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C1371 ANALYSIS OF THE MILKING WORK ON SERRANA GOAT FARMS IN NE PORTUGAL, IN ORDER TO IMPROVE GOAT BREEDING AND MILK PRODUCTION, IN THIS REGION

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1 Key words

small-scale milking, work, development

2 Introduction

The "Serrana" goat is the leading Portuguese local breed and it is generally bred to produce milk for cheese-making. Besides, the "Serrana" goat is largely predominant in the northeastern region of Portugal.

In this region, the farms on which the Serrana goat is raised are small, with small flocks raised according to extensive systems and they rarely have suitable milking facilities. Mostly, goats are hand-milked inside the shelters in which they are housed during the night.

As a result of actions carried out over the recent years involving strategies to improve milking conditions on goat farms in the region, some breeders adopted mechanical milking.

Presently, there are very few farms with milking machines. Milking parlors are in very reduced number and usually, goats are placed on a platform and milked by small-scale milking machines (mobile/portable machines).

For these breeders, mechanical milking is a new technology, they are inexperienced and they lack knowledge about the correct use of these machines and best milking practices.

The main objectives of this work were to identify milking practices on farms with mechanical milking; to analyze milker's procedures and activities; and to study work organization during goat milking. The study allows us to identify problems and to think about ways to tackle them, as well as to propose changes that should be recommended.

ANCRAS (Serrana breeder's association) intends to encourage breeders to adopt mechanical milking, aiming to improve working conditions and milk quality. Therefore, it contributes to improvement in goat production and the development in rural areas.

3 Material and Methods

Milking was studied on six goat farms (ANCRAS affiliate) that used milking machines.

We collected data about the conditions of the place where milking is carried out, the equipment used and work organization.

Milking procedures were recorded on video with a digital camera. Later, video recordings were studied with appropriate software in order to identify milking practices, to analyze working organization and to identify activities and procedures performed by milkers. After that, we identified the problems and deficiencies that occurred during milking work.

4 Results/Conclusions

Observing milking work we can say that there are significant differences among goat farms studied. There are milkers with different working methods and different work organization.

On several farms, it is possible to verify the poor adaptation to new technologies (mechanical milking) and the lack of knowledge about good practices required by this type of milking method.

The main problems and deficiencies identified have to do with the cleanliness and disinfection of the teats and udder. Other times, they concern handling and controlling goats, or the way work is organized.

5 Acknowledgements/References
