



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



International Seminar Camilk 2024

Fostering camel milk value chain: Challenges and future perspectives facing global changes

Djerba (Tunisia) October 2nd - 4th, 2024

Institut des Régions Arides, Médenine, Tunisie
Laboratoire d'Élevage et faune sauvage, LEFS

Call for participation

CONTEXT

Recognizing their contribution to food security and nutrition, the United Nations, during its General Assembly of October 18th, 2017, decided to establish an international year of camelids in 2024 to support these species that the FAO describes as "key" for the development of the world's most hostile regions. This declaration aims to raise awareness among the public, governments, and donors about the economic and social importance of camelids in communities of arid and desert regions. The International Year of Camelids would significantly contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. This would manifest notably through the promotion of SDG 1 aimed at eradicating poverty, support for SDG 2 in the fight against hunger, the endorsement of SDG 5 related to empowering women particularly in rural areas, as well as the support of SDG 15, which aims at the preservation, restoration, and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems since camelids are well adapted to harsh environments where other livestock species can hardly survive.

Considered for a long time as a secondary product intended for self-consumption of pastoral societies, camel milk is nowadays experiencing a growing interest as a promising product both economically and socially. The prominence of camel milk is reflected by the continuous

increase in global production that has accelerated over the past two decades. Further, the expanding demand driven by consumers' enthusiasm for the therapeutic and nutritional virtues of camel milk is widely recognized. Camel milk is sold at a price that can reach up to six times cow's milk price, attributing to dairy camel farming a certain comparative advantage despite modesty of milk productivity compared to other dairy species.

Nevertheless, the camel milk value chain in Tunisia, as in many other countries, is facing major constraints at its key stages (farming system and management, production, collection, packaging, processing, marketing, etc.). The persistent questions are: i) how to make camel milk available to consumers with respect of market standards? and ii) how to successfully transform this milk into derivative products on a larger scale? Resolving these issues can be ensured through the development of a quality camel industry, with stakeholders having a good understanding of best practices and ensuring a smooth functioning of all links in the value chain.

In Tunisia, a research program on the intensification of farming system and machine milking of camels has been initiated at the LEFS laboratory (IRA Medenine) since 2004. These efforts have been strengthened by several national and international projects, including the "PROCAMED" project (2012-2015) funded by the European Union, which aimed to promote innovative camel farming systems for a sustainable development of local sectors and the management of the Saharan territory in partner countries Tunisia and Egypt. Additionally, the PAQ Collabora project (2019-2022) that focused on the processing and packaging of camel milk and aimed to introduce high-quality fermented dairy products to the Tunisian market. This project was concluded by the first edition of the international seminar Camilk organized in June 2022. Earlier, the MECAMEL project, aimed at promoting machine milking among small-scale breeders of dairy camels, was launched in 2020.

In this context, and concomitant with the International Year of Camelids and the closure of MECAMEL project, the LEFS/IRA plans to organize the second edition of the international seminar CAMILK 2024: **Fostering camel milk value chain: Challenges and future perspectives facing global changes**, in partnership with the **OEP** and other organizations including **FAO, GIZ, ICARDA, ILO, Swiss cooperation, ACSAD...**"

OBJECTIVES

- i. Celebrate the International Year of Camelids by presenting results of research on dairy camel products and productivity with a wide scientific committee.
- ii. Share and exchange the experiences and reflections of various stakeholders in the camel milk value chain (scientists, policy-makers, development practitioners, private sector professionals, NGOs, cooperation agencies, etc.) for supporting the sector.
- iii. Identify the opportunities and perspectives in order to promote the camel milk value chain in the face of climate and socio-economic changes.

THEMES

The proposed papers should align with one of the following five themes:

Theme 1: Management, feeding, and health of dairy camels

This theme deals with research on all aspects of dairy camel management, including farming system, feeding management and nutritional requirements, diseases and health care, animal welfare, machine milking, hygiene and conservation of milk at farm.

Theme 2: Dairy camels biology: Genetics, physiology and reproduction

This theme is dedicated to presenting research results related to the dairy camels' biology, including genetics, proteomics, reproductive biotechnology, gestation and parturition, lactation physiology, adaptation physiology, behaviour...

Theme 3: Nutritional and therapeutic qualities of camel milk

This theme focuses on the research findings and work related to the nutritional, sensory, biochemical, and microbiological qualities, as well as the therapeutic virtues and the biological activities of camel milk or its components.

Theme 4: Camel milk dairy products: Process and quality

The discussions within this theme will revolve around research outcomes related to improving the processability of camel milk, the quality of dairy products, conservation technologies, and the effects of processing methods on the nutritional, sensory, and therapeutic qualities of these products.

Theme 5: Organization, governance, and development of the camel milk sector

This theme focuses on research and development initiatives related to the camel milk value chain in terms of management, organization, governance, profitability, promotion, development, and innovation. Submissions may cover the entire value chain, including production, collection, processing and packaging, marketing, and distribution. Contributions presenting the experiences of national and international development organizations in camel milk farming development projects are welcome in this theme.

SEMINAR ORGANIZATION

Under the patronage of His Excellency the Minister of Agriculture, Water Resources, and Fisheries, this conference will be organized by the Laboratory of Livestock and Wildlife (LEFS) (LR16IRA04) - Arid Regions Institute, IRA-Medenine in collaboration with the Office of

Livestock and Pastures (OEP), and with the support of national and international organizations.

LANGUAGES

Abstracts must be written in English. Presentations (orals or posters) could be presented in one of three languages of the conference: Arabic / French/ English.

Simultaneous translations to the three languages will be provided by the organizers.

KEY DATES AND DEADLINES

- ✓ **January 10th, 2024:** First announcement
- ✓ **March 1st, 2024 :** Second announcement
- ✓ **May 31st, 2024 :** Abstracts submission and online registration
- ✓ **Within a month of abstract submission :** Response to accepted participants
- ✓ **September 1st, 2024 :** Publication of the preliminary program

PARTICIPATION

Individuals wishing to present a communication on one of the seminar's themes are requested to submit an abstract online, following the instructions provided on the website <http://www.camilk2024.com/>

GENERAL COORDINATOR

Pr. Touhami KHORCHANI

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