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## Impact of the Rearing System on the Milk Fatty Acids Composition of Saanen Goats Bred in the S-E Regions of Romania

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Original scientific paper

### SUMMARY

This paper aims especially to

- quantify the fatty acids composition of milk produced by goats from Saanen breed in relation with the rearing system in three
- private farms from the south and south-east regions of Romania (intensive, semi-intensive and extensive). In each farm a group of 15 goats was selected and their milk was monitored along 4 months, from June to September.

In each month the milk yield, the protein and fat as quality parameters were recorded, and also, the fatty acids composition was determined. Milk fat was improved in polyunsaturated fatty acids PUFA without changing the milk fat concentration. In each farm, in above-mentioned order, the milk sum of PUFA  $\omega$ -3 (% of total fatty acids methyl esters FAME) increased: 0.64, 1.38 and 2.19, respectively. The effect of breeding system is reflected in the PUFA ratio  $\omega$ -6/

1.38 2.19.

$\omega$ -3 (%)

0.54,

$\omega$ -6/ $\omega$ -3,  
 8.65, 2.54 1.86.  
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- $\omega$ -3 values which significantly decreased.
- 
- These values corresponding to each farm type were 7.40, 2.54 and 1.86. The favorable influence of pasture (in extensive farm) on the nutritional value of goat milk has been confirmed.

**Key words:** goat milk, fatty acids

## INTRODUCTION

Because more intense attention for goat milk beneficial properties is registered this milk consumption has increased. But the milk composition is variable and depends on animal diet, lactation period, season, breed, geographic region and other factors. The most important roles are played by the optimized rearing system which includes the nutrition and the animal breed.

In the last 10 years in Romania the main direction of goats breeding is for milk production, which depends largely, both quantitative and qualitative, by the system of goats exploitation practiced in farms.

Even that few modern farms were built, the goat farms in Romania are still in their vast majority of small and medium size and the applied operating technology is generally dependent by semi-intensive and extensive systems of exploitation (Raducuta, 2010). There is registered year by year an increased number of goats as a consequence of rearing intensification for autochthonous breeds or foreign breeds like Saanen or French Alpine.

The lipid composition of goat milk is well appreciated and increasing milk polyunsaturated fatty acids content through animal diet improves milk nutritional value.

The most important fatty acids are linoleic, linolenic and arachidonic because they

(Raducuta, 2010).

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-9

-11

(CLA),

(Dhiman, 2005).

- are essential for structure of various cell membranes and certain lipoproteins in humans. Milk fat can also, furnish the cis-9, trans-11 conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) that has health influencing properties including anticarcinogenic, anti-atherogenic, antiobesity, immune system enhancement and antidiabetic (Dhiman, 2005).

- In this context the paper aims to evaluate the quantitative parameters and the qualitative ones like fatty acids profile for goat milk of Saanen breed in relation with the operating system of exploitation. This breed is large spread in Romania and is well adapted to the territory climate.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

15

(50 ± 2.5 kg

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(E)

4

- Three groups of 15 Saanen goats each (50 ± 2.5 kg body weight) were monitorized. Each group belonged to a farm in the S-E plain regions of Romania: an intensive farm (I) in Constanta county, a semi-intensive one (S) in Teleorman county and a traditional, extensive farm (E) in Prahova county. They all were pluriparous in second or third lactation. After parturition which occurred in February, the differentiation between feeding was not possible so the observations were initiated in June and extended for 4 months till September.

- Animals were milked twice a day, and every month milk samples were collected from each animal. Each sample was analyzed for protein and fat content with infrared method using a Funke Gerber Lactostar analyser standardised for goat milk. Also, the milk fatty acids composition was determined by the gas chromatography method after extracting the lipids and the esterification of the fatty acids with methanol.

Funke Gerber Lactostar,

(FAME)

GC Perkin Elmer-Clarus 500,

- The resulted methyl esters (FAME) were separated using gas chromatograph GC Perkin Elmer-Clarus 500, equipped with

60m x 0.25 mm  
0.25µm )  
ISO/TS 17764-2: 2008  
SR CEN  
37  
/100 g  
(FAME).  
( ),  
( ), (EE),  
( ) -  
Criste  
(2003).  
INRA ( )  
IBNA Balotesti (Burlacu, 2002).  
I ( )  
( )  
1.8 m<sup>2</sup>)  
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( 1): , 0.5 kg  
2.2 kg/ / s  
18.5% [ ( )  
( )  
(UFL)/kg  
2].

- capillary column of high polarity stationary phase (Agilent BPX70; 60m x 0.25 mm inner diameter x 0.25µm thick film) and flame-ionization detector according to SR CEN ISO/TS 17764-2:2008 and comparing with a commercial reference mix of 37 fatty acids. The results are expressed as g fatty acid/ 100 g total FAME.

The feed and pasture were analyzed as prepared weighed samples and assayed for dry matter (DM), crude protein (CP), ether extractives (EE), crude fibre (CF) and ash (Ash), according to the methods presented in Criste (2003). Their nutritive value was calculated according to INRA (France) by applying a similar protocol developed by IBNA Balotesti (Burlacu, 2002).

All the animals in group I (intensive system) were kept in shelters under controlled environmental conditions (ventilation, temperature, surface/goat 1.8 m<sup>2</sup>) and with fully mechanized activities (milking, food distribution, garbage disposal, adaptation). They were fed a ration calculated for production of 3 L/head/d (Table 1): straw, 0.5 kg alfalfa hay and 2.2 kg/head/d of a granulated concentrate feed from a Netherland producer [crude protein (CP) 18.5% of dry matter (DM); 0.85 UFL/kg DM; detailed composition in Table 2].

### 1.

**Table 1. The ration composition for intensive goat rearing system**

	Kg	Kg DM/	UFL	PDIN	PDIE	Ca	P
Granulated feed	2.2	1.95	1.66	205	156	2.92	17.9
Alfalfa hay	0.5	0.43	0.30	38	26	8.17	0.77
Straw /	0.7	0.62	0.31	14	26	1.42	0.8
Total /	3.4	3.00	2.27	257	208	12,51	19.47

UFL =

PDIN =

PDIE =

UFL = Feed Units of Lactation

PDIN = intestinally digestible protein allowed by nitrogen

PDIE = intestinally digestible protein allowed by energy

2.

(‰)

**Table 2. Granulated concentrate feed – chemical composition (‰)**

DM	CP	EE	CF	NFE	Ash	Gross Energy	Ca	P
886	163.4	37.37	110.00	480.46	94.77	3816 Kcal	1.33	8.15
16.07%,	1.93%,	13.85%,		1.50%,	7.5%,	27.48%, 19.91%,		3.43%,
0.18%,	=	=		=	=	6.77%, 0.75%,		0.63,

Composition of granulated feed: sugarbeet pulp 27.48%, soybean meal 19.91%, wheat bran 16.07%, corn 13.85%, apple dried pulp 7.5%, barley 6.77%, limestone 3.43%, soybean oil 1.93%, molasses beet 1.50%, monocalcium phosphate 0.75%, minerals 0.63%, salt 0.18%); CP=crude protein, EE=ether extract, CF=crude fiber, NFE=nitrogen-free extractives

S

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The S group had concentrate and alfalfa hay administration after controlled and restricted grazing starting to April. The animal had free access (8.00 a.m-4.00 p.m.) to a permanent pasture, constituted by 30% leguminosae (*Trifolium repens*, *Trifolium pratense*, *Medicago falcata*) i 70% graminee (*Festuca vallesiaca*, *Lolium perenne*, *Bathriochloa ischaemum*, *Stipa capilata*, *Poa bulbosa*, *Agropyron repens*, *Poligonum aviculare*, *Taraxacum officinalis*, *Dactylis glomerata*). The ration for S group, calculated for production of 2.5 L/ head/d is presented in Table 3.

8.00 16.00 .)

30%

(*Trifolium repens*,

*Trifolium pratense*, *Medicago falcata*)

70% (*Festuca vallesiaca*,

*Lolium perenne*, *Bathriochloa ischaemum*,

*Stipa capilata*, *Poa bulbosa*, *Agropyron*

*repens*, *Poligonum aviculare*, *Taraxacum*

*officinalis*, *Dactylis glomerata*).

S,

2.5 L/ /

3.

3.

**Table 3. The ration composition for semi-intensive goat rearing system**

	Kg	Kg /DM	UFL	PDIN	PDIE	Ca	P
Grass pasture	8.00	1.36	1.28	103	95	12.2	4.08
Alfalfa hay	0.20	0.17	0.11	15	10	2.38	0.34
/ Corn	0.45	0.39	0.53	35	43	0.12	1.13
/ Barley	0.25	0.22	0.24	15	18	0.18	0.88
/ Total	-	2.14	2.16	168	166	14.88	6.43

UFL =

PDIN =

PDIE =

UFL = Feed Units of Lactation

PDIN = intestinally digestible protein allowed by nitrogen

PDIE = intestinally digestible protein allowed by energy

-

(8.00 .-16.00 .),

50%

The E group, reared under extensive conditions, had free access starting from April to pasture (8.00 a.m-4.00 p.m.), constituted by 50% leguminosae (*Trifolium*

(*Trifolium* sp., *Vicia* spp.) 50%  
 (*Festuca vallesiaca*, *Lolium perenne*,  
*Taraxacum officinalis*, *Dactylis glomerata*),  
 (

16.1% ,  
 0.95 UFL/kg .

Excel Windows.

sp., *Vicia* spp.) and 50% graminee (*Festuca vallesiaca*, *Lolium perenne*, *Taraxacum officinalis*, *Dactylis glomerata*) grazing on the banks of Prahova River (plain area); it received no other feeds. The average CP content of pasture was 16.1% of DM and its nutritive value 0.95 UFL/kg DM.

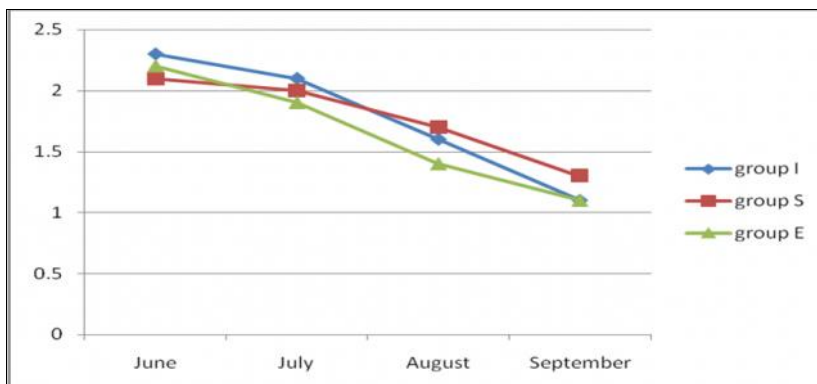
- The results were processed
- statistically for one-way variance using
- Excel for Windows computer program.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *The milk production*

The milk yield decreased along the months of lactation (Figure 1) while the body weight of goats did not show any significant change along the trial. The monthly average yield did not statistically differ among the groups.

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Fig. 1. Average milk yield for the 3 goat groups in the months of trial (L/ head/d)

S E

( 4).

