INTRODUCTION

Milk is a very good source of energy, proteins and minerals for infants and young children who have only few alternative sources for these nutrients. Besides its beneficial effects on nutrition, milk might also be a source of zoonotic infections (Faye and Loiseau 2000). Several surveys have detected food borne pathogens in raw milk and milk products: Mycobacterium bovis, Brucella spp., Listeria monocytogenes, Staphylococcus aureus and others (Alehneg, 2004; Oliver et al, 2005; Ameni et al., 2007). Consumption of raw milk is a high-risk behavior and will continue to cause morbidity and mortality until people stop consuming raw milk and raw milk products (Keene, 1999). In Ethiopia, raw milk and raw milk products often consumed under unsatisfactory hygiene conditions (Ashenafi and Beyene, 1994; Kassahun and Fikadu, 2009; Wubete, 2004). However, there is a paucity of citable scientific data on the magnitude of raw milk consumption behavior and the risk factors for the behavior in and around Debre-Zeit.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study area: In and around Debre-Zeit town, Ethiopia

Study design: A cross sectional study design involving questionnaire survey
Sample size: 170 dairy farmers comprising urban (n=131) and peri urban (n=39) participated in the study.

Data management and analysis: Data entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and R 2.8.1 Statistical package was used for performing X2 test, odd ratio, univariate and multivariate analyses. Statistical significance was accepted at P < 0.05.

RESULTS

1. Consumption of raw milk
Of the 170 participants, 31.8% (n=54) producers had a habit of consuming raw milk. The proportion of dairy farmers consuming raw milk was significantly higher in peri urban areas (94.8%) than in urban areas of Debre-Zeit (13.0%). Of the factors tested, only residing in peri-urban areas was significantly associated with consumption of raw milk (p<0.001). Of the factors tested, only residing in peri-urban areas was significantly associated with consumption of raw milk (p=0.001). The majority of dairy farmers (85.6%) were unaware of milk borne diseases associated with consumption of raw milk.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed the habit of raw milk consumption, poor milk handling practices and inadequate knowledge of milk borne diseases among dairy producers implying the risk of milk borne diseases in the study area. Furthermore, traditional milk fermentation was found to be popular. Future study should investigate its effect to milk hygiene.