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CHANGING IN LIVESTOCK PERSON BEHAVIOUR DURING WEEKENDS HAS NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON COW WELFARE DURING MILKING.

The motivational state of the livestock person is an important factor to define the human-animal relationship. Probably, they have low motivation when working in the weekends. This is usual in dairy farms. In the present study we tested the hypothesis that working in the weekends has negative effects on human-animal relationships. In order to test this hypothesis, we have analyzed the behaviour of humans and cows during milking sessions carried out in different days of the week. Direct and continuous observations were conducted in 5 farms (141 cows) during 14 consecutive days, throughout the milking sessions. The following behavioural categories were considered: a) for humans: scream occurrences (SO), and frequency (FH) and intensity (IH) of hits, b) for cows: score of movements during cluster fixation (MOV) and the occurrences of rumination. Every interaction was considered as an independent measurement. The qui-square test was used for all variables but FH, which was analyzed through ANOVA. There were significant differences ($P < 0,05$) between labour and weekend days for SO ($X^2=10,77$; $DF=1$), FH (Anova, $F=58,21$, $P=0,058$), IH ($X^2=54,060$; $df=3$), MOV ($X^2=6,009$; $df=2$) and rumination ($X^2=26,792$; $df=1$). These results pointed out that there were important changes in human-animal relationship during the weekend, probably due to human actions, which were more aggressive during the weekends than the labour days, resulting in an increase of cows' reactivity and reductions in the rumination occurrences. These conditions could be considered prejudicial for the cows' welfare.