BODY MEASUREMENTS AND WEIGHTS OF MALAWIAN LOCAL GOATS: J A Ayoade; *Department of Livestock Production, University of Malawi, Bunda College of Agriculture P O Box 219, Lilongwe, Malawi.*

A study of the relationship between body measurements and weights was carried out in Malawian local goats. (Key words: goat, body length, heart girth, body weight correlation coefficients).

46 male and female Malawian goats from Bunda college farm were used to determine the characteristics of the body measurements in relationship with age and weight in animals less than one year of age and from one year of age and older. The animals were allowed to browse and graze for 7 hours daily. Supplementary feed was not offered in accordance with village management techniques. The weighing and measuring were done in the early morning before animals had access to feed and water. The parameters taken were body length (from the point of shoulder to the pin bone), heart girth and body weight. Age was obtained from birth records.

The measurements and weights of males less than one year of age were higher than for females; while in females one year of age and older, all the parameters were higher than males. The estimated correlation coefficients between body measurements and body weight were positive and statistically significant ($P < 0.01$)

Body measurements and their correlation coefficients (r) with body weight of Malawian goats

Age	Sex	Body length (cm)	Heart girth (cm)	Body weight (kg)	Correlation coefficient(r) with body weight	
					Body length	Heart girth
Less than 1 year of age	Females (non-pregnant)	46.55 ± 2.70 (n = 9)	50.38 ± 2.97 (n = 9)	10.52 ± 1.52 (n = 9)	0.98**	0.99**
	Males (castrated)	51.00 ± 2.16 (n = 8)	56.76 ± 1.69 (n = 8)	13.63 ± 0.98 (n = 8)	0.75*	0.92**
1 year of age and older	Females (non-pregnant)	63.5 ± 0.89 (n = 23)	69.37 ± 0.86 (n = 23)	23.91 ± 0.73 (n = 23)	0.70**	0.84**
	Males (castrated)	59.22 ± 1.66 (n = 6)	62.92 ± 0.96 (n = 6)	18.17 ± 0.95 (n = 6)	0.81**	0.97**

n = number of animals

Values are Mean ± S.E. , *P < 0.05, **P< 0.01.

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