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Identification of Entrepreneurial Characteristics of Emerging Smallholder Dairy Farmers: A Case Study of Groblersdal and Matatiele Local Municipalities, South Africa

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ABSTRACT This case study evaluated the entrepreneurial characteristics of smallholder dairy farmers in Groblersdal and Matatiele local municipalities. The main findings were: gender disparity in dairy cattle ownership for commercialization; farmers' limited entrepreneur knowledge and skills on commercial dairy farming; maintenance of farming practices using indigenous knowledge systems (IKS); dairy cattle were mainly kept for household subsistence; cultural significance of beef cattle; production of animal manure for agriculture; and use of medicinal herbs for animal health. The key challenges facing farmers included: cattle theft, illnesses and death of exotic dairy cattle, due to lack of adaptation to arid environments. The study recommends training in basic management, improving market access and developing entrepreneurial attributes of the farmers, particularly women; documentation and interface of indigenous knowledge on animal health practices.