Production and body development traits of Balkan goats raised under “Low-input” farming systems

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Summary
Balkan goat is bred in almost whole area of Balkan Peninsula and south-eastern Europe. A major trait of this breed represents its very well adaptation ability towards harsh conditions of nutrition, husbandry and care, thus its robustness being one of the most important functional traits. Recently, the farmers are being increasingly interested in this breed since its breeding is connected with organic, traditional or “low-input” production. The aim of this paper is to analyse both morphometric and production traits in Balkan goats raised under “low-input” farming systems. In this research the 118 goats in different age originating from 9 farms from south-eastern Serbia, that is, 440 lactation records and 211 records on body development were studied. The following traits were analysed: (1) production traits (milk yield in full lactation, milk fat content, daily milk yield and length of lactation) and (2) morphometric traits (body weight, height of withers, body length, chest width, and chest depth). SAS Proc GLM with farm, birth year, production year and number of lactation as fixed factors was used for milk production traits, while in the analysis on body traits the fixed factors were farm, year of birth and the age at measuring. The highest average milk yield (392 kg) and the highest average milk fat content (3.89%) were achieved in III lactation, while fully developed Balkan goats in the age of 6 had a body weight of 51 kg, height of withers of 73 cm and body length of 76 cm.

Key words: goat, production traits, body development traits, low-input farming system