

### Abstract

Forty-five zebu steers (avg wt 311 kg) were allotted to 3 watering frequency treatments with 15 steers/treatment. The treatments involved watering once every day (1/1), watering once every 2 days (1/2) and watering once every 3 days (1/3) to investigate the effect of watering frequency on forage consumption and steer performance. Three steers/treatment were used to quantify fecal output and estimated forage consumption. All steers were grazed together in a 100-ha paddock for 10 hours daily and confined in a corral overnight. Steers were allowed ad libitum access to water only in the evenings according to the watering schedule. The study was conducted over 6 months, during which time total fecal collections were made in March, April, June, and July. All steers were weighed approximately every 2 weeks. Forage consumption was reduced ( $P < 0.01$ ) for steers watering (1/2) and (1/3), compared with the (1/1) watered group. Forage intake was highest ( $P < 0.01$ ) in April when herbage was green and growing. Steer performance followed a seasonal pattern reflecting changes in forage quality. Watering frequency did not influence steer performance. Reducing watering frequency from daily to once every 2 or 3 days may enhance utilization of available range and save on cost of providing water for cattle under certain pastoral conditions.