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“Development on the margin”

Some Aspects of Camel Raising in the Butana Area of the Sudan

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Abstract

Information concerning management, feeding, nutrition and production performance of camels are scanty. The overall objective of this study is therefore to probe the changes in herds and their structure specially herd population with regard to breeds, the current production system; production performance and constrains that hinder camel production in Butana area of Sudan. A well planned questionnaire was designed for the purpose of study. A follow up for one year of milk production in open grazing system (migratory) and semi open grazing system (sedentary) was carried out. The results obtained showed three production systems, the nomadic migratory 22 %, semi-nomadic 36 % and the sedentary production system 42 %. It also reflected a negative decrease (-10.97) in camel herd population under migratory system and a positive increase of (5.2 %) in camel herd population in sedentary system. Milk yield per lactation for migratory was 1654.4 kg and 2925 kg for the sedentary system. The mean herd size was 62 head for migratory and 118 for sedentary, with male to female percentage of 25.6 % and 74.4 %, respectively. Irrespective of sex, age wise less than one year represented 14.4 % of the herd, less than 4 years 23.9 %, less than 14 years 48.9 % and above 14 years was 12.9 %. The practice of the Nomadism by the herders showed a decrease along years 1984, 1994 and 2003 with percentage of 73.3 %, 33 % and 22 %, respectively. Each year is independent of the other and not on an additive basis. The results reflected illiteracy among herders groups of age (15–29 years) was 47.8 % and for (30–49 years) was 67.7 % and for (above 50 years) old was 67.7 %. The study revealed that the migratory system is no longer highly profitable for camel production where the yearly expenditure was exceeding the yearly income. The constrains of camel production include natural disasters as drought and man made halters as encroachment of mechanised agriculture on pasture, insecurity and tribal conflicts and wars.

Keywords: Butana area, camel production, grazing system, herd population