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Fattening operations of small ruminants in Coastal Zone of Western Desert, Egypt¹

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A survey was carried out in 2012 in the Coastal Zone of Western Desert of Egypt, of which the main objectives were to (i) characterize the fattening operations of small ruminants in this area, (ii) identify the factors that affect the fattening operations and (iii) determine the criteria that drive the choice of animals to be fattened.

Primary data were captured by means of personal interviews with 55 fatteners using a specialized questionnaire. The processing of the data from these interviews revealed some important aspects:

Fatteners prefer to fatten lambs more than kids,

The demand of fattened lambs increases at the period of religious celebrations (El-Aid El Adha and Ramadhan) and seasons (summer holidays),

Although most of the fatteners cooperate with each other for information on this subject, their main problem seems to be the availability and price of feedstuffs, as the grazing resource is more and more scarce.

Most of the fatteners pay with delay, at high prices, when purchasing feedstuffs. As a result the added value for the fattened animal is often very low.

All these factors limit the ability of most of the traders to undertake fattening.

Providing feedstuffs at low prices or introducing loans for the traders to face high prices of feedstuffs and animals should be the suggestions to face the difficulty of fattening activity.

Key words: commercial transaction, Middle East and Northern Africa, kid, lamb, commodity chain.

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