### *The milk composition*

- No significant changes in the
- protein and fat content in the milk during
- the monitored lactation period were
- found (Table 4). Group S and E showed
- significantly lower fat content only in June
- but in all other months there were no
- significant differences between groups for
- protein or fat.

(Kljajevic, 2018).

This low fat level in June can be explained by the fact that Saanen goats are very prone to heat stress, which could strongly affect the expected quality of goat milk through the year (Kljajevic, 2018).

**4. (%)**  
**Table 4. The average milk composition (%) in each month of the trial**

	1 / Group I		S / Group S		E / Group E	
	Protein (%)	Fat (%)	Protein (%)	Fat (%)	Protein (%)	Fat (%)
/ June	3.14±0.19	3.84±0.91	3.09±0.13	3.18±0.26	3.26±0.75	2.61±0.42
/ July	3.27±0.67	3.72±0.35	3.31±0.08	3.88±0.22	3.15±0.79	3.22±0.50
/ August	3.59±0.62	3.80±0.67	3.53±0.09	3.79±0.60	3.31±0.66	3.49±0.40
September	3.53±0.45	3.56±0.55	3.58±0.27	3.83±0.37	3.37±0.50	3.91±0.73

*The milk fatty acids profile*

5,

As depicted in Table 5 the level of saturated fatty acids (SFA) in the milk of goats from group S is the highest value, 71.31%, which is also, significant different to level 65.26% of the group I. This difference is due to the myristic C14:0 and palmitic C16:0 acids which had unexpected highest values in group S, especially in August and September.

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The 68.36% level in group E is not different than group I value; an evident difference is only for the stearic acid C18:0 which is much higher in group E, respectively 10.02% than 6.96% in group I and 5.73% in group S. A detailed examination of the distribution of SFA showed a constant level in group I and E, and a slight increasing in group S through the months of the trial.

( )  
 S 71.31%,  
 65.26%.  
 14:0  
 16:0  
 -  
 S,  
 68.36%  
 -  
 18:0,  
 10.02% 6.96% I  
 5.73% S.  
 I ,  
 S

5. (g/100 g ) ± SD  
**Table 5. Milk fatty acids profile for the months of trial (g/100 g FAME) – mean value ± SD**

	group I	group S	group E
C 4:0	0.08±0.05	0.05±0.02	0.05±0.02
C 6:0	1.48±0.31	1.31±0.16	1.41±0.20
C 8:0	2.84±0.48	2.46±0.31	2.95±0.47
C 10:0	9.34±1.02	9.07±1.02	10.19±1.56
C 11:0	0.27±0.08	0.31±0.08	0.23±0.06
C 12:0	4.85±0.79	4.22±0.75	4.25±0.79
C 13:0	0.05±0.02	0.09±0.02	0.08±0.01
C 14:0	9.77±0.48	12.04±1.16	10.64±1.48
C 14:1	0.24±0.13	0.52±0.13	0.40±0.06
C 15:0	0.33±0.12	0.42±0.08	0.34±0.06
C 15:1	0.89±0.20	1.43±0.24	1.21±0.14
C 16:0	28.73±1.54	34.87±5.13	27.61±2.92
C 16:1	1.40±0.21	1.33±0.31	1.46±0.28
C 17:0	0.53±0.12	0.62±0.12	0.46±0.06
C 17:1	0.63±0.09	0.82±0.14	0.76±0.11
C 18:0	6.96±1.25	5.73±1.13	10.02±2.18
C 18:1n9c	25.18±2.01	18.38±2.45	20.12±2.86
C-18:2tr9,12	0.41±0.04	0.40±0.13	0.97±0.25
C-18:2cis9,12	3.83±0.21	2.39±0.30	2.44±0.32
C 20:0	0.02±0.03	0.10±0.04	0.14±0.06
C 18:3n6	0.01±0.00	0.11±0.07	0.15±0.07
C 20:1n9	0.09±0.01	0.12±0.06	0.15±0.08
C-18:3cis9,12,15	0.34±0.01	0.96±0.21	1.52±0.29
CLA(C18:2n 9c11t)	0.30±0.01	0.42±0.09	0.67±0.19
C 20:2n6	0.13±0.08	0.18±0.07	0.18±0.07
C 20:3n6	0.16±0.23	0.07±0.06	0.09±0.05
C 20:3n3	0.07±0.05	0.05±0.04	0.10±0.00
C 20:4n6	0.13±0.11	0.14±0.04	0.14±0.04
SFA	65.26±2.27	71.31±3.39	68.36±3.65
MUFA	28.43±1.99	22.60±2.80	24.10±3.15
PUFA	5.38±0.50	4.71±0.65	6.26±0.75
UFA	33.81±2.12	27.31±3.31	30.36±3.60
PUFA -3	0.64±0.02	1.38±0.25	2.19±0.33
PUFA -6	4.67±0.46	3.28±0.46	3.97±0.49
-6/ -3	7.40±0.79	2.54±0.39	1.86±0.23

( )  
 (28.43%) I  
 22.60% S 24.10% .  
 - , C18: 1n9c,  
 I,

The monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFA) level is significantly high (28.43%) in group I compared with 22.60% in group S and 24.10% in group E. This level is due to the concentration of cis-oleic acid, C18:1n9c, indeed present in the concentrate feed of the group I as mentioned by the producer. But the group



S

C14:1 (0.52%), C15:1 (1.43%)  
C17:1 (0.82%)

I E

( )  
(6.26%)  
5.38% I 4.71% S.

, C18:2n  
, C18:3cis9,12,15

CLA (C18:2n 9c11t).

Soryal (2004), D'Urso (2008),  
Tsiplakou (2006). CLA

15  
(Cabiddu, 2004; Sanz, 2007)

. CLA

*Butyrivibro*

*fibrisolvens*  
CLA

, CLA

0.67% E, 0.42% S  
0.30% I.

(0.97%),

(3.83%). S

(2.39%)

(2.44%)

S had some unexpected high values for C14:1 acid (0.52%), C15:1 (1.43%) and C17:1 (0.82%) and this is the reason that MUFA level in group S is the only decreased through the months June-September while in group I and E the level is relatively constant.

The polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) level is significantly high in group E (6.26%) comparing with 5.38% in group I and 4.71% in group S. The increasing of PUFA in group E is due to a great content of linoleic acid, C18:2n and alpha-linolenic acid, C-18:3cis9,12,15, in pasture.

Consequently, the milk had the greatest values for these acids, and for CLA (conjugated linoleic acid C18:2n 9c11t). The positive effect of pasture on milk PUFA has been reported by many authors for goats or sheep – Soryal (2004), D'Urso (2008), Tsiplakou (2006). The CLA as part of PUFA acids spectrum take an important place in the studies during the last 15 years (Cabiddu, 2004; Sanz, 2007) because of their health improving biological function.

CLA is formed mainly via isomerization of linoleic acid using the anaerobe *Butyrivibro fibrisolvens* in the rumen. The CLA-concentration in raw milk and milk products varies with different factors as breed, season, animal nutrition. In the context of our trial the CLA is influenced by the quality of meadow grass and indeed, the CLA level is improved by grazing feeding as can be observed by the results: 0.67% in group E, 0.42% in group S compared with 0.30% in group I.

Group E has the highest level for trans-linoleic acid (0.97%), and group I has the highest level for cis-linoleic acid (3.83%). In group S, the cis-linoleic acid has lower value (2.39%) than group E (2.44%) and this average result was influenced by the August and September pasture for group S. As previously

S.

(1.52%) 5  
(0.96%), 3

I (0.34%).

-3 ( -3)

-6 ( -6),

-3

: 2.19%

E ( 1.38% ) S ( 0.64% ) I ( )

-6/ -3 4,

7.40

S , 2.54 1.86.

- observed, the modification of this pasture quality influenced all the fatty acids content in these months.

The alpha-linolenic acid level is 5 times higher in group E (1.52%) and 3 times higher in group S (0.96%) than in group I (0.34%). And this is a beneficial effect for milk consumers as already known.

In the human nutrition a special attention is dedicated to omega-3 (PUFA -3) and omega-6 (PUFA -6) unsaturated long-chain fatty acids because they prevent coronary and cardiovascular diseases.

In our study, the level of -3 fatty acids is increasing as the feeding is based on grazing: 2.19% in group E (only pasture), 1.38% in group S (partial pasture) and only 0.64% in group I (not pasture).

The fatty acids ratio -6/ -3 below 4, as recommended by Food and Agriculture Organization Expert Committee can indicate that the tested milk is at low risk for human health. In our study, the ratio between these two groups of fatty acids was 7.40 for milk of group I, and decreased at very good values for group S and E, 2.54 and 1.86, respectively.

These values indicate that milk from grazing goats is with low risk factor for human health.

**CONCLUSIONS**

- This study confirms the beneficial influence of pasture to goat milk fatty acids profile by the presence of high content of CLA, -3 and -6 acids.

CLA,

-3 -6

:

-6/ -3 2.

With advance of pasture proportion in goats feeding the concentration of the major fatty acid groups changes: PUFA level increase, MUFA level decrease, SFA is not influenced, ratio -6/ -3 is lowering near 2.

Also, this study demonstrates the high biological value of the Saanen bred which is well adapted to Romanian rearing systems and produce very good quality milk.

Finally, it has to be underlined that pasture improves milk fatty acid profile without detrimental effects on milk fat or protein.

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24.1.2.

ADER

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## Assessment of the Quality of Milk from Dairy Farms throughout Kosovo based on Total Bacterial Count and Somatic Cells

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Original scientific paper

### SUMMARY

The main purpose of this study is the assessment of quality of the fresh milk collected from the dairy farms throughout Kosovo, as a part the national program "Transparency and Neutrality of Milk Samples".

- According to the national administrative instruction No. 20/2006 on milk quality standards, fresh milk is classified into four classes based on Total Bacterial Count (TBC) and Somatic Cells (SC).

- Around 2,000 dairy farms with a daily milk production of approximately 185,000 L were selected for sampling. In total, 9,663 samples of fresh bulk milk were collected during July-December 2019.

- Sodium azide was used as a preservative. Samples were kept cool during transport

9663

BactoScan™

(45.56%) 9 663

3.048 (31.55%)

III.

Fossomatic™

3 920

1.132 (11.71%)

II

and submitted to the Kosovo Food and Veterinary Laboratory for testing. TBC were analyzed by using BactoScan™ by measuring the individual bacteria cells in raw milk, whereas SC were analyzed by using Fossomatic™.

Present data show that 3,920 (40.56%) out of 9,663 samples were classified as Extra Class, 1,132 (11.71%) as a Class I, 1,563 (16.18%) as a Class II and 3,048 (31.55%) were classified as Class III (LUV 2019).

Present data do not show a big deviation in relation to national administrative instruction No. 20/2006. We can conclude that milk quality in Kosovo is above average quality and could be safely used for public health after heating treatment such are Pasteurisation (HTST) and Sterilisation (UHT).

