

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3019
ANSWERED ON:16.03.2010
DECLINE IN CAMEL POPULATION
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the dwindling camel population in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reason therefor during the last three years and the current year;
- (c) whether camel milk contains high medicinal and nutritional properties;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government has any proposal to develop camel as a dairy animal and has carried out research in this regard through the National Research Centre on Camel (NRCC); and
- (f) if so, the details thereof, and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) & (b) Yes, Madam. The number of camel has declined from 632 thousand in 2003 to 523 thousand in 2007 (provisional) which is about 17.2%. State wise distribution of camel population as per 2007 Livestock Census indicates that Rajasthan has the highest number (421.8 thousand) followed by Haryana (38.6 thousand), Gujarat (38.5 thousand) and Uttar Pradesh (9.0 thousand). The declining trend in camel population can be attributed mainly due to continuous shrinkage of range lands, mechanization in agriculture farming, changing social structure, less remunerative and continuous drought situation in some areas.

(c) & (d) National Research Centre (NRC) on Camel, Bikaner - a premier research institute on camel is conducting systematic research on camel milk, its yield in diverse breeds of camel and their processing and utilization. Research on camel milk has found that it contains lower percentage of fat (2.8%), insulin, vitamin C, free form of calcium, copper, zinc, iron which are better absorbed and large number of new and very useful protective proteins. The water percentage in camel milk is 90.30%. Camel milk is white, normal odour and slightly salty sweet in taste. These constituents make the camel milk a perfect drink. The research conducted with SP Medical College, Bikaner has found that the camel milk is useful in diabetes type I and II. Validation of the study is in progress.

(e) & (f) NRC on Camel has conducted extensive research on camel milk and has explored the possibility of developing camel as a dairy animal. The Centre had also developed several value added products like ice- cream, kulfi, flavored milk, sugar free kulfi, etc. Recently the Centre has established a small dairy unit at its campus to popularize camel milk. It has also initiated commercialization of camel milk through Rajasthan Cooperative Dairy Federation. There is an increase in the popularity and awareness of camel milk and its products. As such there is no proposal from the Government at present to develop camel as a dairy animal as its potential is still to be fully exploited.