



# LIVESTOCK ACTIVITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN KHOREZM OASIS

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## ABSTRACT

*The article is devoted to cattle-breeding activities of the population living in the lower Amudarya basin, it reveals the specific development processes of cattle and shows the role of cattle-breeding in the social life of peoples.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Kyzylkum, Karakum, Aralboyi, Khiva, Bagat, Khazarasp, Tuproqkala, Avesta, Ghats, Zoroastrianism, G. M. Danilevsky, argumaq (a common name given by Eastern peoples to thoroughbred horses), kimyz, Karakalpakstan, zebulike cattle, Hisori sheep, fold, Turkmen horse.*

## INTRODUCTION

The Khorezm oasis is geographically located in the northwestern part of Uzbekistan. The region is surrounded by sand on almost all sides. In particular, the southern districts are located in the Karakum desert, and the eastern districts are located in the Kyzylkum desert. In general, almost half of the oasis is sand. This, in turn, affects the development of livestock in these areas. The inhabitants of the northern and western districts of the oasis have long been engaged in irrigated agriculture.

Livestock was one of the most important economic sectors among the peoples of the Aral Sea. Each nation has its own characteristics in animal husbandry, as in agriculture. Accordingly, livestock products and the diet of each ethnic group have their own characteristics [1,161]

Livestock training is widespread among the people living in the sandy areas of the region. Such districts include Khiva, Bagat, Khazarasp and Tupraqkala districts. But the pastoral activity of the oasis was fundamentally different from that of the neighboring Karakalpak and Kazakh peoples. The reason is that in most parts of the Khorezm region, irrigated agriculture is the leading type of activity, and cattle are not kept in herds. On the contrary, he was raised in a domestic environment. If we look at it from this point of view, the number of types of livestock suitable for domestic livestock is greater than the type of livestock that is driven. Cattle, cows, sheep, and pigs are the main types of livestock that are kept on a leash.

## METHODS

If we look at the history of the oasis, we can learn that it was in this area that one of the centers of ancient civilization, the teaching of Zoroastrianism was created, and in it, farmers and shepherds were mentioned with special respect. Zoroastrianism is one of the biggest factors that influenced the development of livestock. In the "Ghats" section of "Avesta", the holy book of Zoroastrianism, it is said: "The main task of people is to breed and keep livestock." We can learn from this that in the XI-X centuries BC, livestock occupied the main place in the social life of the population [2, 58]. We can learn from this that in the XI-X centuries BC, livestock occupied the main place in the social life of the population.

Humans have tamed and domesticated animals, and over time have used them to plow the land. With the advent of plow farming, domestication also began to develop. Cattle breeding developed. In the past, cattle breeding served to satisfy the human need for meat. The consumption of milk started much later. "Cow's milk was considered divine in Zoroastrianism. The consumption of cow's milk and khaoma drink was started by Zoroaster's mother [3, 14]".



The land of Khorezm has long been considered a favorable area for people to settle down and engage in farming and livestock, and therefore the foundations of the first statehood appeared and were formed in this oasis.

The livestock sector of the region has a unique appearance. Below, we describe the types of cattle that are kept the most, from the ones that are kept to the least, and we also touch on each type of livestock separately and try to explain more fully the information about its place and importance in the oasis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Cattle Species

Large horned livestock include cattle, oxen and cows.

Cattle are the most common type of livestock kept by the inhabitants of the oasis. If we consider that the population of the region is engaged in irrigated agriculture, this number of livestock is naturally the majority. Examples of reasons for this are:

- Firstly, in agricultural conditions, it helps in plowing the land;
- Secondly, to satisfy the demand for meat more;
- Thirdly, meeting the demand for dairy products;
- Fourthly, cattle do not require driving and are convenient for domestic husbandry.

Describing the wealth of the settled population in the oasis, G. M. Danilevsky writes: "Horned cattle are generally very small, weak and simple breed, farmers keep them only for field work." The author probably considers a zebu-like animal to be a normal breed, because such a description belongs to a zebu-like animal [4, 77]. In our opinion, the reason why the local people breed zebu-like cattle is that it is suitable for the climate and natural conditions of the region, and that it does not choose fodder.

The Khorezm oasis is a zone close to the desert, and unique plants grow in the area. Raising large horned cattle poses a number of challenges. First of all, due to the problem of winter feed and space, the middle class of the population cannot feed them. The most common among the lower stratum is the cow. Because if it provides her own food by selling its milk, it will help the family to increase the number of livestock due to it giving birth once a year. Below we compare the peoples living along the Lower Amudarya according to the type of livestock.

