

VALUE CHAIN ANALYSIS: SHEEP MILK FOR PROCESSING IN THE GOSTIVAR REGION, REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

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Abstract

Primary goal of the study was to perform a detailed analysis of all chain stakeholders, irrespective of their direct or indirect participation, for the purpose of identifying and discussing possible problems, possibilities and methods of their reduction and elimination, and to identify actions how to increase the milk quantity and quality. Processed product is yellow cheese, intended for the domestic market, which is produced in a local dairy in the region. Apart from the economic analysis of the sheep milk value chain, the farmers were interviewed to identify their motivation to increase production, as well as to analyze identified weaknesses in the process.

The obtained results indicated a weak motivation of farmers to sell sheep's milk in dairies, due to the low purchase prices. At the same time there was substantial difference between selling prices at dairy markets and selling price in retails. The obtained results were compared with data determined for the Kumanovo region. Simple analysis show that in Gostivar region, sheep yellow cheese is produced with lower production cost, compared to the same region of Kumanovo.

The findings from the study show the following: farmers, due to the low purchase prices, did not sell the sheep milk to the dairy; the milk production was low due to genetic composition of sheep in the region and the low level of animal welfare measures implemented; the production price of milk was high due to the high price of animal feed and labour engaged on farms, as well as lack of herd booking, market research by producers, etc.

Key words: *Sheep, Sheep milk, Sheep cheese.*