albadrani, Mohamed M. Abdel-Daim, Gong Cheng, Linsen Zan, Potential role of specific microRNAs in the regulation of thermal stress response in livestock. *Journal of Thermal Biology*. Vol. 96, 2021, 102859. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtherbio.2021.102859>.

³⁵ Salama, A. K., Duque, M., Wang, L., Shahzad, K., Olivera, M., Loor, J. J. Enhanced supply of methionine or arginine alters mechanistic target of rapamycin signaling proteins, messenger RNA, and microRNA abundance in heat-stressed bovine mammary epithelial cells in vitro. *Journal of Dairy Science*. Vol. 102. Is. 3, 2019. P. 2469–2480. <https://doi.org/10.3168/jds.2018-15219>.

³⁶ Sameh A. Abdelnour, Mohamed E. Abd El-Hack, Asmaa F. Khafaga, Muhammad Arif, Ayman E. Taha, Ahmed E. Noreldi. Stress biomarkers and proteomics alteration to thermal stress in ruminants: A review. *Journal of Thermal Biology*. Vol. 79, 2019. P. 120–134. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtherbio.2018.12.013>.

³⁷ Chauhan, S. S., Celi, P., Ponnampalam, E. N., Leury, B. J., Liu, F., & Dunshea, F. R. Antioxidant Dynamics in the Live Animal and Implications for Ruminant Health and Product (Meat/Milk) Quality: Role of Vitamin E and Selenium. *Animal Production Science*, 20, 54, 1525–1536.

as a non-invasive and practical approach to studying behavioral indicators of heat stress³⁸.

It is also extremely important to ensure not only the growth and development of bulls in hot conditions, but also the preservation of their breeding qualities. Males exhibit reduced sperm quality and fertility for several weeks after the onset of heat stress³⁹. Increased ambient temperature leads to increased testicular temperature, which causes hypoxia and increased production of ROS as metabolic byproducts. An increase in the frequency and depth of breathing leads to increased alkalosis, which interferes with the delivery of oxygen to the tissues. Reactive oxygen species (ROS) are produced by cellular metabolism⁴⁰. They play an important role in regulating sperm function, increasing sperm capacity and acrosomal reaction, and binding to the membrane with membrane⁴¹.

Thus, a consequence of heat stress during spermatogenesis is a decrease in sperm quality, which leads to a decrease in the yield of viable embryos and decreased fertility⁴².

Comparative studies of the sensitivity to heat stress of fattening bulls of the Angus and Nelor breeds showed some differences in the consumption of dry matter of feed⁴³.

Sperm motility of stressed breed Angus bulls returned to normal values 8 weeks after the end of heat stress⁴⁴.

In finishing steers, heat stress decreased basal circulating glucose concentrations (7%) and tended to increase (30%) plasma insulin concentrations, but plasma non-esterified fatty acid concentrations were stable⁴⁵.

³⁸ Mufford, J. T., & Church, J. S. Using UAVs to measure behavioral indicators of heat stress in cattle. *Measuring Behavior* 2022.

³⁹ Collier, R. J., Renquist, B. J., & Xiao, Y. A 100-Year Review: Stress physiology including heat stress. *Journal of dairy science*, 2017, 100(12), 10367-10380.

⁴⁰ Danchuk V. V. Peroxide oxidation in farm animals and poultry. Kamenets-Podolsky: Alphabet, 2006, 192: 38.

⁴¹ Jane M. Morrell. Heat stress and bull fertility. *Theriogenology*. Vol. 153, 2020. P. 62–67. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.theriogenology.2020.05.014>.

⁴² Setchell, B. P The parkes lecture heat and the testis. *Reproduction*, 1998, 114(2), 179–194.

⁴³ Valente, É. E. L., Chizzotti, M. L., de Oliveira, C. V. R., Galvão, M. C., Domingues, S. S., de Castro Rodrigues, A., & Ladeira, M. M. Intake, physiological parameters and behavior of Angus and Nellore bulls subjected to heat stress. *Semina: Ciências Agrárias*, 2015, 36(6Supl2), 4565–4574.

