



D4Dairy

**Digitalisation, Data integration,
Detection and Decision support
in Dairying**

Programme: COMET – Competence
Centers for Excellent Technologies

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ACCEPTANCE OF DIGITALIZATION IN AGRICULTURE

SURVEYS REVEAL NEEDS, WISHES AND CONCERNS OF FARMERS, VETERINARIS AND OTHER GROUPS

Modern dairy farming is undergoing a fundamental transformation process that aims to achieve the goals of responsible, resource-saving, efficient and socially acceptable agriculture. Digitization can make an important contribution here. A strength of our research approach was that different stakeholder groups were included. In addition to farmers, veterinarians, consultants, students of veterinary medicine and agricultural sciences also consumers were interviewed. In all online surveys we were able to reach a high number of participants, so that the results are very meaningful.

Results of the surveys

The survey of 2925 farmers revealed areas in which the participants see a need for new technologies and a benefit in data networking. Above all, a better

insight into the performance of their own farms and a more efficient work routine can be seen as the drivers to use these technologies. More than half of the participants indicated that digital technologies can help to improve animal welfare and animal health. With regard to the use of data by third parties, it should be emphasized that a large majority of those surveyed have a strong trust in agricultural organizations and veterinarians. The majority of the 115 veterinarians surveyed also saw a benefit of digital technologies for improving animal health on dairy farms. Above all, the use of cameras, the automated analysis of animal movement pattern and computer-controlled feeding are seen as helpful. Veterinarians use the data from the farms and animals to better understand the course of a disease. On the other hand, the survey also shows a certain skepticism towards digital technologies with regard

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to their own veterinary work and the quality of animal monitoring on farms.

In addition to farmers and veterinarians, we surveyed 429 students of agricultural sciences and veterinary medicine at 14 German-speaking universities (AT, D, CH). The majority of students see the use of digital technologies as an opportunity to improve animal welfare. At the same time, many of those surveyed feared a loss of human-animal contact. Only a minority of students see themselves adequately prepared for the digital transformation in dairy farming during their studies.

Agricultural advisors see great potential in digitization and data networking for improving advice and optimizing the operational situation. At the same time, the majority of the 77 respondents assume that digitization in dairy farming is viewed critically by consumers. A representative survey of 500 consumers, carried out in cooperation with

Agrarmarkt Austria (AMA) Marketing, showed a rather positive attitude towards the use of digital technologies in the dairy industry, especially to improve animal health and animal welfare. In this survey, too, the fear was expressed that the bond between farmers and their animals could suffer from the increased use of technology in the barn.

Impact and effects

In order to achieve social acceptance of the transformation of agriculture, it is extremely important to know the positions, expectations and fears of different social groups. This is important for directly involved organizations and industries as well as for the social discourse. The surveys as a whole have made a valuable contribution to this. The project has produced scientific findings that have not previously been available in this scope.

Project coordination (Story)

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Project partners



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