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Posters

30. Characterization of the Hamra sheep breed in western Algeria

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The present work is a part of a National Research Project (PNR Algeria 2022) dedicated to the development of the Hamra sheep breed in his cradle western Algeria. The aim of this study is to characterize the morphology, growth and reproductive performance of this ovine breed. A sample of 15 rams and 30 ewes were used for the morphological characterization versus a total of 1,328 head for the growth and reproduction performance carried out at the technical livestock institute in Saida area located in the western Algeria. Hamra sheep breed is small compared to other Algerian breeds. It has a dark brown (mahogany) head and legs, a blackish-blue tongue, white wool, spiral horns, and a fine, medium-length tail. Total body length is 124.5 cm for males and 110.5 cm for females, with a trunk length of 78.6 cm for males and 67.7 cm for females. Depth, width and circumference of chest are respectively 40.3 cm; 30 cm; 116.4 cm for males, and 34.2 cm; 22 cm; 99.8 cm for females. Growth monitoring showed an average birth weight of 3 to 3.6kg, depending on sex (male or female) and litter size (single or double). Live weights reached an average of 17.9kg for males and 16.2kg for females at 90th day of age. The ewes' reproductive performances are as follows: 82.2% for fertility, 97% for fecundity and 118% for prolificacy at birth and weaning. In conclusion, the Hamra breed has shown promise performances in terms of growth, but its butchering potential needs more assessments. Further studies are required to establish a conservation strategy becoming urgent by the uncontrolled introduction of genetics from other sheep breeds.
