Identification of health problems affecting livestock of the Aymara ethnic group in the region of Arica and Parinacota, Chile

Cordova, F., Ramirez, G., Urcelay, S., Araya, F. and Hamilton-West, C., Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Chile, Department of Preventive Veterinary Medicine, Chile; christopher.hamilton@veterinaria.uchile.cl

The Aymara ethnic group live in the Altiplano, which is an area of inland drainage laying in the central Andes. This zone includes part of Chile, Bolivia and Peru. Their population is estimated in about two million people. The Aymara’s livelihood is closely related with the livestock they breed, which is mainly composed by South American camels ‘llamas’ (Lama glama) and ‘alpacas’ (Lama pacos). The main products they get are meat and fiber to produce clothes. Those products are for their own use or for trade. Also, llamas and alpacas represent part of the particular Aymara’s view of the world. To keep a good health status of ‘llamas’ and ‘alpacas’ is a key element for Aymara’s subsistence. Nevertheless, there is a lack of studies addressing this issue. This study therefore focuses in the identification of the main health issues that affects the livestock of South American camel of the Aymara group that live in the Chilean region of Arica and Parinacota, through participatory epidemiology. Personal and group interviews are being conducted during January and March 2012. The results of this study can be of great interest for the Chilean animal health authorities and for the governmental agricultural extension services, to develop agricultural policies according to the Aymara needs.