

Summary

Some aspects of growing and managing tropical kudzu and its use as a protein bank are presented. At the Gualaca experiment station, David, Panama, this species produces up to 5.4 t/ha of DM every 42 days. Tannin content in the whole plant varies between 2.42% in the rainy period and 0.20% in the dry period; CP *in vivo* digestibility is, on the average, 65% at 3 months and 59% at 5 months after cutting, respectively. Use of kudzu as a protein bank is made by introducing animals for 1 to 2 hours daily after milking, the average DM consumption being 54 g/kg LW^{0.75}. In dual-purpose production systems, with grasses of low CP content, kudzu provided in this manner increases of daily milk production up to 1.5 liters/animal/day. Because of the advantages observed up to now with kudzu as a low-cost CP source, on-farm research of protein banks with this legume is being undertaken in Panama.