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## Dairy production in South America

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### INTRODUCTION

In 2010, South America produced 64.5 billion litres of milk. It represented 10.8% of the world dairy production. The largest dairy producers of this region are: Brazil (31.7 billion litres), Argentina (10.5 billion litres) and Colombia (7.5 billion litres). In the international trade, Brazil and Venezuela are the main importers of the region, while Argentina and Uruguay are the largest exporters. So, the main objective here is to analyse the dairy production systems in South America in order to understand why some countries characterizes as importers and others as the largest dairy exporters of the world.

### *Materials & methods*

Secondary data will be presented. It includes type and size of dairy farms, number of farmers and their geographical location, among other important variables. The main dairy players of the South America will be analysed.

### *Results & discussion*

Spatial heterogeneity of climate, topography and cultures in South America implies on a great heterogeneity of production systems, which varies from the most intensive trough the most extensive farms. In Brazil, 45.2% of the dairy farms produce less than 10 litres of milk per day and they are responsible for only 4.6% of the national production. On Uruguay, 61% of the farmers are classified as familiar and produce 26% of the country's production. On Argentina, more than 65% of the farmers has a diary production up to 2,000 litres and respond for about 35% of the national production. On Chile, 10% of dairy farmers are owners of 76% of dairy cows.

### CONCLUSIONS

As a great milk producer, South America region has a lot of discrepancies among farmers and production systems. However, the region has potential to improve it.



# ABSTRACTS

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