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The Moka cattle, an element of the Reunion Island heritage to preserve

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Thirty-three animals typed as Moka by their owners were the subject of a phenotypical description and measurements. The mean value for the thoracic perimeter, the height at withers and the rump width are respectively 162 6 15.2 cm, 116 6 8.3 cm and 120 6 17.6 cm; the mean liveweight of males and females are 430 6 85 kg and 340 6 45 kg respectively. These results constitute the initial values of a zootechnical description of the breed. They show the underaverage development of the animals, which can be qualified as medium sized. A photographic database of individual animals was created and could be used for the definition of the standard of the breed.

The genetic analysis showed that the population presents a good allelic richness (6.7 alleles/locus) and genetic diversity (measured by an unbiased heterozygocity of 0.75), and a low estimated consanguinity (3.3%). Some specific features have been identified, such as the presence of zebu specific alleles, but few admixtures of taurine cattle. The relationship of this breed with African breeds, especially from Madagascar, or with European or Creole cattle will be studied in more detail in the future.

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