

The chemical composition of rabbit milk compared to the milk composition of other mammal species

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Summary. We know that the needs of newborns in macronutrients and minerals vary, among other things, with the species (Stannard et al 2020). Therefore, the chemical composition of fresh milk varies greatly from one species to another (Osthoff et al 2020).

Our short paper is based on our own laboratory analyzes (Bud et al 2011), as well as on compilations from the scientific literature, and presents the chemical composition of domestic rabbit milk (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), compared to the milk of other mammalian species (Table 1).

Table 1

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Specification	Percent (%) in raw milk				
	Raw protein	Fat	Lactose	Minerals	Dry substance
Doe (large breeds)	13.2	15.15	3.1	1.60	33.05
Doe (medium sized breeds)	14.0	11.20	0.9	2.40	28.40
Cow	3.3	3.7	5.0	0.95	13.00
Goat	2.9	4.5	4.1	0.80	13.20
Sheep	5.5	7.4	4.8	1.00	19.30

As can be seen in the synthetic table, compared to the milk of other mammalian species, rabbit milk is very rich in protein, fat and mineral salts, which makes the value of the dry matter in milk high (see also Ludwiczak et al 2020). However, the percentage value of lactose is small.

This information is extremely useful for the development of improved milk recipes for feeding orphaned rabbits. For the production of milk for orphan kits you can use cow's milk, enriched with egg yolk and whey protein for sports use (low in carbohydrates). In this way, both the total fat value and the total protein value will be corrected, without increasing the value of the carbohydrates in the mixture.

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