**Composition of Livestock by Ethnic Groups**  
(the end of the 20th century in thousand heads) [5,163]

Ethnic group	Cattle	Sheep	Goat	Horse	Camel
Uzbek	32	43.7	4.2	11.8	8.1
Karakalpak	22,9	16.1	40.8	14.1	0.6
Kazakh	2,6	42.7	43.7	2.7	8

### Small horned cattle

Uzbeks and Kazakhs are the leaders in sheep breeding in the Lower Amudarya region, while Karakalpaks and Kazakhs are dominant in goat breeding. We explain this with the following points. There are few irrigated areas in Karakalpaks, that's why there are many goats. There is a proverb among the people: "The evil of farming is the goat." From this we can know that the number of goats will be small among the farming people. Goat breeding has developed in Karakalpakstan due to the abundance of pastures. There are a number of reasons why goats were abundant among the above two peoples. one of them is that it is satisfied with little fodder, and the second is explained by its rapid reproduction. Residents raise goats for two different products. Mainly for meat and milk. Therefore, in the folk saying of the Karakalpak people, it is called "the poor man's cow is a goat"[5, 160].

In the period that we are showing, sheep breeding in Karakalpaks is very little developed. But the number of cattle is higher than that of Kazakhs. The main reason for this is that one of the main drinks of Karakalpaks is milk. It is the need for milk that leads to the increase of large horned animals.

The field of sheep breeding is mainly carried out among the Uzbek people by raising two types of sheep. The first one is black sheep farming, and the second one is the technology of rearing sheep with normal humps. Cattle farming is a unique type of activity in which cattle are raised mainly for wool, not for meat and milk, and it requires individual attention and care. Most of the common people keep a lot of humped (Hisori) sheep. Such sheep are specially bred for their meat and fat. Sheep, like goats, have a rapid reproduction rate. That is why their number exceeded 40 thousand at the end of the century. The reason why sheep are more numerous than large cattle is probably that they do not eat a lot of feed and do not require large barns. It is no exaggeration to say that



camels and horses were the golden treasure of their time. The reason is that until the middle of the last century, they were the main means of transport for the population, as well as the force that drives the earth and carries loads. But by the end of the century, we can see that their number decreased sharply (in the table on page 3). Karakalpak took the lead in horse breeding, while Uzbeks and Kazakhs recorded the same result in camel breeding. The reason why the population consumed more camel milk was that not everyone could digest horse's milk, "kimyz". But camel milk was useful. In addition, the camel was raised by the people living in the desert zone. Horse meat is not eaten much in Khorezm and Karakalpakstan, this custom has spread in the valley. The people of the Lower Amudarya use its cargo transportation service more.

In Khorezm, the most valuable part of the livestock industry was argumoq (a common name given by Eastern peoples to thoroughbred horses). They required a lot of attention and more complicated care. That is why the oasis is valued more expensive than other horses. If you refer to G. M. Danilevsky's book "Image of the Khiva Khanate", the author considers argumoq (a common name given by Eastern peoples to thoroughbred horses) to be pure Turkmen horses [4, 84].

But in the later period, attention to them began to decrease. According to statistics, there were 1,500 head of horses in the region in the first years of independence. Later, the attention to horse breeding in our country increased, and now their number in our region has exceeded 5 thousand [6].

Camel breeding was a highly developed industry in Khorezm region. For example, in the middle of the last century, their number was about 10 thousand. It was the best transport for the inhabitants of the desert region. Considering that half of the oasis is made up of sand, it is reasonable to assume that this type of livestock is quite numerous. Koshkopir and Khiva districts of the province were the place of breeding camels. Because the territory of these districts was covered with sand and was suitable for camel breeding. Khorezms were familiar with both types of camels. They were considered one-humped and two-humped camels. But in 1992 there were only 102 camels in the regional farms [4, 290].

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, livestock activities of residents of the region and the Lower Amudarya basin are distinguished by their specific nature, climate, and conditions. In these regions, the peoples have clearly defined for themselves the most effective technique and type of livestock for thousands of years. Because as a result of adaptation processes, livestock types that are suitable for the conditions and have fast breeding characteristics have been continuing their offspring for centuries. The main goal of improving the quality of their numbers is to meet the needs of the native population for meat, milk and wool more effectively. It is for this reason that there are various differences in the number of livestock types among the three nations. Because their natural conditions, food products and way of life are adapted to it. Here it is worth saying that the type of livestock is formed and multiplied according to the region and conditions. Then, the natives reflect this in their lifestyle, national food and drinks. In conclusion, the population adapts to the nature, climate, flora and fauna of the area and creates its own and appropriate customs, clothing, food and drink.

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