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Introduction

Camel (*Camelus dromedarius*) belongs to a group of **mammals** with long legs.

They are browsers and thrive on the sparse pasture. They also have thick lips which makes it possible for them to forage on thorny plants that other animals cannot forage on.

Camels are mostly found in Africa and Asia. They are **multipurpose animals** raised for their **milk, meat, hair, wool and hides**. Camels are also kept for racing, tourism and used as a means of transport in some parts of the world (Faraz et al., 2013). **They can carry up to 170-270 kg load on their backs.** Camels are highly tolerant to diseases.

Camels have a hump used to store fat, which is metabolized during the scarcity of food and water (Faraz et al., 2013). This makes it possible for them to survive under harsh environments and producing high quality meat even under those climates, where other animal production efficiency is affected.

Camels are usually kept in pastoral and agro-pastoral production systems and only a few males are found in mixed crop-livestock systems (Mirkena *et al.*, 2018).

Types of domesticated camels

1. One-humped Arabian camel or Dromedaries (*Camelus dromedarius*)
2. Two-humped Bactrian (*Camelus bactrianus*)

Products from camels

Meat

Camel meat is leaner, and sweeter than any other meat because of the high glycogen content and protein that it contains. **The meat has low fat, Low cholesterol, high polyunsaturated fatty acids. It is highly recommended because camel meat highly nutritious and healthier** (Mahmud et al., 2011).

Like any other animals, it is advisable to slaughter camels when younger (between 2-3) because of the more juiciness and tenderness it yields.

Milk

Camels are popular for their milk and it is a stable food for the nomads. **They produce high amount of milk then cattle and even during dry periods they produce high amounts of milk. Camel milk is highly nutritious**, with a high amount of protein (3.7%), fat (4.9%), lactose (5.1%) and total solids (14.4%), vitamin C (2.9 mg/100 g) (Khan et al., 2003).

Dung

Camel dung is small, dry and odorless. **It can be used as fertilizer and fuel.** Camel dung is used in the production of bio-paper in India. Camel

dung decomposes very fast due to the diverse and stronger microflora in their rumen.

Hair and wool

Camel hair is commonly reddish brown with variants from brown to grey. Camel hair has a strength of 1.79 grams/denier, *luster, smoothness, water repellency, warmth, fineness* (9.55 denier), and *lightweight* (Humphries, 1996). **Camels produces hair of about 1-3 kg that can be used to make ropes, carpets and blankets** (Faraz et al., 2013).

Did you know?

5 interesting facts about camel

1. The word 'camel' comes from the Arabic word, meaning 'beauty'.
2. Camels are mammals.
3. Camels are called "ships of the desert" because they are used as means of transport through the desert.
4. They are able to close their nostrils to keep dust out.
5. Baby camels are born without humps.

References

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