⁴⁴ Meyerhoeffer, D. C., Wettemann, R. P., Coleman, S. W., Wells, M. E. Reproductive Criteria of Beef Bulls during and after Exposure to Increased Ambient Temperature, *Journal of Animal Science*. Vol. 60. Is. 2, February 1985. P. 352–357. URL: <https://doi.org/10.2527/jas1985.602352x>.

⁴⁵ O'Brien, M. D., Rhoads, R. P., Sanders, S. R., Duff, G. C., Baumgard, L. H. Metabolic adaptations to heat stress in growing cattle. *Domestic Animal Endocrinology*. Vol. 38. Is. 2, 2010. P. 86–94. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.domaniend.2009.08.005>.

Moderate heat stress suppresses the fraction of active polysomal ribosomes from more than 60 % (preheating) to less than 30 %. The return to physiological levels results in an increase in protein synthesis, called “recovery”⁴⁶.

Heat stress affects digestion in ruminants, and can cause disruption of protective functions in the digestive tract⁴⁷.

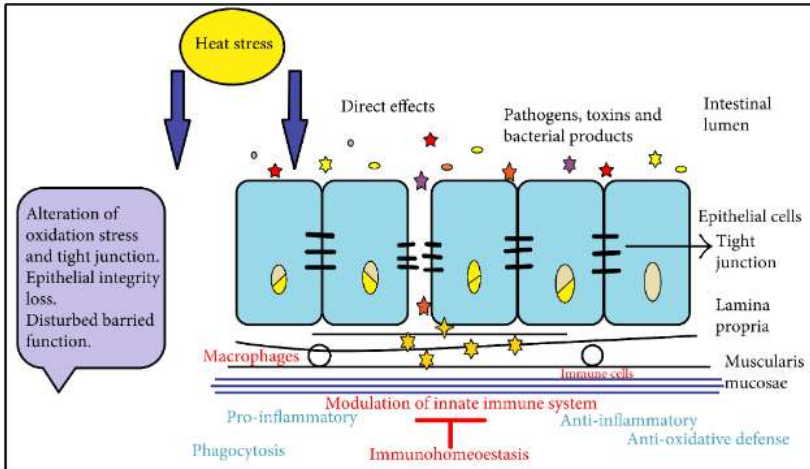


Fig. 1. Effects of chronic heat stress on the intestinal mucosa²⁹

Disruption of the epithelial barrier in the intestine allows entry of molecules in the intestinal lumen as well as opportunistic microbiota and entry into intestinal-associated immune organs and causes an inflammatory response. Most investigators have described that proinflammatory cytokines, such as TNF- α , INF- γ , IL-1 β , and IL-13, lower the barriers by decreasing the expression of tight junction proteins and promoting epithelial apoptosis. Changes in cytokines and their consequences associated with tight junctions

⁴⁶ Duncan, Roger F., Hershey, J. W. Protein synthesis and protein phosphorylation during heat stress, recovery, and adaptation. *The Journal of cell biology*, 1989, 109.4: 1467–1481.

⁴⁷ Ghulam Mohyuddin, S., Khan, I., Zada, A., Qamar, A., Arbab, A. A. I., Ma, X. B., ... & Yong Jiang, M. Influence of heat stress on intestinal epithelial barrier function, tight junction protein, and immune and reproductive physiology. *BioMed Research International*, 2022.

during the inflammatory process are complex and require additional research⁴⁸.

Heat stress also affects carcass quality, which is reflected in the amount of subcutaneous and intramuscular fat⁴⁹.

Intramuscular fat content of skeletal muscle, including the longest dorsi muscle, also known as marbled fat, is one of the most important factors determining the quality of beef in several countries, including South Korea, Japan, Australia and the United States.

