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Goat milk prevents iron deficiency - study

By Alex McNally

31/07/2007 - **A study of the nutritional benefits of goat milk, compared to cow milk, at preventing iron deficiency could prove to be a huge benefit to human health.**

Research carried out at the Department of Physiology of the University of Granada (UGR) has found goat's milk not only helps prevent against ferropenic anaemia (iron deficiency) but also combats bone demineralisation (softening of the bones).

In the UK, [cow milk](#) dominates the market, which was estimated to be worth some £2.6bn in 2005. According to market analysts [Mintel](#), [goat milk](#) makes up only a tiny percentage of milk volume sold - less than 100 million litres in 2005 of the total 4.8bn litres.

The study, conducted by Doctor Javier Castro and directed by professors Margarita Campos, Inmaculada Aliaga and José Alférez, focused on the comparison between the nutritional properties of goat milk and cow milk

Both types of milk had the normal calcium content and were calcium enriched, and were tested against the bioavailability of iron, calcium, phosphorus and magnesium in rats.

The rodents consuming the goat milk were found to have better levels of parathyroid hormone (PTH), a hormone that regulates calcium balance. This the group said, was because of goat's milk higher bioavailability of iron, calcium, phosphorus and magnesium.

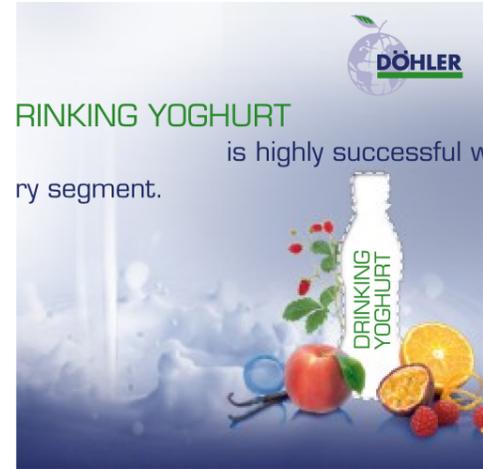
Castro points out that the inclusion of goat milk with normal or double calcium content in the diet, "*favours digestive and metabolic utilisation of iron, calcium and phosphorus and their deposit in target organs - parts of the organism to which these minerals are preferably sent - involved in their homeostatic regulation*".

According to this research, all these conclusions reveal that regular consumption of goats' milk aides mineral metabolism. NutraIngredients.com has not seen the full results prior to publication.

Castro said: "[Regular consumption] has *positive effects on mineral metabolism, recovery from ferropenic anaemia and bone mineralisation in rats. In addition, and unlike observations in cow milk, its calcium enrichment does not interfere in the bioavailability of the minerals studies.*"

However, the researchers said further studies in humans are still required.

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