Raising Goats in Southwest Florida

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Featuring Rock & Roll Sports Pub
“Where it all comes together like GOAT LIPS!”
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Presentation Objectives

• Overview of the Industry
• Factors Affecting Demand
• Opportunities
• Selection – Do’s and…
• Just one ‘Don’t’
Introduction

• Humans domesticated goats as early as 10,000 years ago
• From this primitive type, our modern, high-producing breeds were developed
• Today’s Angora produces 10 kg of mohair each year
• The Boer (South African meat-goat) grows quickly to 220 pounds
• Modern dairy goat breeds produce over 1000 kg of milk in 10 months
Around the world

In many parts of the world goat is the preferred meat. 63% of the red meat consumed worldwide is goat.

- It is a tradition in Greece at Easter
- In parts of Mexico, cabrito is standard barbecue fare
- Enjoyed in China as well as Italy
- The French call goat "chevon" and regard it as a delicacy
- Meat of choice at weddings, parties and other festivities throughout the islands of the Caribbean
In the U.S.

• In the past, goat meat was far from familiar fare in the U.S.

• There is a currently a growing, solid market for goat meat in the United States

• About 1.5 million pounds of goat meat is imported every week.

• In Florida, one supermarket chain (28 stores in SF) carry goat meat next to poultry, pork and beef in the meat case.
In the U.S.

- The increasing economic importance of meat goat production in the U.S. can be attributed both to a strong demand for goat meat and to an interest in ecologically sound forms of vegetation control.
In Florida

• Demand is currently about double the domestic production, so there is ample room for expansion.

• Meat goats fit in well with other enterprises, particularly cattle operations, and may be used to control noxious weeds and brush to improve pastures for other livestock.
Multi-species grazing

- Cattle prefer grass over other types of plants
- Goats are much more likely to eat weeds
- Goats have preference for browsing on brush, shrubs, and broad-leaved weeds
- Result is all types of plants being eaten, thus controlling weeds and brush, while yielding more pounds of gain per acre compared to single-species grazing.
In Florida

• Meat goats can be raised with very little supplemental grain and with minimal shelter, and are generally an easy-care animal.
What’s so special about goat?

• Many people have digestive problems that require a careful diet
• The molecular structure of chevon is different than that of other meats, making it more easy to digest
• It is low in fat, and lower in cholesterol
# What’s in Goat Meat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 oz. Roasted</th>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>Fat</th>
<th>Sat'd Fat</th>
<th>Protein</th>
<th>Iron</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOAT</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEEF</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PORK</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAMB</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHICKEN</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: USDA
Goat’s milk

Demand for goat’s cheese and milk is continually growing for three reasons

• More American palates adore the flavor and taste
• More restaurant menus now include goat’s cheese starter
• Dietary concerns have created a demand for alternatives to cow’s milk
Demand and the Supply Response

- There is currently a strong and increasing demand for goat meat
- Meat once exported is now being consumed in the U.S.
- From 420 thousand goats in 87’, the number reached 3.5 million heads in January 2008
- Currently, about 1.5 million pounds of goat meat is imported into the U.S. every week

Sources: Raising Meatgoats for profit
USDA, US Agriculture Census
Who buys goat?

Ethnic groups
• Hispanics
• Asians
• Caribbean Nationals
• Middle Easterners
• Italians
• British
• Greeks
• Swiss

