

## **P11. Characterization of traditional Buffalo skimmed milk chain in Greater Cairo**

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There is scarcity of data on traditional milk chain in Greater Cairo. This traditional sector is estimated to account for 80% of the consumption of milk. The aim of this study was to characterize traditional milk chain particularly Buffalo skimmed milk chain in Greater Cairo. The methodology used in this study was field visits, interviews and GIS. The study was carried out in El-Reka village located south of Greater Cairo, which is considered a main hub for milk collected from around 3000 farmers. Farmers had each 1-3 dairy animals. Average milk yield for Buffalo was about 6-8 kg/day with an average lactation period of 7 months. A percentage of 7-15 % of milk was self-consumed as fresh milk; the rest of milk was skimmed to separate cream to produce butter. Most farmers sold skimmed milk to Milk Collection Center (MCC) at the price of 1.40 EGP/liter. Around 60 % of butterfat is self-consumed and 40 % is sold with a price of 40-45 EGP/kg. Some farmers used skimmed milk to produce Qarish cheese for home consumption and sale to neighbors and in village market for a price of 6-8 EGP. A total of 150 milk separating units (MSU) are distributed in 11 villages. The farmer paid 2-3 EGP/ head/ week to the owner of the MSU. The MSU collects skimmed milk from farmers to MCC and received 20-50 EGP/ week. Skimmed milk is transferred from MCC after cooling at 0-3° C especially in summer to 16 Cheese Processing Units (CPUs) with a price range of 2.10 to 2.5 EGP. Milk collection center is playing a vital role for developing rural communities. Extension services are needed in Egypt to improve the quality of buffalo milk produced through improving hygienic measures throughout the chain from farm to fork.

**Keywords:** Buffalo, Milk Chain, Greater Cairo