

Abstract

This paper presents a review of dairy goat production in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) from 2010-2017, its current state, constraints and prospects for research and development. Since the introduction of dairy goats in SSA in pre-colonial times, their populations have continued to increase due to declining land size as a result of land fragmentation and increasing demand for goat milk. The current goat population in SSA is 372,716,040 head of which only 15.98% used for milk production. Populations in the Eastern and Western regions of SSA have shown an increasing trend from 2010 to 2017. The Southern Africa goat population is on the decline at an annual rate of about 1.77% whereas Central Africa has had a constant goat population within the same period. Eastern Africa reported the highest increase in the population of goats used for milk production. Milk production was highest in Eastern Africa and lowest in Southern Africa. However, dairy goat productivity remained constant in the Eastern region throughout the review period. Dairy goats are mainly raised under smallholder mixed crop-livestock systems. To enhance the development of the dairy goat, concerted efforts should be made to alleviate the constraints that stifle its growth. These constraints can be categorized into nutrition and feeding, breeding and reproduction, diseases, parasites, climate change, and underdeveloped dairy goat products market. Effective management of dairy goats requires a holistic approach and there is the need to expand the markets by further sensitization on the nutritional and medicinal advantages of dairy goat products. In order to achieve rapid development in the dairy goat sub sector, research and development initiatives should be directed towards alleviating the hurdles in nutrition and feeding, breeding, animal health and resilience as well as dairy goat markets.

Keywords: Dairy Goats; Low Input Systems; Milk Production; Research and Development; Sub-Saharan Africa.