**Key words:** fresh milk, dairy farmer, total bacteria counts, somatic cells, samples equipment

## INTRODUCTION

Milk and its products are an important source of nutrients preventing several human diseases, although negative effects such as lactose malabsorption or proteinic allergies may happen at a certain number of people (Pereira, 2014). The purpose was to provide real information for the total number of bacterial and somatic cells, nowadays is being considered much more important than given more datas about physical-chemical parameters such are fat, protein, lactose, acidity, density, freezing point, total dry mass etc., because they have to do with public health and food safety.

But, also dairy products respectively raw material milk production, should be produced and processed under strictly control measures to achieve the appropriate level of public health

-  
 (CAC/RCP 57-2004).  
 (A.I)  
 92/46/  
 (A.I., 20/2006).  
 (CFU)/ml,  
 (Dibra, 2011).  
 2 °C - 8 °C.  
 pH 6.4-6.8  
 (Bijo, 2012).  
 (Schukken et al., 2003).  
*Corynebacterium* spp, *Streptococcus*  
*uberis*  
 83%

protection determined in code of hygienic practise (CAC/RCP 57-2004).

Kosovo Authorities have approved Administrative Instruction (A.I) in accordance with Directive No.92/46/EEC on Quality Standards and Categorization of Fresh (raw) Milk (A.I., No. 20/2006). On this guideline are established indicators and their verification, sampling activity, milk standards and categorization classes (Extra, I-st, II-nd and III-rd).

To monitor the quality of milk among the parameters being tested are TBC and SC. Hence the TBC represents the number of bacterial colonies per unit CFU/ml and it's an indicator of general hygiene in relation to farm zootechnical management, the overall microbiological condition of product and sanitary-hygienic conditions under which the product was produced, processed or stored (Dibra, 2011). The hygiene of animal, milking device, equipmenets and environment are determining factors same as the requirement for immediate cooling 2 °C - 8 °C.

Taking into account the pH neutral 6.4-6.8 and nutrients, milk is attractive food for bacterial contamination. On the other side the Somatic Cells originates from blood (lymphocytes, leucocytes, monocytes, erythrocytes) and udder (teat, canal and glands) and their number depends on pathogenicity of microorganisms, immunity response, environment, lactation, hygiene, estrous cycle, stress, food and zootechnic conditions (Bijo, 2012).

SC shows the inflammation process mostly and specifically on the udder gland displaying clinical and subclinical mastitis (Schukken et al., 2003).

Negative coagulase staphylococci, *Corynebacterium* spp, *Streptococcus uberis*, are some of the pathogens causing mastitis found on up to 83% of all milk samples showing the presence of

100 000 /ml (Schwarz, 2010).  
 : 80 000; I 100 000;  
 II 300 000; III 500 000 ( )  
 300 000; I 400 000; II 500 000;  
 III 750 000 ( ) (A.I., 13/2011).  
 ,  
 100 000 /ml  
 30°C,  
 400 000,  
 ( )  
 12/2011).  
 ,  
 (More, 2009).

SC 100,000 cell/ml (Schwarz, 2010).  
 Categorization of cow milk according to  
 classes: **Extra** 80,000; **I** 100,000;  
**II** 300,000; **III** 500,000 (TBC) and  
**Extra** 300,000; **I** 400,000;  
**II** 500,000; **III** 750,000 (SC) (A.I.,  
 No.13/2011). From the food safety point  
 of view for unprocessed milk the indicator  
 TBC should be 100,000 cells/ml on  
 temp 30 °C, whereas for SC 400,000  
 provided that milk should be treated  
 thermally (Reg. No. 12/2011). Thus, the  
 quality of milk is important for human  
 health, milk processing and productivity of  
 farmers (More, 2009).

( )  
 ( )  
 2019 . 9 663  
 2000  
 ,  
 2007 . (KMPA, 2019).  
 > 20  
 .  
 (SOP P.355/6, 2019).  
 (NRFVL),  
 40 ml,  
 Azidol.  
 BactoScan - Foss  
 50 . BactoScan™  
 .  
 ( )

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The workout includes testing of milk  
 samples on determination of Total  
 Bacteria Cells (TBC) and Somatic Cells  
 (SC) number for the period July-  
 December 2019. A total of 9,663 samples  
 of raw cow milk have been taken, on more  
 than 2,000 farms which are included on  
 governmental program for transparency  
 and neutrality of milk samples, an activity  
 which has started implementation on 2007  
 (KMPA, 2019). Each month, two milk  
 samples have been taken on farm  
 collection point or individually on cases of  
 more than > 20 cows within one farm. The  
 data average was calculated on three  
 months period in order to subsidize the  
 farmers by Ministry of Agriculture (SOP  
 No.P.355/6, 2019). The laboratory part  
 was performed on National Referent Food  
 and Veterinary Laboratory (NRFVL),  
 where the samples were received on 40  
 ml test tubes treated with Azidol  
 preservative. In order to count **TBC**  
 BactoScan - Foss equipment have been  
 used, with the capacity of 50 samples per  
 hour. BactoScan™ is based on  
 flowcytometry technology for bacteria  
 counting.

- Sample with the liquid dyes the bacteria  
 and removes other compounds, which  
 passes through a light beam (laser) tube

) , , , , , , Antifoam-Y30 Emulsion, Sheath Liquid Stock Solution (SLSS), Staining Reagent Stock Solution (SRSS), Rehydration Solution (RHS), Blank Solution (BS), End-of Day Solution (EDS), Rinse Solution (RS), Incubation Reagent (IR), Bacterial Control Sample (BCS), Particle Control Sample (PCS).

250 500 ml, 25 ml, 5 ml, BactoScan™. : 40 ml 2-4 °C / 1 BactoScan, 4.5 ml / (SOP 5.4. M-1, 2012). Fossomatic™ Minor 50 1 ml 40 ml - Azidol.

Clean flow system, Clean cuvette, Zero count FM Adjustment Sample.

: Clean I, Clean II, Day solution, FM Adjustment Sample. Fossomatic,

: 40 ml 40 °C / 7 / 1

where bacteria emits a red light registering bacterial cells by the microscope, which are counted electronically through a monitor. The preparation of dilutions, reagents and change of filter is the starting process of work. Reagents and used materials: Boric Acid, Buffer, Ammoniac, Antifoam-Y30 Emulsion, Sheath Liquid Stock Solution (SLSS), Staining Reagent Stock Solution (SRSS), Rehydration Solution (RHS), Blank Solution (BS), End-of Day Solution (EDS), Rinse Solution (RS), Incubation Reagent (IR), Bacterial Control Sample (BCS), Particle Control Sample (PCS).

Equipment used: analogue and electronic scale, water bath, deionizer, test tubes 250 and 500 ml, graduated cylinder 25 ml, pipets 5 ml, laboratory dishes and BactoScan™. The flowing diagram of milk testing for TBC: 40 ml of milk was poured on a glassware, temp. 2-4 °C / stirred manually for 1 min / samples were placed on a BactoScan tape which receives 4.5 ml per sample / displaying results on monitor (SOP 5.4. M-1, 2012). Whereas for counting the **SC** Fossomatic™ Minor equipment was used with a capacity of 50 samples per hour receiving 1 ml of milk and working based on fluorine-optical-electronic technology. Samples were received on test tubes of 40 ml treated with Azidol preservative. On the beginning the cleanup process was performed Clean flow system, Clean cuvette, Zero count and FM Adjustment Sample. Samples were heated on water bath while stirring them to eliminate the fat residue.

Reagents and used material: Clean I, Clean II, Day solution, FM Adjustment Sample. The equipment for counting the SC is Fossomatik minor, whereas the others are similar to the equipment used for counting TBC. The flow diagram of milk testing for SC: 40 ml of milk on temp.40 °C / 7 min / stirred for 1 min / placed on pipet Fossomatic minor which



/  
Fossomatic minor (SOP 5.4. M-2, 2012).

receives 1 ml sample and the results displayed on monitor (SOP 5.4. M-2, 2012).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

9 663 ,  
-  
-  
-  
-  
5369  
2019 .  
O  
1.  
I 1132 , II 3920  
III 3048 .  
-  
-  
-  
40.56%,  
80 000 /ml,  
31.55%, III 500 000.  
I 11.71%,  
100 000 II 16.18% 300 000.  
1  
5 399  
2,  
2  
2.274 ,  
I 846 , II 1 253  
III 996 .  
42.35%,  
300 000, II  
23.34%, 500 000,  
III 18.56% 750 000,  
I 15.75%, 400 000  
( . I., 13/2011).

For determination of milk quality 9,663 samples were tested determining also their class. Subsidizing is done based only on TBC parameters, where on all samples taken the bacterial colony count is performed, whereas the counting of SC is performed only for 5,369 samples for the period July-December 2019. The milk quality based on TBC are briefly presented below in Table 1, which were resulted satisfactory where on class Extra were 3,920 samples, class I 1,132 samples, class II 1,563 samples and class III 3,048 samples. This shows that based on total distribution for each class in regard to TBC, class Extra dominates on milk categorization. If this is converted into percentage and figures according to standards, then it shows that unprocessed milk in Kosovo, in relation to bacterial load results on 40.56 % belonging to class Extra which is 80,000 TBC/ml, followed by 31.55 % which is class III with 500,000. A fewer number of samples resulted on class I with 11.71 % that corresponds to 100,000 and class II with 16.18 % with 300,000.

Furthermore the Table 1, converted in Figure 1, to comparison four TBC classes. Whereas the counting results for SC for a total of 5,369 tests, are shows in Table 2, respectively in Figure 2, which are known comparison between four classes, that class Extra resulted with 2,274 samples, class I 846 samples, class II 1,253 samples and class III 996 samples. On the case where SC were counted, class Extra dominates with 42.35 % which is 300,000, then class II with 23.34 % which is 500,000 followed by class III with 18.56 % with 750,000 and the bottom class I with 15.75 % which is 400,000. (A.I., No.13/2011). In order to compare the results of TBC with SC, it is significant that on both cases class Extra dominates

42.35% III

41.45% (40.56 + 42.35 / 2)  
 I 13.73% (11.71 + 15.75 / 2).  
 55.18%

<200 000 /ml  
 > 300 000 QS/ml  
 (Smith, 1996).

534  
 5%

TBC

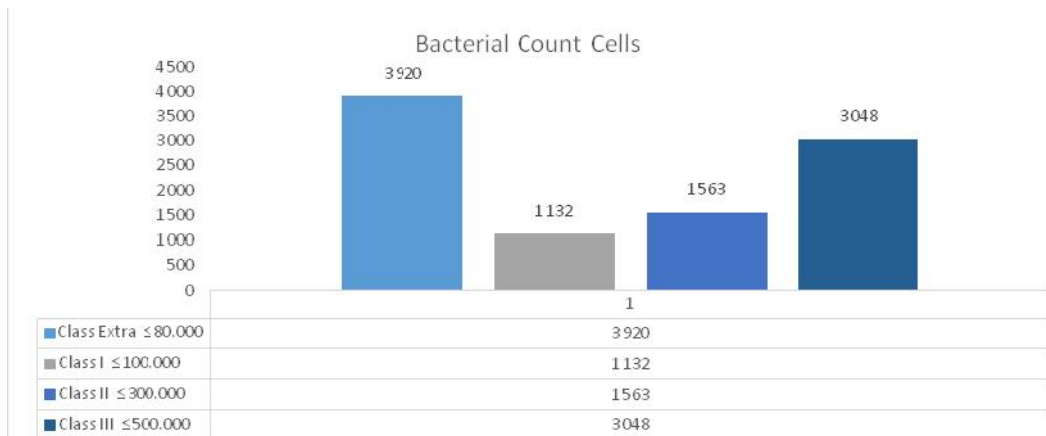
(Bijo, 2012; Dibra, 2011).

