



animals



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Advances in Mammary Gland Biology and Lactation of Ruminants

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Message from the Guest Editor

Apart from its milk-producing function, the mammary gland is a unique organ in two major ways. First, it is usually sited outside the body cavity, and second, it grows and regresses several times during the animal's life. Being isolated from the body protects vital organs from infections that are common in the mammary gland, and the gland has both local and systemic methods to combat mastitis. Isolation also facilitates growth and regression of the gland by separating its many growth factors from other body organs. Add to these functions the mechanisms by which the gland produces colostrum to provide offspring with immunological competence, as well as with milk, both produced in amounts and compositions appropriate for the species and the offspring.

It is five years since Michael Akers wrote the 100-year review on mammary development and lactation, in which he pointed out that despite great advances in knowledge, the fundamental questions regarding mammary development and lactation have changed little. Thus, the plan for this Special Issue is to highlight research in mammary biology and lactation in ruminants.



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Special Issue



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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

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