

Session 6: Challenges and Developments in recording and sampling for sheep and goats.

S06.O-04

OVERVIEWS OF MILK RECORDING AND RECORDING DEVICES IN SHEEP AND GOATS IN ITALY

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Milk performance recording in sheep and goats has been operational in Italy since the second half of the last century. The most recent demographic census indicates about 6.1 million sheep and 0.9 million goats belonging to more than 100 breeds distributed in 81,262 and 51,056 flocks, respectively. The most represented breeds are Sarda, Massese, Valle del Belice, Langhe, and Comisana for sheep and Saanen, Camosciata delle Alpi, Sarda, Aspromontana for goats. Official technicians perform milk recording methods monthly ("A" method). The methodologies used are AC and AT in sheep and AT in goats. Milk performance recording is executed using ICAR-approved devices. In 2022, 153367 ewes and 55671 goats were performance recorded, visiting 962 and 642 flocks, respectively, and spending about 10,000 working days. Milk analyses were more than 255,000 (69,000 in primiparous Sarda sheep only and 186,000 for goats)

Since 1970 Italian DHI organization (AIA) has been deploying a national service called SCM (Milking Control Service). SCM accounts for more than 100 highly qualified technicians and includes calibration checks of recording devices and efficiency control for milking systems in the absence (dry test) or presence (wet test) of milking animals. In addition, SCM service catalogs the milk meter operating in farms or used by technicians, detects milk registration errors, and corrects deviations whenever possible. In 2022, SCM performed more than 3 thousand calibration checks and dry tests (1,800 in sheep and 1,200 in goats).

From a recent survey, electronic meters represent about 5% of total devices, jars are the most used (about 85% in sheep and 49% in goats), and mechanical meters are 9% for sheep and 45% for goats.

Within the LEO (Livestock Environment Opendata) project, SCM acquired new-generation Vadia and Lactocorder TT devices to enhance the service testing, for example, pulsator settings and their faults.

The idea is to use advanced tools to thoroughly check the milking systems providing farmers early alerts, suggestions, and extension services to improve animal welfare and milk's quality and yield.