COST ACTION FA1308 DAIRYCARE

Proposal for Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM)

Applicant: Renata Reli , Assist. Prof., University of Belgrade - Serbia, Faculty of agriculture, rrelic@agrif.bg.ac.rs

Host: Joflica Jeflek, Assist. Prof., University of Ljubljana - Slovenia, Veterinary faculty, jozica.jezek@vf.uni-lj.si

Title: **Survey data analysis to assess calves welfare issues in small scale farms**

WORKPLAN

Background

The Short Term Scientific Mission entitled õ**Survey data analysis to assess calves welfare issues in small scale farms**ö aims at fostering the collaboration between the University of Ljubljana (SLO) and the University of Belgrade (RS) in the field of dairy animals welfare improvement.

Calves are the most sensitive category of cattle, and success of dairy production in general largely depends on calves health and rearing conditions. In Serbia, different systems and capacities of cattle farms are present, but mostly small scale farms with 5 to 10 cows can be found. Data on management practices and calves' welfare in intensive farms can be found in the literature. However, data on situation at small, rural farms are insufficient.

In Slovenia also small farms dominate, which on average rear 13.5 cattle and 6.4 cows (Statisti ni urad Republike Slovenije, 2013). Different housing systems and feeding practices are used which influence health and welfare of calves.

Objectives:

- to determine whether there are significant differences in the results between these two countries

- to identify failures in management procedures that threaten welfare of the calves in both countries

Activities

Previously, data on management procedures, housingandthe most important diseases of calves in the first few months of their life were collected. For that purpose, in both countries the same type of questionnaire-based survey has been used. Questions were compiled on the basis of similar studies conducted in other countries, and in order to get as much information about the possible threats on the welfare of calves. Questionnaires were distributed among farmers, and their participation in the survey was voluntary.

Activities during STSM will be focused on:

- Data management (data cleaning, standardization, integration and comparison)

- Identification of failures in management procedures in both countries

- Discussion on the results in aim to select material(s) for presenting/publishing (at the conference/in the SCI journal/instruction for farmers)

Outcomes

The expected outcomes of the STSM are:

 - A scientific research paper(s)

- Publishing manual for farmers in Serbian and Slovenian language, with recommendations regarding calf management, in aim to improve calves' health and welfarein both countries

- The encouragement of the collaboration between the faculties and the departments of the University of Ljubljana and the University of Belgrade

Duration:

The STSM is expected to last seven (7) days, in second half of March 2017.

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