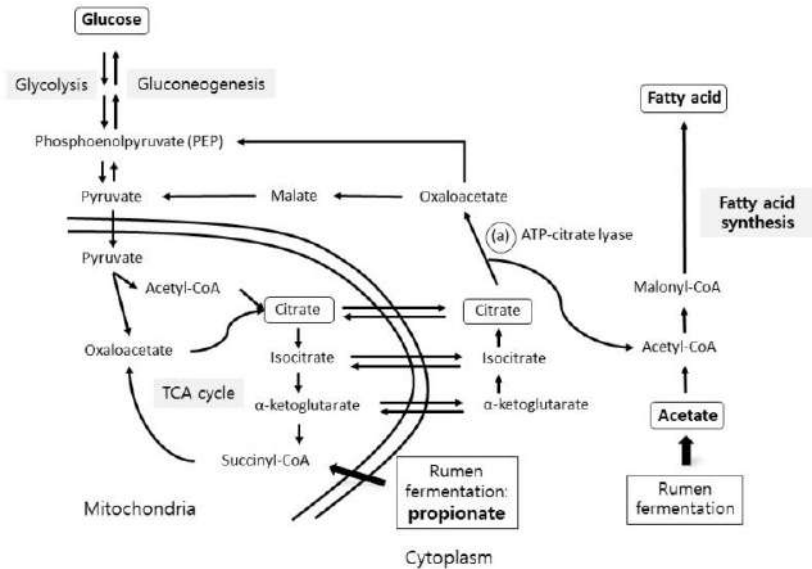


Fig. 2. Fatty acid synthesis in ruminants⁵⁰

As this figure shows, microorganisms in the rumen ferment polysaccharides into volatile fatty acids such as acetate, propionate and butyrate. Acetate and propionate can promote FA synthesis. Acetate is

⁴⁸ Leppkes, M., Roulis, M., Neurath, M. F., Kollias, G., & Becker, C. Pleiotropic functions of TNF- α in the regulation of the intestinal epithelial response to inflammation. *International immunology*, 2014, 26(9), 509–515.

⁴⁹ Park, S. J., Beak, S. H., Kim, S. Y., Jeong, I. H., Piao, M. Y., Kang, H. J., ... & Baik, M. Genetic, management, and nutritional factors affecting intramuscular fat deposition in beef cattle – A review. *Asian-Australasian journal of animal sciences*, 2018, 31(7), 1043–1061. doi: 10.5713/ajas.18.0310.

⁵⁰ Bauman, D. E., Mellenberger, R. W., & Derrig, R. G. Fatty acid synthesis in sheep mammary tissue. *Journal of dairy science*, 1973, 56(10), 1312–1318.

converted to acetyl-CoA in the cytoplasm of ruminant cells and is used for fatty acid synthesis. Propionate is transported into the mitochondria where it enters the tricarboxylic acid cycle via succinyl-CoA and can be used as a substrate for glucose production via gluconeogenesis. Glucose that is synthesized from propionate or leaves the rumen and is absorbed in the small intestine can generate citrate in the tricarboxylic acid cycle, from where it can be transported into the cytosol. Citrate in the cytosol is decomposed into oxaloacetate and acetyl-CoA by ATP-citrate lyase, and acetyl-CoA can be used for the synthesis of fatty acids³¹.

Consequently, there are several critical points for disruption of fatty acid synthesis during heat stress, these are disruption of ruminal digestion and the formation of volatile fatty acids and disturbance of glucose metabolism.

Heat stress increases the body temperature of cattle; this causes an acclimation response to reduce the heat generated during digestion, resulting in decreased feed intake⁵¹. Reduced feed intake due to heat stress conditions reduces cattle blood glucose and carbohydrate metabolites by affecting glycolysis and gluconeogenesis pathways^{52, 53}.

