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Dairy Markets and Distribution Channels in Bamako, Mali

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Abstract

From August 2017 to March 2018, research about the dairy markets in Bamako, capital city of Mali, was carried out within the BMBF-funded project Urban FoodPlus. Fresh milk and dairy products are nutritious foods that can alleviate certain nutrient deficiencies, especially in food insecure societies of West Africa. While the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) recommends a yearly per capita milk consumption of 62L, Mali remains at a low national average of 10L, and about 25L in Bamako. For this study, 166 milk producing households were successfully interviewed in the urban and peri-urban areas of the metropole. The semi-structured questionnaire included both qualitative and quantitative questions on their household socio-economic characteristics and assets, farm production and management, sales and purchases, institutional factors, and milk marketing strategies. In addition, data on 68 random sale points of dairy products was collected across 18 different neighbourhoods. A total of 103 milk samples were compiled and analysed for physiochemical components. Results show a median herd size of 40 cattle heads per household, and a low average daily milk production of 3.7L cow⁻¹. For milk quality, 4.1% was the average fat content, 3.5% for protein, and only 5 samples were diluted (mean of 11.8% of water). Average farm-gate price of fresh unpasteurised milk was 380 CFA L⁻¹ (0.58€). Sale points sold on average 40L per day of fresh pasteurised milk for 560 CFA L⁻¹ (0.85€). In terms of transformation, neither households nor sale points marketed locally-made cheese or butter, and all yogurts in the city are made with imported milk powder. Transformation is limited to “fènè”, a traditional soured milk product fermented without lactic cultures. Only 14% of households produced “fènè” for the farm-gate price of 505 CFA L⁻¹ (0.77€), and almost half of the sale points also sold “fènè” for roughly 590 CFA L⁻¹ (0.90€). Accordingly, only 30% of respondents mentioned having access to training related to dairy. Investigating the milk distribution channels used by urban Malian dairy farmers and the fresh milk transformations occurring along the value chain can enable policy makers and entrepreneurs to identify the lacunas of the markets and value addition opportunities.

Keywords: Bamako, dairy, livestock, Mali, markets, milk, urban agriculture, value chain