Dairy Asia partnership

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Introduction / Background

Dairy Asia was established in 2014 by the FAO through the Animal Production and Health Commission for Asia and the Pacific (APHCA). It is a multi-stakeholder partnership with a vision to build a sustainable dairy sector in Asia and the Pacific region. The partnership is voluntary and its functions are based on consensus and mutual respect.

Dairy Asia is one of the action networks of the Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock in the region. As a knowledge partner, Dairy Asia also collaborates with the International Dairy Federation, Dairy Sustainability Framework, IILH, and the IFCN-dairy network.

In 2020, the Dairy Asia secretariat office was established in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia supported by the Government of Mongolia and FAO. Its objective is to strengthen Dairy Asia as a sustainable regional institution for the dairy sector development in the region.

Dairy Asia’s membership has reached 13 countries, namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. The partnership is prospectively aiming to be expanded to North-East Asia, Central Asia, South-East Asia, West Asia and the Middle East.

Methods / Approach

Cow milk accounts for 81% of world milk production followed by buffalo milk with 15%, goat milk with 2%, sheep milk with 1%, camel milk with 0.5%, and other dairy species (yak milk, mare milk, etc.) with 0.5% (FAO).

As an action network, Dairy Asia is highly focused on both cow milk and non-cow milk production and hosts a series of Dairy Asia dialogues in the region.

Cooperated with FAO, GASL, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry of Mongolia, Department of Livestock, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests of Bhutan, National Dairy Development Board of Nepal, National Research Center on Yak in India, IDF, Yurta Association, Dairy Association of China, “Treasure of Plateau” enterprise in China, the joint Dairy Asia dialogue: Yak milk production was held on 19th November 2021.

Cooperated with GASL, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry of Mongolia, National Research Center on Camel in India, Yak and Camel Foundation, Mongolian Bactrian Association, China Animal Agriculture Association, China Camel Industry Association, “Camelicious” in UAE, the joint Dairy Asia dialogue: Camel milk production was held on 26th May 2022.

References/Links

www.dairaysia.org

Results

The number of yaks in Asia is estimated at 17.3 million (China, Mongolia, Nepal, India, Bhutan...)

Main products: yak milk cheese, yak liquid milk, yogurt, curd, ghee, butter, and fermented milk.

Facing challenges in yak husbandry countries:
Harsh winter combined with droughts, rangeland degradation, worsened genetics, declining feeding resources, milk quality and safety, insufficient veterinary service, poor infrastructure, not enough market linkage (middle man), migration of yak herders to urban, aging yak herders, low recognition, insufficient in depth research, lack of supportive policy and regulations.

Camel population -35.0 million. (dromedary – 90%, Bactrian camel - 10%)
Camel milk is used as a treatment against diseases (diabetes, tuberculosis, autism, dropsy, jaundice, and asthma)

Main products: Camel liquid milk, powder, curd, ghee, and butter.

Facing challenges in camel husbandry countries:
Rangeland degradation, water scarcity, poor veterinary service, hybridization, milking training for camels, extension service, underdeveloped cold chain and transport, freeze drying facilities, lack of mechanism for testing adulteration of other milk, lack of marketing, and supportive policy and regulations.

Conclusions / Significance

Yak and Camel milk production may play an important role in non-cow milk production, nutrition security, rural livelihood, and regional sustainable development. Yak and Camel husbandry is one of the most eco-friendly sub-sectors in the global livestock that has a unique culture based on the nomadic lifestyle and special natural ecosystems.

From the joint Dairy Asia dialogues, new initiatives for the establishment of the World Yak Association and the International Bactrian Camel Association in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia have been proposed. Dairy Asia is calling on international organizations and national institutions in highlighted countries to cooperate on those proposed projects.

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