It was shown that the levels of glucose, galactose, lactose, ribose and arabinol in blood serum were reduced in the mild and severe heat stress groups compared to the control, and the content of myoinositol and acetic acid was significantly higher in the group of beef calves with severe heat stress. These changes in blood carbohydrate metabolites appeared to be related to heat stress and its effect on glucose metabolism⁵⁴. Heat stress increases protein breakdown and AA mobilization, allowing further energy production for maintenance and growth⁵⁵.

As the largest reservoir of protein and amino acids, muscle protein metabolism has a direct impact on whole body amino acid levels and protein

⁵¹ Baumgard, L. H., & Rhoads Jr, R. P. Effects of heat stress on postabsorptive metabolism and energetics. *Annu. Rev. Anim. Biosci.*, 1(1), 2013, 311–337.

⁵² Kim, W. S., Peng, D. Q., Jo, Y. H., Nejad, J. G., & Lee, H. G. Responses of beef calves to long-term heat stress exposure by evaluating growth performance, physiological, blood and behavioral parameters. *Journal of Thermal Biology*, 2021, 100, 103033.

⁵³ Abbas, Z., Sammad, A., Hu, L., Fang, H., Xu, Q., & Wang, Y. Glucose metabolism and dynamics of facilitative glucose transporters (GLUTs) under the influence of heat stress in dairy cattle. *Metabolites*, 10(8), 2020, 312.

⁵⁴ Kim, Won-Seob, Jongyoo Kim, and Hong-Gu Lee. "Identification of Potential Biomarkers and Metabolic Pathways of Different Levels of Heat Stress in Beef Calves". *International Journal of Molecular Sciences* 23, 2022, no. 17: 10155. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijms231710155>.

⁵⁵ O'Brien M. D., Rhoads R. P., Sanders S. R., Duff G. C., Baumgard L. H., Metabolic adaptations to heat stress in growing cattle. *Domestic Animal Endocrinology*. Vol. 38. Is. 2, 2010. P. 86–94, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.domaniend.2009.08.005>.

metabolism. Under stress, muscle is catabolized to substrates (amino acids) for energy supply through gluconeogenesis in the liver^{56, 57}.

Insulin-like growth factor-1 (IGF-1) is synthesized and released from the liver, then transported into the blood to regulate body growth and protein metabolism. It increases muscle amino acid uptake and protein synthesis, and inhibits protein catabolism through binding to IGF-1R and triggering the downstream effectors S6K1 and eukaryotic translation initiation factor 4E-binding protein-1^{58, 59}.

4. Heat stress and beef cattle breeding in Ukraine

Beef cattle breeding includes about fifty beef breeds of cattle. The selection of such animals has been carried out for the previous 300 years, and its goal is to effectively “convert” feed into high-quality beef. The lack of specialized beef cattle in Ukraine, the low efficiency and high cost of imports have necessitated the development of beef breeds taking into account soil and climatic zones. As a result of painstaking work, Ukrainiska (1993), Volynska (Volyne (1994)), Poliska (1999) and Pivdenna (Southern (2009)) meat breeds were created and approved⁶⁰.

Ukrainian producers have compiled a rating of beef cattle breeds in Ukraine. Based on their popularity, the breeds were ranked in the following order: Volynska (Volyne) meat; Aberdeen Angus; Poliska meat; Pivdenna (Southern) meat; Simmental meat; Ukrainian meat; Limousine; Charolais; Sira Ukrainian (Grey Ukrainian); Znamensky type of Poliska meat; Hereford; Blonde d’Aquitaine⁶¹.

Taking into account global trends in the development of the breeding process in relation to global warming, a zebu breed of beef cattle was created

⁵⁶ Sandri M. Protein breakdown in cancer cachexia. *Seminars in cell & developmental biology*. Academic Press, 2016. T. 54. C. 11–19.