- other classes which except the bacterial load also in part of somatic cells, milk in Kosovo results with 42.35 %.
- Class III is more characterized by TBC in comparison to SC if we look into percentage of samples based on classes. Therefore, milk quality for parameters of TBC and SC results as a good quality if we refer to class Extra with 41,45% (40.56+42.35 / 2) and class I with 13.73 % (11.71 + 15.75 / 2). Thus class Extra and class I represents a total of 55.18 % out of entire samples tested for quality of milk on counting TBC and SC. On previous studies it results that detection of < 200,000 SC/ml in milk there is no existence of pathogenic causes of mastitis, whereas > 300,000 QS/ml in milk (Smith, 1996).
- According to standard procedure 534 samples were not tested because the raw milk resulted on more than 5 % fat. The deviation of limits from the norms of each class most probably is impacted by the hygiene of stable, environment, animal, equipment, inflammation of the animal, acute or subacute mastitis because through the milking process zootechnical principles of hygiene were not respected. Whereas on TBC we have performed on the manner of high microbial loads or necessary measures to decrease the contamination through the environment, equipment, personnel or animal, were not taken on due time (Bijo, 2012; Dibra, 2011).

1.

**Table 1. Presentation of total samples for bacterial count cells detection and their categorization**

/ Bacterial count cells									
	/ Class Extra 80.000		I / Class I 100.000		II / Class II 300.000		III / Class III 500.000		Total samples
	Samples	%	Samples	%	Samples	%	Samples	%	
Total	3,920	40.56	1,132	11.71	1,563	16.18	3,048	31.55	<b>9,663</b>



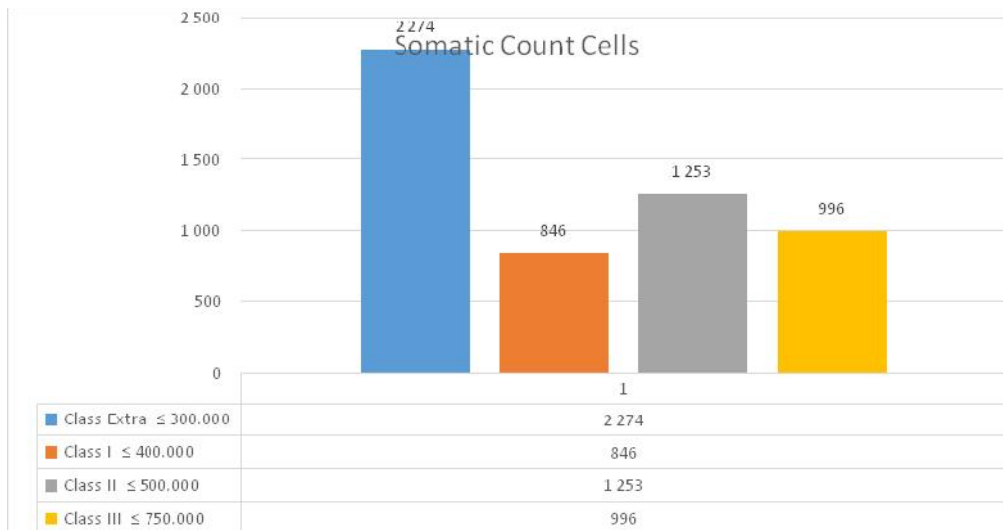
. 1.

**Fig. 1. Samples comparison by four classes on Bacterial Count Cells**

2.

**Table 2. Presentation of total samples for somatic count cells detection and their categorization**

/ Somatic count cells									
	/ Class Extra 300.000		I / Class I 400.000		II / Class II 500.000		III / Class III 750.000		Total samples
	Samples	%	Samples	%	Samples	%	Samples	%	
Total	2,274	42.35	846	15.75	1,253	23.34	996	18.56	<b>5,369</b>



. 2.

**Fig. 2. Samples comparison by four classes on Somatic Count Cells**

## CONCLUSIONS

- Up to now the sampling included all the country farms based on the transparency program, and we may not conclude yet on a regional level which places we are dealing with higher milk quality, medium or low. The sampling person should apply the sampling protocols, certainly on more contaminated points potentially or averagely contaminated, to take samples with solid impacts on the aspect of milk quality. The conclusions are:
  - Results are equivalent, where last years we had progress in relation to milk quality increase through classes and farmers benefit by various programs.
  - Present data do not show a big deviation in relation to the National and European Legislation.
  - The trend of milk quality in Kosovo presents significant increase in report.
  - Setting higher requirements for determination of classes has shown successful on the aspect of milk quality.
  - A considerable number of farms appears on a good infrastructural condition and thanks to the support through grants or subsidies.
  - Good hygiene conditions on farms shows that farmers have implemented good hygiene and zootechnic practices on farm level, animal or milking devices.
  - Organization programs through associations and communities of interest are showing results on growth of this industry.

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1\* , 2 , 1 , 1 ,  
1 , 1407 ,  
2 , 5600 ,

## Assessment of Cow's Milk Quality and Consumption of Bioactive Fatty Acids

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Original scientific paper

### SUMMARY

- The physicochemical and fatty acid composition of cow's milk and their consumption in human nutrition were evaluated. The milk cows studied were characterized as a low fat trans fatty acid food product (from 0.11 to 0.21 g/100g product) and high saturated fatty acid content.

- On average daily women consume 11.8% more milk than men. The average daily intake of monounsaturated fatty acids with milk was 3.61 g/day to men and 0.46 g/day to women with milk.

- Daily intake of biologically active fatty acids was 0.08 g/day CLA to women and 0.07 g/day CLA to men, 0.27 g/day vaccenic acid to women and 0.24 g/day to men, omega-3 fatty acids to women - 0.09 g/day and to men 0.08 g/day, trans fatty

0,13 0,20 g/100g )  
11,8%  
3,23 g/ 3,61 g/  
CLA , 0,27 g/ 0,07 g/ 0,08 g/ CLA  
-3 0,24 g/

0,09 g/ , 0,08 g/ ,  
 0,42 g/ , 0,46 g/ , 2,94  
 g/  
 2,63 g/ :  
 , CLA, ,

acids was 0.46 g/day to women and 0.42 g/day to men, 2.94 g/day cis fatty acids to women and 2.63 g/day to men.

**Key words:** physicochemical composition, CLA, indexes, TFA

## INTRODUCTION

Milk, as a major part of human food, was a source of nutrients that can be enriched and/or modified. It was a complete and unconditionally necessary human food, which contains all the necessary elements for maintaining life and growth (Petrova, 2007; Boycheva et al., 2007). Whole milk was considered the milk from which no nutrients have been extracted or added. Breed differences (Mihailova and Odjakova, 2006) strongly influence milk production and lactation duration in ruminants.

With increasing intensity the aforementioned factors were on the attention of both researchers (Cabiddu et al., 2005; Bauman and Griinari, 2003) and consumers, especially those related to animal and human nutrition.

Hamiti et al., (2014) found that cow's milk from five different regions of Albania had a fat content of raw milk on average 3.85%, protein 2.86%, SNF 8.77%, density 1,0298 kg/l and acidity according by Turner - 17,37.

The fatty acid content of the milk fat from different types of ruminants was not the same. 142 fatty acids have been identified in milk fat, 62.8% of which were saturated, 34.6% of unsaturated cis and trans isomers, 2.2% of branched-chain acids.

Ruminant milk and meat were rich sources of vaccinic, oleic and conjugated linoleic acid, which were produced by the biohydrogenation of linoleic acid under the action of 9 desaturase in the rumen of

(Petrova, 2007; Boycheva et al., 2007).

(Mihailova and Odjakova, 2006)

(Cabiddu et al., 2005; Bauman and Griinari, 2003),

Hamiti et al., (2014),

3,85%, 2,86%, 8,77%,  
 1,0298 kg/l  
 - 17,37.

142  
 62,8% , 34,6%  
 , 2,2%

9  
 (Rego et al., 2004).  
 CLA  
 ,  
 (Chiliard et al, 2000).  
 .  
 ,  
 /PUFA, (  
 )  
 CLA  
 .  
 ,  
 ( )  
 CLA  
 (Kelly et al., 1998; Rego et al., 2004).  
 Ivanova et al., (2012)  
 )  
 ,  
 ,  
 68.95  
 75.32 g/100g  
 69.66 g/100g  
 . CLA  
 0.24 0.45 g/100g  
 .  
 -3  
 0.69 0.58 g/100g  
 ) 1.39 g/100g (

- ruminants (Rego et al., 2004).  
 The concentration of CLA in cow's  
 - milk was increased by changes in diet, in  
 - particular the use of a supplement of  
 - polyunsaturated fatty acids (Chiliard et al,  
 - 2000). The reason for the increase in the  
 - amount of fused linoleic acid in grazing on  
 - ruminants has not yet been well  
 - understood. However, pastures were  
 - considered to contain high levels of  
 - PUFAs (poly-unsaturated fatty acids),  
 - which were the source of CLA and  
 - vaccenic acid.  
 - Supplementation of dairy cows with  
 - concentrates in pasture farming determines  
 - the quality and quantity of milk. Feeding on  
 - the pasture grass when excluding total  
 - mixed ration (concentrate mix) leads to an  
 - increase in the level of CLA at the milk fat  
 - (Kelly et al., 1998; Rego et al., 2004).  
 -  
 - Ivanova et al., (2012) were studied  
 - of the fatty acid composition in milk fat  
 - from cows of the Bulgarian Rhodope  
 - cattle (breed for milk) during pasture  
 - grass and the transition to grazing, found  
 - that saturated fatty acids increased as a  
 - result of feeding from 68.95 to 75.32  
 - g/100g fat and reduced to 69.66 g/100g  
 - fat after switching to grazing with the  
 - addition of compound feed and alfalfa.  
 -  
 - The CLA in the cow's milk from the  
 - Bulgarian Rhodope cattle breed, when fed  
 - with concentrate mix ranges from 0.24 to  
 - 0.45 g/100g fat and increases twice  
 - during free pasture grass period.  
 -  
 - Cow's milk obtained from the breed of  
 - Bulgarian Rhodope cattle had low omega-  
 - 3 fatty acids content during the indoor  
 - rearing from 0.69 to 0.58 g/100g fat,  
 - which as a result of passage of free  
 - pasture increases twice (compared to  
 - April) to 1.39 g/100g fat.  
 -  
 - Cow's milk was characterized by a very  
 - good ratio of -6: -3 and ranges from



3.42 3.72, . . . -6: -3

3.42 to 3.72, i.e. the milk obtained has a low risk factor for human health.

The physicochemical and fatty acid composition of cow's milk and their consumption in human nutrition were evaluated.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The studies were conducted on a private farm during lactation. Cows (BRG) were raised under natural grazing conditions (May-July) and individual milk samples were tested (n = 6).

