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INFLUENCE OF TECHNICAL TRAINING ON HUMAN-ANIMAL INTERACTIONS AT MILKING

INFLUÊNCIA DO TREINAMENTO TÉCNICO SOBRE INTERAÇÕES HUMANO-ANIMAL NA ORDENHA

GUILHERME AMORIM FRANCHI^{1*}, FERNANDA VICTOR RODRIGUES VIEIRA¹, IRAN JOSÉ OLIVEIRA DA SILVA¹

¹Universidade de São Paulo (USP), Escola Superior de Agricultura “Luiz de Queiroz”, Núcleo de Pesquisa em Ambiente, Piracicaba, SP, Brazil.

*e-mail: amorimfranchi@gmail.com

Faced with the prominent developments in breeding dairy cattle systems in Brazil, it is observed that the aspects related to animal welfare (AW) and the human-animal relationship did not achieve the same breakthrough. Thus, actions are needed that may generate positive changes in human-animal relationship, which relates closely to the AW and productivity in dairy cows. Therefore, this work aimed to evaluate the human-animal interactions at milking and the influence of technical training on these interactions. The research was divided into four stages. The first step consisted in selecting of six dairy farms based on pasture in São Paulo State. The second step was the evaluation of milking and the action of workers through the proposed protocol by Hemsworth et al. (2002): moving the cows in the shed for milking line activities; forcing the cows in the milking position; coupling and uncoupling the liners and moving the cows out of the milking line. Tactile interactions of humans toward the cows were classified as positive (POS) or negative (NEG), which were considered positive interactions "patting", affection or support hand on the back, legs or flanks of the cow, whereas negative interactions included slaps, shoving, or blows with the hand or with objects of any type. In the third stage, it was realized the technical training on good practices for the AW with the workers of the respective farms and finally, a new evaluation of the interactions was performed in the fourth and final step. At the end of the four stages, comparing the levels and occurrences of initial and final interactions obtained after the training, it was possible to notice a reduction of negative interactions at milking. Furthermore, it was possible to visualize what properties where milking is conducted by hired workers, the number of negative interactions is greater, and that in properties where milking is performed by the owner himself the number of positive interactions was higher. Therefore, it is suggested that the technical training of workers on rational management and raising of dairy cows helps these people understand the animals' behavior and thus there may be better interactions between them and provide better working conditions within dairy farms.

Table 1. Average number of positive and negative interactions within dairy farms, divided by farms which milking are performed by farm owners and hired workers

Average number	Owner		Hired worker	
	1 ^a Visit	2 ^a Visit	1 ^a Visit	2 ^a Visit
Positive Interactions	2,3	6,7	45,7	38,0
Negative Interactions 1	9,3	4,3	42,0	21,0
Negative Interactions 2	2,0	0,3	22,0	4,7

Keywords: interaction, dairy cattle, worker.

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