⁵⁷ Pedroso, F. E., Spalding, P. B., Cheung, M. C., Yang, R., Gutierrez, J. C., Bonetto, A., ... & Zimmers, T. A. Inflammation, organomegaly, and muscle wasting despite hyperphagia in a mouse model of burn cachexia. *Journal of cachexia, sarcopenia and muscle*, 2012, 3, 199–211.

⁵⁸ Ma, B., He, X., Lu, Z., Zhang, L., Li, J., Jiang, Y., ... & Gao, F. Chronic heat stress affects muscle hypertrophy, muscle protein synthesis and uptake of amino acid in broilers via insulin like growth factor-mammalian target of rapamycin signal pathway. *Poultry science*, 2018, 97(12), 4150–4158.

⁵⁹ Crossland, H., Kazi, A. A., Lang, C. H., Timmons, J. A., Pierre, P., Wilkinson, D. J., ... & Atherton, P. J. Focal adhesion kinase is required for IGF-I-mediated growth of skeletal muscle cells via a TSC2/mTOR/S6K1-associated pathway. *American Journal of Physiology-Endocrinology and Metabolism*, 2013, 305(2), E183-E193.

⁶⁰ Ugnivenko A. M., Kolisnyk O. I., Kos N. V. Meat breeding: Textbook. Kyiv, 2020. 536 p.

⁶¹ Rating of beef cattle breeds in Ukraine. URL: <https://kurkul.com/spetsproekty/961-reyting-myasnih-porid-vrh-v-ukrayini>.

in Ukraine – the Pivdenna (Southern) beef cattle for breeding in the hot climate of the steppe zone of Ukraine. In 2008, it was tested and recognized as a selection achievement in animal husbandry.

The Taurian type of the pivdenna beef breed was created by the method of complex reproductive crossing of cows of the Chervona Stepova (Red Steppe) breed with bulls of the world's best breeds of beef cattle, Shorthorn and Santa Gertrude, followed by hybridization of two- and three-breed crosses with Cuban zebu. As a result of the hybridization, arrays of animals with a polyheterozygous genotype structure were obtained. Breeding them “inside” ensured the stable transmission of traits to descendants, since with this structure of the genotype, polyhybrid cleavage occurs, which minimizes or eliminates the appearance of extreme variants. The choice of zebu was due to the fact that zebu-like breeds can easily tolerate long-term exposure to an environment with high temperatures (≥ 35 °C), while maintaining the constancy of homeostasis, animal health and level of productivity. The body temperature of zebu and zebu-like cattle increases by 1 °C only at ambient temperatures ≥ 43 °C⁶².

When studying the heat resistance of full-aged cows of the Pivdenna (Southern) beef breed in the thermoneutral zone, it was found that the value of the heat resistance index (THRI) is 81.64 ± 0.62 , which is significantly higher than that of other breeds of dairy and beef cattle ($(57 \pm 1.03 - 79 \pm 1.01)$) and close to the THRI value of zebu and zebu-like cattle (85 ± 1.16). Under heat load, when the temperature difference of 7° and 13° is 17–20 °C (increasing from 17–20 to 35–40 °C), THRI probably ($P > 0.999$) increases, which ensures the preservation of temperature homeostasis and body temperature within the physiological norm⁶³.

A blood test indicates that the body of Taurian type cows responds to temperature stress by increasing the amount of albumin in the blood serum by 23.8 % from 26.0 ± 0.16 to 32.2 ± 0.08 g/l. ($P > 0.999$) and a decrease in the total amount of globulins by 11 % from 52.4 ± 0.13 to 47.2 ± 0.07 g/l, which ensures the preservation of colloid-osmotic pressure. With a general decrease in the content of the globulin fraction, the content of γ -globulins probably increases by 34 % from 22.3 ± 0.12 to 29.9 ± 0.1 g/l ($P > 0.999$). This immunoglobulin ensures the activity of precipitation reactions, neutralization of toxins and viruses, as well as other endogenous and exogenous factors. Under heat stress, the leukocyte count probably decreases by 27.7 % from 12.06 ± 0.21 to

⁶² Voronenko V. I., Omelchenko L. O., Fursa N. M., Makarchuk R. M., Naidyonova V. O., Dubinsky O. L. Taurian type of the southern meat breed—an innovative breeding achievement in zootechnical science. Scientific Bulletin Askania-Nova. 2009. No. 2. P. 38–46.

