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Influence of diets with silage from forage plants adapted to the semi-arid conditions on lamb quality and sensory attributes

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ABSTRACT

Quality and sensory attributes of meat from 32 mixed-breed Santa Inês lambs fed diets composed of four silages with old man saltbush (*Atriplex nummularia* Lind), buffelgrass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*), Gliricidia (*Gliricidia sepium*), and Pornunça (*Manihot* sp.) were evaluated. Meat from lambs fed diet containing old man saltbush silage ($P<0.05$) showed greater values for cooking loss. Of the sensory attributes evaluated in the *Longissimus lumborum* muscle of the lambs, color and juiciness did not differ ($P>0.05$). However, the silages led to differences ($P<0.05$) in aroma, tenderness, and flavor values. The meat from animals fed the pornunça and Gliricidia silages was tenderer. Flavor scores were higher in meat from lambs that consumed old man saltbush silage and lower in the meat from those fed buffelgrass silage. Diets formulated with buffelgrass silage for sheep reduce meat production. Based on the results for carcass weight and meat quality, old man saltbush and pornunça are better silages for finishing sheep.

Keywords: Sheep, Protein, Flavor, Juiciness, Moisture