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Characteristics of Different Properties Located in the Dairy Basin of Cariri of Paraíba

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Dairy cattle farming is essential for Brazil's economy, given that milk is one of the main products of national agriculture, contributing to income generation throughout the country. Milk production in the Cariri microregion of the Brazilian state of Paraíba faces the challenge of the semi-arid climate conditions and the inherent difficulties in property management regarding advances in zootechnical control and management practices. The objective of this study was to characterize the technical, economic, and social profile of dairy properties in Cariri, Paraíba. A survey was conducted on 12 bovine milk-producing properties in the Paraíba municipalities of Barra de Santana, Boqueirão, Campina Grande, Caturité, Gado Bravo, and Queimadas - PB. A descriptive survey, a quantitative research method, was conducted, allowing the observation of some technical factors of the properties and the social and economic aspects of a group of milk producers in the region. Information was obtained through interviews with the owners and/or managers of each milk-producing unit, with questions involving dialogue on zootechnical, economic, and social characteristics. For ease and reliability in working with the data, the Easy Research smartphone app was used, with a structured form and a previously established script to standardize the data collection process. The data were organized and entered into the system, and through synchronization with the administrator platform, descriptive analyses were performed considering the calculations of absolute and relative frequencies for nominal variables through mathematical and comparative constructions. After analyzing the collected data, it was found that, despite the properties implementing essential zootechnical practices such as forage production for silage and the planting of forage cactus for animal consumption, there are still deficiencies in the registration and control of zootechnical data and financial management. Regarding the precarious administration of these properties, only 50% regularly record the income from milk activity, while the other 50% do not do so at all. Additionally, 41.7% of respondents reported regularly recording direct expenses of the activity, while 58.3% do not. In terms of the size of these properties, it was observed that 16.67% have between 5 and 20 hectares, while 83.33% have more than 20 hectares. The average size of properties in Cariri, Paraíba is 56.4 hectares, with 75% of the properties having up to 50 hectares. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a need and importance in raising producers' awareness about the fundamental aspects of organizing and managing dairy productivity in properties in Cariri, Paraíba, as it is also possible to improve the living conditions of those involved in the activity.

Keywords: Dairy cattle farming, zootechnical control, management, practices.