### Methods of analysis:

Total solids - BSS1109:1989, ISO 9622  
Protein - ISO 9622, BSS EN ISO 8968-1:2002  
Fat - BSS EN ISO 1211:2002, ISO 9622

Extraction of total lipids was performed by the method of Roese & Gottlieb for milk. Fatty acid methyl esters (FAME) were analyzed using a Shimadzu-2010 gas chromatograph (Kyoto, Japan).

The qualitative assessment of the fat fraction comprises the following parameters: lipid preventive score, atherogenic and thrombogenic index (Ulbricht and Southgate, 1991), the ratio between hyper- and hypocholesterolemic fatty acids, trans fatty acids and the amount of saturated fatty acids (Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006).

( ) ( - )  
(n=6).  
1109:1989, ISO 9622  
EN ISO 8968-1:2002  
1211:2002, ISO 9622  
Roese & Gottlieb (FAME)  
Shimadzu-2010 (Kyoto, Japan).  
(Ulbricht and Southgate, 1991),  
(Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006).

$$AI = \frac{12:0 + 4 \cdot 14:0 + 16:0}{[MUFAs + PUFA n6 + PUFA n3]} / LPS = FAT + 2 \cdot SFA - MUFA - 0,5 \cdot PUFA$$
$$TI = \frac{(14:0 + 16:0 + 18:0)}{[0,5 \cdot MUFAs + 0,5 \cdot PUFA n6 + 3 \cdot PUFA n-3 + PUFA n3 / PUFA n6]}$$
$$h/H = \frac{C18:1n-9 + C18:1n-7 + C18:2n-6 + C18:3n-3 + C18:3n-6 + C20:3n-6 + C20:4n-6 + C20:5n-3 + C22:4n-6 + C22:5n-3 + C22:6n-3}{(C14:0 + C16:0)}$$

Basket-Duplicate-

The calculation of the daily intake of essential fatty acids was used the Basket method and the Duplicate method respectively in the population inhabiting the mountainous regions of the Middle Rhodopes was important for the

- consumption of biologically active and anticancer substances via milk.

- The experiment involved six women and six men in seven consecutive days for all subjects. The start of a duplicate experiment was independent of the weekday. All bioactive fatty acids consumed by milk, calculated using the "consumer basket" method.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The total fat in the milk cows tested ranged from 3.24 to 5.10%, the protein and lactose content was being relatively constant. The dry matter increases in the course of lactation from 12.16 to 13.39%. The solids non-fat residue decreased to 4.71 in the middle of the period considered and increased to 8.31% at the end of lactation.

3,24 5,10%,  
12,16 13,39%.  
4,71  
8,31%

1.

**Table 1. Physicochemical composition of cow's milk**

	/ May		/ June		/ July	
	X	SD	X	SD	X	SD
/ Fat, %	3.24	1.45	4.26	0.67	5.10	1.07
/ Protein, %	3.48	0.42	3.45	0.23	3.22	0.24
/ Lactose, %	4.47	0.18	4.48	0.19	4.32	0.31
/ Total solids, %	12.16	1.92	12.95	0.65	13.39	1.41
/ Solid non-fat, %	8.91	0.51	4.71	5.93	8.31	0.52
/ Freezing point, °C	0.53	0.01	0.53	0.01	0.53	0.01

2.

64,67 66,06 g/100g  
g/100g 3,82 g/100g  
6,33

The fatty acid composition of milk fat was presented in Table 2. Saturated fatty acids increase from 64.67 to 66.06 g/100g fat, while monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fatty acids decrease in the middle of the period and eventually increase on the end of period again. The trans fatty acids in the milk cows analysed decreased during the lactation with a tendency to decrease from 6.33 to 3.82 g/100g fat, while the opposite trend was observed with the cis isomers.

2.

(g/100g )

**Table 2. Fatty acid composition of cow's milk (g/100g fat)**

MK FA	/ May		/ June		/ July	
	X	SD	X	SD	X	SD
SFA	64.67	4.51	71.14	8.99	66.96	2.94
MUFA	29.70	4.33	24.87	9.74	28.29	1.50
PUFA	4.13	0.68	2.91	0.86	3.76	0.49
TFA	6.33	4.53	2.59	1.34	3.82	1.53
CFA	21.87	3.48	21.18	8.74	23.47	0.16
CLA	1.20	0.61	0.55	0.07	0.79	0.36
n-3	0.72	0.13	0.61	0.04	0.67	0.11
n-6	2.35	0.23	1.86	0.89	2.49	0.02
n-6/ n-3	3.35	0.55	3.12	1.67	3.80	0.62

CLA - 1,13 0,74 g/100g  
 -3 0,72  
 0,67 g/100g  
 -6 2,35 2,49 g/100g  
 -6 -3  
 - 3,80  
 5.  
 -3 -6  
 -3  
 -6 -3  
 (Larsson et al., 2004).  
 -3  
 -6

The CLA content of the milk analysis decreased from 1.13 to 0.74 g/100g fat during the lactation. Omega-3 fatty acids reduce slightly from 0.72 to 0.67 g/100g fat, at the expense of omega-6 fatty acids, which increase from 2.35 to 2.49 g/100g fat.

The ratio of biologically active omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids was highest at the end of lactation-3.80 and remains within the range recommended by nutritionists to this ratio up to 5.

The essential fatty acids from -3 and -6 groups were a vital component of human and animal nutrition. There was a significant imbalance between the two fatty acid groups, with the -3 acid level being very low. Linoleic and linolenic acid were important for humans, but they were not synthesized in their body (essential fatty acids).

Balanced intake of -6 and -3 fatty acids can only be achieved by pre-selecting foods and controlling the composition of the essential fatty acids entering the body (Larsson et al., 2004).

The main functions of -3 and -6 fatty acids were related to the accumulation of energy in the cell, maintaining the body temperature, protecting the skin from drying out, reproduction of certain

2005, Conor , 2000).  
 (Buckley et al.,  
 9,93  
 1,88 2,05.  
 -  
 (h/H)  
 - 0,75.  
 1.0 (Senso et al., 2007),  
 (h/H),  
 1.00 (Ivanova and Hadzhinikolova,  
 2015).  
 0,20 0,13  
 g/100g  
 2,44  
 3,41 g/100g ( 3).

- hormones needed for the cells, cellular  
 - biochemistry and energy metabolism,  
 support the cardiovascular and immune  
 systems (Buckley et al., 2005; Conor,  
 2000).

The lipid preventive scor,  
 atherogenic and thrombogenic index  
 varied in the milk cows studied, with the  
 highest value reported at the end of  
 lactation 9.93 for LPS, and the lowest for  
 the atherogenic and thrombogenic index  
 on May, respectively 1.88 and 2.05. The  
 ratio of hyper- and hypocholesterolemic  
 fatty acids (h/H) during the study period  
 was highest on July - 0.75. The  
 atherogenic index was giving the  
 correlation between the sum of basic  
 saturated and unsaturated fatty acids for  
 animal products was from 0.5 to 1.0  
 (Senso et al., 2007), while the  
 cholesterolemic index (h / H) must be  
 above 1.00 (Ivanova and Hadzhinikolova,  
 2015).

Trans fatty acid content decreased  
 from 0.20 to 0.13 g/100g product during  
 the lactation period, while saturated fatty  
 acid content increased from 2.44 to 3.41  
 g/100g product (Table 3).

### 3.

(g/100g )

**Table 3. Qualitative indicators of the fat fraction in cow's milk obtained from grazing animals (g/100g product)**

Indicators	/ May		/ June		/ July	
	X	SD	X	SD	X	SD
LPS	6.84	3.95	9.04	1.23	9.93	2.99
AI	1.88	0.28	2.30	0.07	1.96	0.34
TI	2.05	0.37	2.27	0.31	2.22	0.22
h/H	0.69	0.09	0.65	0.04	0.75	0.15
TFA	0.20	0.11	0.16	0.02	0.13	0.07
SFA+TFA	2.44	1.33	3.03	0.30	3.41	1.06

The intake of foods with high  
 content of saturated fatty acids leads to  
 cardiovascular diseases, which were the  
 leading cause of mortality in Europe,  
 therefore the unsaturated fatty acids and

-3  
-6  
( 18:2).  
,  
,  
(Pajor et al.,  
2009; Williams, 2000).  
WHO/FAO/  
11,8%  
( 1).

- the nutritional balance between omega-3 fatty acids, the major representative -linolenic acid, and omega-6 fatty acids, with the main representative linoleic acid, were the interest in science (C18:2).
  - The high ratio between the two fatty acid groups was a prerequisite for coronary heart disease and the formation of blood clots leading to a heart attack, so it was recommended that the ratio not exceed four units (Pajor et al., 2009; Williams, 2000).
- The daily milk consumption survey was based on the human population living in the Taran village. The WHO/FAO/MAEA World Organization recommends two different methods for determining the uptake of organic and inorganic components.
- On the one hand, there were calculation methods for calculating by examining the consumer basket, general diet, etc., and on the other hand, carrying out analytical procedures in the form of a duplicate method. Both methodologies were considered reliable for obtaining representative values for the consumption of nutrients.
  - However, the tests conducted so far show that, as a result of the analytical determination of the daily intake of basic substances by the Duplicate method, they were not in accordance with the Basket method.
- The study results show significant differences in the daily intake of milk by different participants. On average, women consume 11.8% more milk than men (Figure 1).

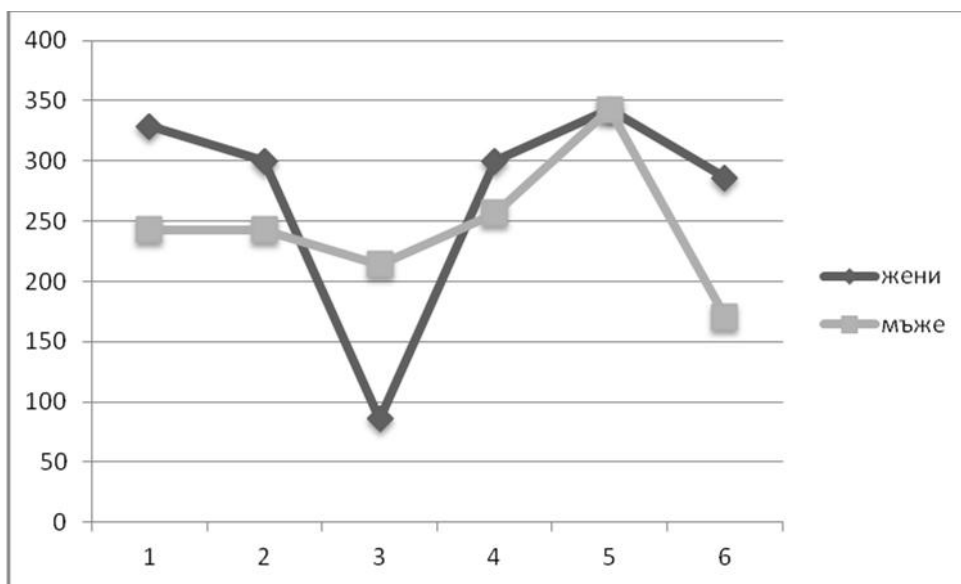


Fig. 1. Average daily consumption of milk in women and men (ml)

- The calculation of total fat consumption by milk shows, on the one hand, the daily fat intake of women and men, and on the other side the distribution of quantities of major fatty acid classes (Table 4).
- The results show some patterns that women consume, on average, significantly more saturated fatty acids via milk than men during the day.

