Effect of Zinc Source and Optaflexx® on the Growth Performance and Carcass Characteristics of Steers Fed in Confinement to Harvest

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A single randomized complete block design study was conducted to compare three sources of supplemental zinc fed with and without Optaflexx on feedlot performance and carcass traits of feedlot steers. Optaflexx was fed at 27.3 g/ton of dry matter which provided 316 mg per head daily during the final 29 days on feed when Optaflexx was fed. The zinc sources evaluated were: 1) zinc sulfate, 2) a combination (67:33 zinc ratio) of zinc sulfate and ZINPRO® 100 (zinc methionine complex) and 3) IntelliBond® Z (zinc hydroxychloride) and were fed at 90 ppm added Zn for the entire 154 day study. The study was conducted in a small pen research facility according to label directions. A total of 432 steers were allocated to 48 pens of nine head each. Treatments consisted of: Treatments 1 and 3) Zinc sulfate fed with and without Optaflexx; Treatments 2 and 4) a combination of Zinc Sulfate and ZINPRO 100 fed with and without Optaflexx and Treatments 3 and 6) IntelliBond Z fed with and without Optaflexx. The steers were on feed for a total of 154 days. An interaction between Optaflexx and zinc source was detected for dressing percentage (P < 0.01). No other interactions between Optaflexx and zinc source for feedlot performance or the remaining carcass traits were detected (P > 0.10). When expressed on a “deads and rejects out” basis, Optaflexx increased live gain (17.6 lb), improved feed conversion (15%), increased carcass weight (17.0 lb) and increased LMA (0.39 sq in), (P < 0.05). No differences (P > 0.15) between zinc sources were detected for feedlot performance or carcass traits.