⁶³ Vdovichenko Yu.V., Omelchenko L. O., Naidyonova V. O. Creation of beef cattle genotypes for beef breeding and production in conditions of intense heat load. Herald of Agrarian Science. 2013. No. 6. P. 34–38.

9.44 ± 0.14 thousand/mm³ (P > 0.999). Considering that leukocytes determine the cellular mechanisms of immunity, and blood serum proteins determine the humoral ones, both mechanisms can be considered quite developed in cows of the breed, but in the thermoneutral zone the cellular ones are dominant, and during heat stress, the humoral factors of nonspecific resistance are dominant.

High values of the correlation coefficients of the heat resistance index with indicators of immunological reactivity during thermal load indicate that it is the thermal load that is the factor that activates the body's defense mechanisms and its adaptation to the action of inadequate environmental influences⁶⁴.

In general, animals of the Tauride type have a high level of adaptation to the intense heat load caused by the meteorological characteristics of the region's climate. High THRI values, which probably increase with intense heat load, ensure the preservation of temperature homeostasis in the body.

CONCLUSIONS

Global climate change on our planet is of significant concern to beef producers. Productive animals have certain comfort temperature limits, compliance with which affects their well-being, food supply and productivity. The activity of anabolic enzymes depends on the temperature of the body and tissue, pH and the presence of the substance in sufficient quantities. It has been shown that in groups of mild and severe heat stress, the level of many carbohydrates in the blood serum is reduced, the synthesis of fatty acids is disrupted, protein catabolism increases and the concentration of amino acids increases. Which has a significant impact on maintaining heat balance, energy supply and the intensity of anabolic processes. An increase in body temperature as a result of heat stress in beef cattle has an extremely negative impact on its welfare, physiological state and the intensity of muscle protein synthesis. Moreover, long-term effects may last even longer. The main ways to avoid the threat of heat stress in productive animals are quite universal. This is the genetic selection of resistant breeds, re-equipment of livestock buildings, platforms and pastures with means for regulating the speed of air movement, provision of sufficient drinking water, sprinkling, shade, changing the diet towards reducing the intensity of digestion and feeding high-quality feed.

⁶⁴ Vdovichenko Y. V., Omelchenko L. O., Fursa N. M., Makarchuk R. M., Yaremchuk A. I. Mechanisms of adaptation of animals of the pividenna (southern) meat breed of cattle to the extreme conditions of the steppe zone of Ukraine. Scientific Bulletin "Askania-Nova". 2013. No. 6. P. 132–141.

SUMMARY

Global climate change on our planet is of significant concern to beef producers. Productive animals have certain comfort temperature limits, compliance with which affects their well-being, food supply and productivity. The activity of anabolic enzymes depends on the temperature of the body and tissue, pH and the presence of the substance in sufficient quantities. It has been shown that in groups of mild and severe heat stress, the level of many carbohydrates in the blood serum is reduced, the synthesis of fatty acids is disrupted, protein catabolism increases and the concentration of amino acids increases. Which has a significant impact on maintaining heat balance, energy supply and the intensity of anabolic processes. An increase in body temperature as a result of heat stress in beef cattle has an extremely negative impact on its welfare, physiological state and the intensity of muscle protein synthesis. Moreover, long-term effects may last even longer. The main ways to avoid the threat of heat stress in productive animals are quite universal. This is the genetic selection of resistant breeds, re-equipment of livestock buildings, platforms and pastures with means for regulating the speed of air movement, provision of sufficient drinking water, sprinkling, shade, changing the diet towards reducing the intensity of digestion and feeding high-quality feed.

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