4.  
(g/ )

Table 4. Daily consumption of fatty acids via milk in women and men (g/day)

Fatty acids	/ Women			/ Men		
	X	min	max	X	min	max
SFA	9.28	2.91	11.62	8.30	5.79	11.62
MUFA	3.61	1.13	4.52	3.23	2.25	4.52
PUFA	0.47	0.15	0.59	0.42	0.29	0.59
n-3	0.09	0.03	0.11	0.08	0.06	0.11
n-6	0.31	0.10	0.39	0.28	0.19	0.39
n-6 / n-3	3	3	3	3	3	3
CLA 9c,11t	0.08	0.03	0.10	0.07	0.05	0.10
C-18:1t11	0.27	0.08	0.34	0.24	0.17	0.34
C-18:1Trans-FA	0.46	0.15	0.58	0.42	0.29	0.58
C-18:1cis-FA	2.94	0.92	3.68	2.63	1.84	3.68

MUFA  
 1,13 g/ 4,52  
 g/ , 0,15  
 0,59 g/ .  
 . 0,03 0,10 g/  
 . 0,08 0,34  
 g/ . -3  
 0,11 g/ , 0,03  
 . -6 -  
 0,10 0,39 g/ .

The intake of MUFA by milk was in the range from 1.13 g/day to 4.52 g/day and in polyunsaturated from 0.15 to 0.59 g/day. The daily intake of CLA with milk varies from 0.03 to 0.10 g/day and vaccenic acid from 0.08 to 0.34 g/day. The daily consumption of omega-3 fatty acids ranges from 0.03 to 0.11 g/day, while the omega-6 fatty acids range from 0.10 to 0.39 g/day.

## CONCLUSIONS

Providing animals with nutritional resources rich in linoleic and alpha linolenic acid in grazing cows leads to an increase in the quality of the fat fraction of milk in relation to biologically active fatty acids - omega-3, omega-6, CLA, trans and cis fat acids and the amount of saturated fatty acids was reduced.

The milk cows studied were characterized as a low fat trans fatty acid food product (0.13 to 0.20 g/100g product) and high saturated fatty acid content.

On average, women consume 11.8% more milk than men. Daily intake of biologically active fatty acids was 0.08 g/day CLA in women and 0.07 g/day CLA in men, 0.27 g/day vaccenic acid in women and 0.24 g/day in men, omega-3 fatty acids in women - 0.09 g/day, and in men 0.08 g/day, trans fatty acids 0.46 g/day in women and 0.42 g/day in men, 2.94 g/day cis fatty acids in women and 2.63 g/day in men.

-3, -6, CLA,  
 .  
 ( 0,13 0,20 g/100g )  
 .  
 11,8%  
 .  
 0,08 g/ CLA  
 0,07 g/ CLA , 0,27 g/  
 g/ , -3  
 - 0,09 g/ ,  
 0,08 g/ ,  
 0,46 g/ , 0,42 g/  
 , 2,94 g/  
 2,63 g/ .

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## Biological Rhythms and Reproduction

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Review paper

### SUMMARY

Some mammals, which live in temperate climate zones with four seasons, have developed the ability to reproduce according the seasons. In this way, they ensure the survival of their generation by providing the most favourable conditions for its growth and development. This determines the basic biological law that the living generation must appear in nature at the most favourable moment for its survival.

There are various environmental signals that animals can use to regulate their reproduction. Such are the ambient temperature, the presence or lack of food, the precipitation amount etc.

These signals, however, are not enough to determine the period of reproductive activity. Perhaps, the change in the length of the day, which changes the melatonin secretion during the different seasons of the year is the most significant signal.

In mammals, melatonin is secreted at night, which is inversely proportional to the length of the day and serves as a signal for a change in reproductive

activity.

The purpose of the present review is to briefly examine the impact of biological rhythms on the reproduction of small ruminants in the temperate zone and their significance for the survival and endurance of newborns.

**Key words:** sheep, goats, reproduction, melatonin, biological clock

## DISCUSSION

Environmental parameters are exposed to predictable fluctuations as a result of changes in seasons or 24-hour period. When events and conditions are repeated in a cyclical pattern, the organism's ability to anticipate and prepare for them is essential to its survival. There are two types of adaptations to the environment: reactive, in which the adaptation follows the changes in the environment, and prognostic, in which the organism anticipates the changes in the environment before their realization (Seron-Ferre et al., 1993). Animals adapt to the environment by adapting their behavioral, physiological and life cycles to upcoming events. The environmental changes take place in a certain sequence and organisms adapt as they anticipate them. The cyclical changes in physiological processes known as circadian and seasonal rhythms are the visible performance of these adaptation. Periodic oscillations in biological functions are observed in all living organisms - single and multicellular, i.e. they are ubiquitous in nature, although variations are observed in different species, plant cultivars and animal breeds (Reinberg, 2003).

This phenomenon is not simply a reaction to environmental changes, but is controlled by endogenously generated rhythms synchronized with environmental signals. Biological rhythms with a period

24 hours are called circadian rhythms, which are controlled by biological clocks, adjusted by the signals received from the environment - dawn/dusk, activity/rest, noise/silence (Banerjee and Dandapat, 2010). The main environmental signals that trigger biological clocks in most animals in nature are related to changes in the photoperiod, or optical signals.

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The circadian rhythm, which is generated at the central and cellular levels (outside the biological timer in the suprachiasmatic nucleus) is regulated by wavelength, intensity, period of manifestation and duration of light stimuli associated with the earth's rotation around its axis and the sun (Banerjee and Dandapat, 2010). According to Vitaterna et al., (2001) the sequential change of day and night helps the organism to anticipate and prepare for environmental changes by adapting through adequate behavior at the appropriate period during the year.

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Vitaterna et al., (2001)

- According to Vitaterna et al., (2001) the sequential change of day and night helps the organism to anticipate and prepare for environmental changes by adapting through adequate behavior at the appropriate period during the year.

According to the season and the day, the organisms show a rhythmic performance of biological variables, expressed in coordinated changes in the behavior and physiology, controlled by the biological clock located in the suprachiasmatic nucleus of the hypothalamus. Variations in biological and physiological functions that depend on time are rhythmic and predictable and correspond to changes in resistance to various environmental agents (Piccione and Caola, 2002).

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(Piccione and Caola, 2002).  
The circadian clock also acts as a mechanism that estimates the length of day and night - so the seasonal phenomenon that corresponds to changes in day length can be precisely adjusted (Dunlap et al., 2004) to synchronize with the 24-hour cycle of the environment. (Hirota et al., 2004). The change in the conditions of continuous seasonal and

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- The circadian clock also acts as a mechanism that estimates the length of day and night - so the seasonal phenomenon that corresponds to changes in day length can be precisely adjusted (Dunlap et al., 2004) to synchronize with the 24-hour cycle of the environment. (Hirota et al., 2004). The change in the conditions of continuous seasonal and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- diurnal fluctuations of the factors of animate and inanimate nature determine the rhythm in the activity of various vital functions, including reproduction. Many mammals exhibit seasonal reproductive rhythms regulated by the photoperiod.</li> <li>-</li> <li>- The length of the day in these animals is measured by the circadian system and the pineal gland (Goldman, 2003).</li> <li>-</li> </ul>
<p>(Goldman, 2003).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The rhythm of melatonin secretion is regulated by a neural pathway that includes circadian oscillations in the suprachiasmatic nucleus of the hypothalamus. In mammals, melatonin is secreted at night, which is inversely proportional to the length of the day and serves as a signal for a change in reproductive activity. Melatonin secretion varies with the length of the day and serves as an internal signal that regulates changes in behavior and physiology, thus ensuring seasonality in the manifestation of biological functions (Dax and Bentley, 2018). In this way, it has an exceptional influence on the process of evolution in the adaptation of animals to environmental conditions. The ultimate reproductive success is based on the creation of offspring, which is born at the most favorable time and grows during the time of maximum food availability.</li> <li>-</li> <li>- Animals have developed numerous strategies that provide optimal chances of survival, including optimal time to perform reproductive functions.</li> <li>-</li> <li>- In temperate climates, they have developed a mechanism for seasonal reproduction to achieve birth in spring and early summer.</li> <li>-</li> </ul>
<p>(Dax and Bentley, 2018).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In small ruminants, the onset of reproductive function occurs in late summer and autumn, pregnancy occurs in the winter and birth occurs in the spring (Boden and Kennaway, 2006).</li> <li>-</li> </ul>
<p>and Kennaway, 2006). Goldman, (2003),</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- According to Goldman, (2003), in</li> </ul>

pregnant animals, the fetus responds to the mother's melatonin rhythm, and the transfer of photoperiodic information from the mother to the fetus is part of the adaptive system associated with the survival of the species. Circadian rhythms are thought to prepare the fetus for postnatal events such as changes in daytime and nighttime temperatures.

If properly informed, the fetus can prepare in advance to meet the cold or warm season at birth. In seasonal animals such as sheep, photoperiodic signals received before birth determine the intensity of postnatal development with a view to reaching puberty at the optimal time of year (Goldman, 2003), thus not becoming pregnant and producing offspring at inappropriate times of the year (Foster et al., 1988).

Thus, the photoperiodic experience of the fetus plays an essential role in determining the endocrine status of the newborn and the onset of ovarian activity in female lambs (Helliwel et al., 1977).

Many studies suggest that photoperiodic information may also be involved in determining the time of day at which birth occurs, which may be essential for the survival of the newborn.

The duration of pregnancy, which is a predetermined characteristic for each species, ends at a specific time of day. Usually diurnal animals give birth at night, and nocturnal - during the day, i.e. during periods of decreased activity (Silver, 1990).

In order for a newborn to survive in the first place, it must be sufficiently developed and viable. Its maturity is associated with changes in the hormonal status of the mother.

In ruminants, the fetus sends signals about its physiological state to the mother, which

is considered as the initial signal of birth.

(Lindahl, 1964).

Liggins (2000)

(Silver, 1990).

Keverne, (1984)

(Nathanielsz, 1977). Sumar, (1985)

( )

90%

07.00 13.00

( )

Changes in the photoperiod can cause changes in the time of birth. Sheep give birth more often at night (Lindahl, 1964). According to Liggins (2000), birth in sheep does not occur when the fetal pituitary gland is removed, while infusion of cortisol or ACTH into the fetus a few weeks before term causes birth within a few days.

In goats, preterm birth can be induced by intrafetal infusion of ACTH or corticosteroids. This shows that in ruminants the pituitary-adrenal axis of the fetus plays a dominant role in initiating prenatal hormonal changes in the mother's organism. In essence, the increase in circulating fetal cortisol stimulates placental steroidogenesis and the conversion of progesterone to estrogen. The mother also plays a role in refining the time of birth and even initiating it under certain conditions.

