



Ecological Camel Farming – Supporting Aravana Camel Breeders in Turkmen Region of Iran

Description

Reported by my friend Kianzad from Camel Center Iran

The native flora, especially the resilient bush varieties are re-cultivated and protected to provide healthy and sufficient feed resources to the precious camel breed Aravana in Turkmen region of the country. Here is a brief example of the Salsola bush. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salsola_vermiculata



Camel and the salsola bush

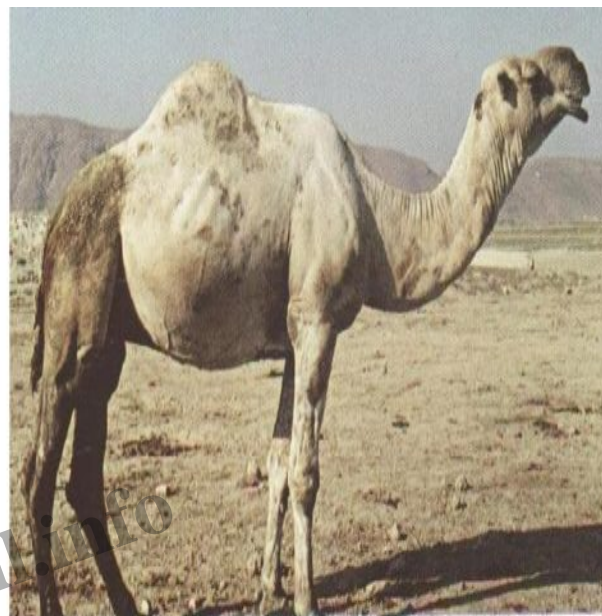


Camel loves the salsola bush

The camel and Salsola bush

Salsola or Saltwart bush is highly adapted to the native ecosystem and is highly liked by the camels. In native language (Turkmen), the camel breeders call it the 'sparrow Eye'. Being rich in nutrients, this bush has very good effect on milk, i.e. viscosity of milk based on fat & protein contents. The Turkmen camel breeders in Gonbad district (centre of Turkmen area, Iran) use it as main part of camel ration. The region is home to the precious camel breed 'ARAVANA' which is a promising dairy type. <https://arkbiodiv.com/2016/06/19/the-camel-genetic-treasure-of-iran/>

Torkumani camel breeders, raising in Gonbad and Gorlestan province in North East of Iran and the adjoining regions of Turkmenistan are herding the Aravana breed. This camel is widely used by the Turkmen nomadic people of the region. Aravana breed is specialized milk breed with short age at first calving and shorter calving interval compared to other breeds. The nomads make the specialized sour milk of this breed, called as CHAL. <https://arkbiodiv.com/2020/07/23/chal-a-traditional-camel-milk-product-of-turkmens-cameleers/amp/>



Aravana camel breed of Turkmen camel keepers have diversities in types. Here are some pictures.

Ministry of jihad agriculture support the cultivation and extension of the native but resilient plants which are highly liked by the camels. The ministry with the collaboration of rangeland, watershed management, and deputy of agronomy and land grant management organization has launched a unique project of its kind 'ECOLOGICAL CAMEL FARMING. In this plan, they are using very extensive land (with salt contents) which is unable for arable farming. In the project they used mechanization for cultivation and protection with some level of irrigation to support the early growing of the halophyte bushes like *Salsola and Alhagi camelarum* which is also known as camel thorn. I shall share some pictures provided by Kianzad.



A Turkmen camel breeder is offering camel milk to the guests



A field of Aljagi camelarum plants

The native flora gave a very good boost the the milk yield in camels

Conclusion

The best method is the ecological farming ‘farming with zero harm to the nature’. This is the only way for a safe and zero emission farming system, especially for the camels with the native flora. Both the camels and the native bushes have the highest tolerance level and very adapted to the harsh and hostile ecosystems. Under the guidance of the COP26, we have to go for the adaptation and rely on the genetic resources which are highly resilient and

sustainable with very low input system.



Harvesting of Alhagi camelarum



A hope of the Alhagi camelorum



The pods of seed, rushed to make TMR from the Alhagi camelarum

Different types of pictures of the Alhagi camelarum from the field work

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