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Horse welfare on agricultural mountainous farms

S u m m a r y

The aim of the study was to characterize maintenance conditions of horses on small mountainous farms. The material consists of 126 horses on 23 farms. On the basis of farm inspection and interviews with owners, the maintenance conditions were described on the farms. The health state of horses, their character and behaviour were taken into consideration to estimate the welfare. Low level of horse welfare regarding trimming hooves, the frequency of feeding and stable maintenance circumstances was found on many farms. Increase of welfare level will make small farms more attractive as places of active leisure for tourists. At the same time it will rise the profitability of keeping horses on these farms.