Many animals give birth at night or at certain times of the 24-hour period. It is known that if the day/night cycle is disturbed close to the term, the animal can "wait" and give birth at the appropriate time the next day (Silver, 1990). According to Keverne, (1984) in most farm animals the majority of births are in the evening or early in the morning.

Births in alpaca species depends on sunlight and usually occur early in the morning (Nathanielsz, 1977). Sumar, (1985) also reported that in South American camelids (llamas and alpacas) birth occurs during the day, with a significantly higher frequency in the morning than in the afternoon.

More than 90% of alpacas and llamas give birth between 07.00 and 13.00. According to the author, these species are able to delay (postpone) birth in adverse environmental conditions, preventing its

	<p>occurrence at low night temperatures, characteristic of their habitats.</p>
	<p>They give birth during the hours of the day when the temperatures are highest, then the offspring are already dry, able to stand on their feet. Even during different seasons of the year and the application of schemes with different darkness/light ratios, births in the alpaca species show a similar pattern, confirming the existence of photoperiodic control over reproduction (Knight, 1995). Births in alpacas and other ruminants in Africa have been found to be closely linked to both the onset of the rainy season and, consequently, the survival of the species (Davis et al., 1997).</p>
<p>(Knight, 1995).</p>	
<p>(Davis et al., 1997). Longo and Yellon, (1988)</p>	<p>According to Longo and Yellon, (1988) the circadian rhythm of melatonin in sheep is clearly expressed, it is delivered to the fetus and this may be the way the mother signals to the fetus.</p>
<p>Silver, (1990)</p>	<p>Silver, (1990) believed that the proximity of the placenta, amniotic fluid, and the newborn would signal the onset of labour in some mammalian species. It is well known that in sheep and goats the adoption of another's lambs and kids becomes easier if they are sprayed with amniotic fluid.</p>
	<p>Any form of stress is one of the factors that can delay or postpone the birth. Sympathoadrenal activity and the release of adrenaline lead to relaxation of the uterine muscles (Nathanielsz, 1985).</p>
<p>(Nathanielsz, 1985). Alexander et al. (1993)</p>	<p>Alexander et al. (1993) reported that births in merino sheep could be delayed for a short period of time when mothers moved from one plot to another.</p>
	<p>It has been established that animals of different species give birth at different times of the day. In domestic animals, birth could be influenced by methods of selection and modification of breeding and feeding conditions.</p>

<p>(Thornburn et al., 1977; Bazer and First., 1983).</p>	<p>Birth initiation in sheep is associated with coordinated hormonal signals generated by the central nervous system of the fetus, modifying placental steroidogenesis, while in goats, the maintenance of pregnancy depends on the continuous functioning of the corpus luteum (Thornburn et al., 1977; Bazer and First., 1983).</p>
<p>50</p> <p>90</p> <p>125 - 130</p>	<p>In sheep, during the first 50 days of pregnancy, the source of progesterone is the corpus luteum, then luteal progesterone gradually decreases and the pregnancy is maintained by placental progesterone. After the 90th day, progesterone levels rise sharply, reaching a maximum by the 125th - 130th day. This is followed by a decrease caused by the increase in fetal plasma corticosteroids, which affect placental steroidogenesis (Thornburn et al., 1977; Al-Gubory et al., 1999).</p>
<p>(Thornburn et al., 1977; Al-Gubory et al., 1999). Thornburn et al., (1977)</p> <p>60 - 70</p> <p>4,5-5,5 ng/ml</p> <p>ng/ml.</p> <p>- 1,25</p>	<p>Thornburn et al., (1977) summarizes that in goats, the corpus luteum is the main source for progesterone production and oophorectomy at any stage of pregnancy leads to abortion. The regression of corpus luteum and the decrease in plasma progesterone levels precede the evolution of uterine activity and normal birth. By the 60th - 70th day of pregnancy, plasma progesterone concentrations increase to 4.5-5.5 ng/ml and remain at this level for several days at birth, but even on the day of birth it is still high enough - 1.25 ng/ml. The placenta also produces progesterone during pregnancy, but the amounts are insufficient to maintain the pregnancy. The change in the estrogen-progesterone ratio increases the secretion of oxytocin.</p> <p>Oxytocin is the terminal hormone in the maternal cascade and is secreted in small amounts until the onset of the second phase of labour, as the signal to the pituitary gland is a consequence of</p>



(Silver, 1990).),

60- George, (1969)

8 18 .

37% 62%

23 39%

(2002) Kaulsuff,

3 . 9 .

12-26%

12 .

et al., 2010). (Hristova

57,1% 8 20 .

16 20 .

Lindhahl, (1964)

stretching of the cervix and vagina (Silver, 1990). It can be said that prostaglandins are the final impulse that activates the uterine muscles.

- Studies on the hourly dynamics of births in sheep began in the 1960s.
- George, (1969) reported a significant difference in the time distribution of lambing in Dorset Horn and Merino sheep

Between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., significantly more births were registered in Dorset Horn sheep than in Merino.

- It was found that this pattern has not been changed over the years, as in winter lambing 62% of Dorset sheep and 37% of Merino mothers lambed during the day between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., and in spring lambing during the specified period of 23 and 39% of mothers gave birth on the same day.

- No effect of the sequence of pregnancies on the hourly dynamics of births has been established. Kaulsuff, (2002) observed the time distribution of lambing in German meat merino, German black-headed mutton breed, and their crosses with Burula breed, raised in premises with limited lighting at night.

Sheep of all genotypes gave birth most often between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. During the day, 12-26% more sheep lambed than during the remaining 12 hours of the 24-hour period. A similar distribution of the frequency of lambing was found in sheep of Ile de France with synchronized estrus, lambed in October (Hristova et al., 2010).

In the period from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. 57.1% of the sheep gave birth, and the peak of lambing was between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. The number of fetuses, which were borne till the beginning of lambing, has no effect on the hourly dynamics of births.

Lindhahl, (1964) studied the time distribution of lambing in sheep of

<p>14</p>	<p>Hampshire, Shropshire, Southdown, Merino, Targi, Dorset breeds and their crosses. The mothers were raised in a stable and fed twice a day - at 8 a.m. and 2 p.m., and the light in the room was turned off at 8 p.m.</p>
<p>20</p>	<p>During the five experimental years in all breeds, regardless of the age of the mothers, a similar pattern of hourly distribution of lambing was observed, with peaks in the frequency of births in the early night hours and late afternoon, and the lowest frequency was recorded in the hours up to noon. No effect of the breed on the hourly dynamics of lambing has been established. It is possible that the onset of birth is due to the level of physical and metabolic activity of sheep.</p>
<p>(Sharafeldin et al., 1971; Aoki et al., 2006)</p>	<p>If this is the case, it should peak after a meal and the lull should occur during the minimum activity. The results show that the activity of sheep after feeding has a certain influence on the onset of birth.</p>
<p>et al., (2008)</p>	<p>Other authors (Sharafeldin et al., 1971; Aoki et al., 2006) also believe that the hourly dynamics of births in ruminants may be influenced by feeding time and related changes in the physical and metabolic activity of animals.</p>
<p>16 18</p> <p>14,6%</p> <p>6</p> <p>6 8</p>	<p>Jaeger et al., (2008) found that in beef cattle fed between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m., births during the day were significantly higher than those registered at night - only 14.6% gave birth between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. In cows fed between 6 and 8 a.m. in the morning, births were randomly distributed throughout the day.</p>
<p>Aoki et al. (2006)</p>	<p>Aoki et al. (2006) also reported that feeding time and ration type may affect the hourly dynamics of calving.</p>
<p>18</p>	<p>For cows fed at 6 p.m. with a ration based on roughage, the frequency of births during the day was significantly higher than for cows fed at the same time with a</p>

79,2% 38,5%. Cobb and Gonyou, (1982)

3  
- 8, 16 24  
12

6 18 . 69,6%

15,2% 22 6 .

(Simonetta et al., 1991).

12 (Bosc et al., 1988)

- 7 9 . 18-19 .

12-

- 11 15 ,  
6 20 .

90,6%

Aleksiev et al., (2013)

high-concentration ration - 79.2% and 38.5%, respectively.

Cobb and Gonyou, (1982) studied the relationship between feeding time and hourly distribution of lambing in sheep of Hampshire, Suffolk and Rambouillet breeds, comparing 3 feeding regimes - at 8 a.m., 4 p.m. and 12 a.m. A single meal at 12 p.m. contributes to an increase in the frequency of lambing during the day, with 69.6% of mothers giving birth between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.

At the same time, this diet reduces the number of births at night, with 15.2% of sheep lambing between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. The results show that feeding time may modify the time distribution of births in cows and sheep, which is probably related to changes in the endocrine status of the fetus and mother at different diets (Simonetta et al., 1991). T

The hourly dynamics of births in goats differs significantly from those observed in cows and sheep. In one of the early studies, which continued 12 years (Bosc et al., 1988), goats of the alpine breed and its crosses with Saanska and Poitevin breeds were observed.

The animals were kept outdoors in the conditions of natural light stimuli and fed twice a day - between 7 and 9 a.m. and 6 and 7 p.m. The birth was in the months of February and March. During the 12 experimental years, a similar temporal dynamics of birth in goats was observed.

The frequency of births was concentrated in the middle of the day - between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., as 90.6% of mothers gave birth in the period between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. Similar are the results of our study in which Aleksiev et al., (2013) studied the distribution of births of goats of Bulgarian White dairy of different ages and found that most births occurred between 6.00 a.m. and 8 p.m. as the peak was between

6,00 20,00 . 2 and 4 p.m.  
14,00 16,00 .

The results show that goats can be classified as species giving birth at a certain time of day, which implies precise regulation of the mechanisms associated with the onset of birth. These mechanisms are similar in cows, sheep and goats, but the time dynamics of births in these species are different.

Establishing the hourly distribution of births during the day for farm animals, especially in intensive breeding systems, is a prerequisite for optimizing the schedule for service and monitoring of animals, planning the needs of the workforce and its effective use during the campaign (Alexiev, 2011).

(Alexiev, 2011).

## CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, it can be summarized that knowledge of the mechanisms of the circadian clock, melatonin secretion and the dynamics of biological rhythms lead to rapid progress in deciphering the ongoing biological processes and regulatory mechanisms in animals. They can serve as a basis for biotechnology to intensify reproductive processes as well as better farm management.

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## Synchronization of Estrus through 5 days Progestagen Treatment Plus or without PMSG at 12 Months Aged Lacaune Ewes

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Original scientific paper

### SUMMARY

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12  
27  
, 2019.  
5  
PGF2  
:  
1 (n = 14) -  
300 UI PMSG;  
2 (n = 13) -  
1 92,86%  
(P<0,05)  
2 - 53,8%.  
1 76,92%  
2 - 0%.  
1 130,0%.  
:  
,

The aim of the present study was to induce synchronized estrus through 5 days progestagen treatment plus or without PMSG 12 months aged Lacaune ewes. The experiment was carried out with 27 Lacaune ewes during November, 2019. The intravaginal sponges were put to all experimental animals for 5 days. At the time of the placement of the sponges, the ewes were treated with a synthetic analogue of PGF 2 . Two experimental groups were formed depending on whether a PMSG was used or not: Group 1 (n = 14) - at the time of the sponge removal, 300 UI PMSG was injected; Group 2 (n = 13) - no PMSG treatment. Estrus synchronization rate was higher and significant at Group 1 – 92,86% (P<0,05 ) compared to Group 2 – 53,85. Fertility for Group 1 was 76,92% and its values was significantly different from values of Group 2 – 0%. Fecundity for Group 1 was 130,0%.

