

ABSTRACT

Milk Production in Belize Costs, Benefits and Constraints

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The dairy industry in Belize is small and growing at a slow pace. As a result, ninety five percent of the milk consumed in the country is imported causing a drain on foreign exchange in the economy. Belize has ample land area for dairy cattle production yet milk production accounts for only five percent of total demand. In this study, a survey was carried out in the country to collect data in selected dairy farms on milk production to determine costs, benefits and constraints affecting milk producers.

Farmers were categorized into three groups, according to the number of productive cows, to enhance the selection process. Twenty five percent of the total number of dairy farmers in the country were selected at random and interviewed for data collection. Most of the milking cows were dual purpose animals and owned by small and medium dairy farmers. Many factors affected the productivity of milk cows, hence, the low annual increase.

Improvements in production efficiency and recommendations such as stock improvement, improvement in nutrition, animal husbandry and milking techniques would enhance milk production countrywide.