

THE IMPACT OF FARM SIZE ON VETERINARY HEALTH STRATEGIES AND DISEASE INCIDENCE IN CALVES: A QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH WITHIN THE ROMANIAN CATTLE LIVESTOCK SECTOR

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of farm size on veterinary health strategies and the incidence of calf diseases in Romanian dairy cattle farms. Based on data collected through a structured questionnaire, the research highlights notable differences in disease prevalence and preventive practices across small, medium and large farms sizes. One of the key findings indicates that navel hygiene practices are consistently applied across all farms, regardless of farm size. In contrast, the incidence of enteritis and respiratory diseases shows a significant association with farm size in dairy cattle. Medium and large-sized farms demonstrated higher variability in enteritis occurrence, while small farms reported a statistically higher incidence of respiratory conditions in calves aged 0–3 months ($p=0.013$). Preventive practices such as deworming and vaccination were not significantly influenced by farm dimension. Preventive deworming was reported by 60% of farmers, and approximately one-third of the respondents vaccinated calves against major diseases, regardless of farm size.

These findings underscore the importance of adapting health management strategies to the specific needs of each production system, while also suggesting that certain preventive practices may be uniformly adopted across farms, irrespective of their size.

Key words: farm size, calves health, disease incidence, preventive veterinary practices