**Key words:** sheep, estrus, short term, progestagens, PMSG

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30

( 1990 2018

8130 000 1316000),

( 70%

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40

15000

(Hernandez et al., 2011).

( 12 ),

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(Harizanova, 2008).

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(FGA MGA)

(Menchaca and Rubianes, 2004; Abecia

## INTRODUCTION

- In Bulgaria, sheep are usually fertilized for the first time at the age of 18 months. This is because of the traditionally extensive breeding system and breed composition (autochthonous, fine wool and semi-fine wool breeds).

Over the last 30 years, the number of sheep has fallen sharply (according to FAO the number of live animals was 8,130 millions in 1990 vs 1,316 million in 2018), as well as the breed composition of the raised sheep has changed (over 70% of live animals for milk production). There is a growing interest and import of elite animals from the specialized dairy breeds like Lacaune, Awasi and Asaff. Up to now, in Bulgaria there are 40 purebred Lacaune farms with more than 15 000 heads.

- Optimizing management procedures to improve the productive and reproductive potential of a selective dairy breed like Lacaune under intensive conditions may be extremely important for milk producers over the world (Hernandez et al., 2011).

- Early fertilization (before 18 months of age), as well as oestrus synchronization are effective methods for optimizing sheep rearing under intensive conditions.

Each additional day before the animals are included in the main flock is associated with the implementation of certain costs, which increase the cost of production and extend the critical path till earning the first income (Harizanova, 2008).

- In Europe, the most common hormonal method for estrus synchronization (ES) of small ruminants is with intravaginal sponges, impregnated with synthetic progestagen (Menchaca & Rubianes, 2004; Abecia et al., 2011).



et al., 2011).

: ( 12 14 )  
5 7 ( )

Ros et al., 2019 ).

5- 12

, 2019, 27  
12

1000

( /  
): - 0,8 kg  
( 17 % ) - 0,5 kg.

(40 ± 2  
kg) ( - 2,5-3,0).

(30 mg FGA  
Synchropart®, Ceva Sante Animale,  
France), 5

PGF2 (1,0 ml Alfabedyl®  
Ceva Sante Animale, France).

1 (n = 14) -

- Different protocols for ES with intravaginal sponges were used, according to the duration of sponge stay in the vagina: 12 to 14 days (so-called long term or traditional treatments) or 5-7 days (short-term treatments).

- All protocols for ES that used progestagens ends with PMSG treatment.

- Currently, there is a highly active movement in European countries against the use of eCG and it is necessary to look for alternative protocols for the induction and ovulation which would not include eCG (Maritnez-Ros et al., 2019 ).

The aim of the present study was to induce synchronized estrus through 5 days progestagen treatment plus or without PMSG at 12 months aged Lacaune ewes.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The experiment was carried out during November, 2019, with 27 Lacaune ewes, aged 12 months. The ewes were raised indoors, in private farm, situated in village Zavala, 1000 m altitude, Breznik municipality. During the time of the experiment, ewes were fed with next ratio (per head per day): alfalfa hay - 0,8 kg and concentrate mix (17% crude protein) - 0,5 kg.

The experimental animals were clinically healthy, equal in live weight (40 ± 2 kg) and body condition (BCS - 2.5-3.0). To all animals were put vaginal sponges (30 mg FGA Synchropart®, Ceva Sante Animale, France) for 5 days.

At the time of the placement of the sponges, the ewes were treated with a synthetic analogue of PGF 2 (1,0 ml Alfabedyl® Ceva Sante Animale, France). Two experimental groups were formed depending on whether a PMSG was used or not.

Group 1 (n = 14) - at the time of the sponge removal, 300 UI PMSG

300 UI PMSG  
 (Synchropart® PMSG, Ceva Sante Animale, France).  
 2 (n = 13) –  
 48-  
 ((Draminski Ltd).  
 350  
 51-  
 6  
 1:3) 0,4-0,5 ml.  
 70%.  
 :  
 • ( ) 48-  
 / 100.  
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 / 100.  
 • / 100.  
 / 100.  
 (n) (%)  
 Fisher's exact test  
[\(http://graphpad.com/quickcalcs/contingency1/\)](http://graphpad.com/quickcalcs/contingency1/)

(Synchropart® PMSG, Ceva Sante Animale, France) was injected i.m.

Group 2 (n = 13) - no PMSG treatment.  
 At 48 h after sponge removal the ewes were tested for presence of a heat with an estrous detector (Draminski Ltd). All ewes that had electrical resistance of vaginal mucus 350 units were considered to be in estrus (according to users' manual and our field observations). Between the 50<sup>th</sup> and 51<sup>th</sup> hours after removal of the sponges, the ewes in the estrus were inseminated once, artificially (AI), deeply vaginal, with diluted semen (with citrate-glucose extender 6A in ratio 1:3) with a dose 0,4-0,5 ml.

The rams were raised in the same building on the opposite side and animals didn't have any visual or service contact, only olfactory.

The ejaculates were obtained from 3 rams by artificial vagina and parameters of all were: volume 1,0 ml and sperm motility 70%.

The following parameters were studied:

- Estrus synchronization rate (ESR) – ewes in estrus on 48 h after sponge removal/ all ewes x 100.
- Fertility – lambed ewes/ inseminated ewes x 100.
- Fecundity - the number of born lambs (included all born lambs – live, dead and aborted) / lambed ewes x 100.

Fertility and fecundity were calculated after lambing. Results were presented in number (n) and percentage (%).

The significance of the differences between groups about the ESR and fertility were established by the Fisher's exact test (<http://graphpad.com/quickcalcs/contingency1/>).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1 92,86%  
(P <0,05)  
53,8% (1).  
1 76,92%  
(2 - 0%  
(1).  
1 130,0%.

1.

Estrus synchronization rate was higher at Group 1 – 92,86% and its value was significantly different (P < 0,05 ) from value of Group 2 – 53,85% (Table 1).

Fertility for Group 1 was 76,92% and its value was significantly different from value of Group 2 – 0% (neither of seven ewes in estrus was pregnant after AI) (Table 1.) Fecundity for Group 1 was 130,0%.

**Table 1. Estrus synchronization rate (ESR), fertility and fecundity of the ewes from the experimental groups**

Group	/ ESR		/ Fertility		/ Fecundity	
	n (ewes)	%	n (ewes)	%	n (lambs)	%
1 Group 1 n = 14	13	92.86*	10	76.92**	13	130.0
2 Group 2 n = 13	7	53.85	0	0.0		

: \* P < 0,05; \*\* P < 0,01

1 (5-7 ) (Metodiev and Raicheva, 2011; Metodiev et al., 2018 Karaca et al., 2009; Martemucci and D'Alessandro, 2011; Maritnez-Ros and Gonzalez-Bulnes, 2019; Maritnez-Ros et al., 2019a; Maritnez-Ros et al., 2019b) 80,0 % 100% 144 60-90%.

The obtained results for ESR and fertility in Group 1 was consistent with the results obtained in our previous experiments with short term (5-7 days) progestagen treatments (Metodiev and Raicheva, 2011; Metodiev et al., 2018) and also to these, reported by other authors (Karaca et al., 2009; Martemucci and D'Alessandro, 2011; Maritnez-Ros and Gonzalez-Bulnes, 2019; Maritnez-Ros et al., 2019a; Maritnez-Ros et al., 2019b) - from 80,0 to 100% ESR until 144 hours after sponge removal and fertility between 60-90%.

The idea of the present experiment came through a previous experiment that we conduct during May, 2019 (results in process of publishing). In that experiment we induced synchronized estrus through 5 days progestagen treatment plus or without PMSG. The experiment was carried out with 26 multiparous ewes, s three experimental groups were formed

depending on whether a PMSG was used or not, as well as the time of treatment with a synthetic analogue of PGF 2 (before or after the removal of sponges): Group 1 - at the time of the placement of the sponges, the ewes were treated with a synthetic analogue of PGF 2 . At the time of the sponge removal, 300 UI PMSG was injected. Group 2 - at the time of the placement of the sponges, the ewes were treated with a synthetic analogue of PGF 2 ; Group 3 – the ewes were treated with a synthetic analogue of PGF 2 at the time of the sponge removal.

In that experiment we used two different methods to detect estrus synchronization – estrus detector and rams. ESR according to the estrus detector was 87,5%, 77,77% and 55,55% respectively to Group 1, 2 and 3. ESR according to ram service was highest at Group 1 – 100% and its value was significantly different from values of Group 2 (33,33%) and Group 3 (33,33%). The protocol, that consisted PMSG had high levels of fertility (87,5%) and fecundity (171,4%). Fertility of Group 2 was 66,67 % but with low fecundity – 1 lamb from 1 ewe, whereas the fertility for Group 3 was 0%.

The results in present experiment for the protocol without PMSG were unsatisfactory too. We hypothesized that the ram stimuli (because the rams were raised in the same building) to the axis GnRH/LH, should be enough to induce ovulation, but it was not come true.

The ram effect is well known in sheep breeding practice. The effect is mainly due to olfactory stimuli, with the maximum effect due to the combination of olfactory, visual and behavioral stimuli (Hawken et al., 2005).

The addition of a ram or rams to pre-isolated sheep in an anestrus leads to the following reproductive manifestations: increased LH pulsations and induction of

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(Knight et al., 1978; Oldham, 1980; Martin et al., 1983).

(Cushwa et al., 1992).

LH

(Hawken et al., 2007).

GnRH/LH

GnRH/LH,

GnRH

C6 (

kisspeptin - 10 Decourt et al., 2019).

ovulation in a large proportion of sheep (Knight et al., 1978; Oldham, 1980; Martin et al., 1983). The ram effect can be achieved without prior isolation of sheep from rams (Cushwa et al., 1992). The effect of the ram is also manifested in cycling sheep, which is expressed in an increase in LH secretory pulsations, regardless of the genotype of the sheep or the phase of the estrous cycle (Hawken et al., 2007).

We supposed that the suppression of high levels of progesterone on the GnRH/LH axis was probably stronger and therefore did not lead to ovulation and fertilization of sheep in estrus. Therefore, as alternatives to PMSG stimuli on the GnRH/LH axis, other products for induction of ovulation such as external GnRH or new products such as kisspeptin-10 analog C6 (studied by Decourt et al., 2019) should be used.

### CONCLUSIONS

5- The protocol, that consisted 5 - day progestagen treatment plus synthetic analogue of PGF 2 put at the time of the placement of the sponges and PMSG at the time of the sponge removal successfully synchronized estrus at 12 months aged Lacaune ewes with high level of fertility. This protocol could be used successfully in practice in order to optimize reproductive management in intensive sheep breeding.

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