

Chilean ethnic groups and livestock: is there any association?

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Chile is composed of a large variety of aboriginal ethnic groups that have lived in its territory for thousands of years. Although initially only the groups in the north domesticated animals (llamas & guanacos), nowadays all of them practice animal husbandry at some level. In 2007 a full scale agricultural census took place in Chile, generating valuable information regarding both key elements: ethnic group of the owners and number of animals of each species simultaneously. Additional other information of agricultural interest was also integrated into the census data. This study therefore focuses on this association and describes the relationship of different Chilean ethnic groups and their animals especially with their non-aboriginal counterparts for the first time. The analyses are conducted in a multi-step stratified approach using administrative regions as well as geographical measures (altitude, agricultural zone etc) as classes to adjust for possible confounding and to study interactions in the different livestock systems. The results of this study can be of great interest to develop a new series of studies exploring the animal husbandry traditions of Chilean aboriginal ethnic groups, and by doing so, helping the government to develop their agricultural policies according to each specific group.