Religious groups
• Muslims
• Hindus

Other groups
• Dieters
• Consumers with intolerance to other meats and milk
## Who buys goat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population trends-U.S.</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>% Total</th>
<th>Net Increase</th>
<th>% increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>248,709,873</td>
<td>281,421,906</td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td>32,712,033</td>
<td>13.15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>29,986,060</td>
<td>34,658,190</td>
<td>12.32%</td>
<td>4,672,130</td>
<td>15.58 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>22,354,059</td>
<td>35,305,818</td>
<td>12.55%</td>
<td>12,951,759</td>
<td>57.94 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>6,908,638</td>
<td>10,242,998</td>
<td>3.64%</td>
<td>3,334,360</td>
<td>48.26 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who buys goat?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Income</th>
<th>1990 (in 2000 Dollar)</th>
<th>2000 Mean</th>
<th>% increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Households</td>
<td>$48,024</td>
<td>$57,047</td>
<td>18.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>$49,962</td>
<td>$59,280</td>
<td>18.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>$31,860</td>
<td>$40,067</td>
<td>25.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>$35,915</td>
<td>$42,411</td>
<td>18.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>$46,412</td>
<td>$70,231</td>
<td>51.32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.census.gov
## Ethnic Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holiday</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Size of Kid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easter (Western)</td>
<td>April 12, 2009</td>
<td>20 to 50 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter (Eastern and Greek)</td>
<td>April 19, 2009</td>
<td>20 to 50 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence Day</td>
<td>July 4</td>
<td>20 to 35 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(older kids also accepted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean holidays</td>
<td>August 1</td>
<td>60 pound bucks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start of Ramadan (Muslim)</td>
<td>August 22, 2009</td>
<td>45 to 120 pounds, less than 12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eid al Fitr (Muslim)</td>
<td>September 21, 2009</td>
<td>45 to 120 pounds, 60 pounds optimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eid al Adha (Muslim)</td>
<td>November 28, 2009</td>
<td>yearlings, blemish-free</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [http://sheepgoatmarketing.info/education/ethnicholidays.htm](http://sheepgoatmarketing.info/education/ethnicholidays.htm)
Other reasons for goats in Florida

- Weed control
- Natural areas control of plants
- Creation of fire lines
Purchasing Animals; Do’s and Don’ts
Key Points to Consider

• The key management issues for a successful goat enterprise are fencing, parasite control, predator control, and marketing.

• Attention must also be paid to nutrition and to breeding stock selection.
Do’s

- While goats are enjoyable to raise and may be profitable, they are not a way to “get rich quick.”
- As with any farming endeavor, knowledge and skills are essential for success.
- Prospective producers are well advised not only to read up on the subject, but to find and spend time with a local meat goat producer, and ask lots of questions.
Do’s

• Before committing to goat production, prospective producers should investigate market conditions, estimate costs, and work out a rough budget.
Consider that...

• In some areas, land and feed costs will be higher, increasing the cost of production;
• In some areas, lack of demand for meat or kids will make marketing more difficult.
• Economic feasibility will be enhanced if the goat enterprise uses land already owned but not fully utilized, such as brushy land on a cattle operation.
Remember!!

• The presence of a local ethnic population is a plus, as is proximity to processing plants that handle goats.
Taking the decision

• If the financial prospects are encouraging and the decision is made to proceed, the next step is to install adequate fencing.

• Cattle fences may be adapted for goats by adding strands of barbed wire (and stays) or by installing offset hot wires inside the fence at about 8 inches high and 6 to 8 inches away from the fence.

• Fences must be tight, and attention must be paid to areas with uneven terrain, as gaps can allow goats to squeeze underneath and escape.
Selecting Animals

• Consider enterprise type and market potential

• Select breed based on the local environment in which they will be reared

• Buy from reputable breeders or producers
Forget Sentiments!!

- Oh, she’s so cute......
Breed

• Several meat-goat breeds are available in the U.S. The most widely available and the breed best suited to extensive range is the Spanish meat goat, also known as the “brush” goat.
• Most are horned; color and size are variable.
• Only horned bucks should be used, as naturally polled goats carry a gene for hermaphroditism.
Goats: (Capra hircus)

http://www.ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/goats/

For answers to many of the commonly asked questions please take a moment and look through our Help files or our Virtual Resource Room.

The goat, along with sheep, were among the earliest domesticated animals. Goat remains have been found at archaeological sites in western Asia, such as Jericho, Choga, Mami, Djeitun and Cayonu, which allows domestication of the goats to be dated at between 6000 and 7000 B.C.

However, unlike sheep, their ancestry is fairly clear. The major contributor of modern goats is the Bezoar goat which is distributed from the mountains of Asia Minor across the Middle East to Sind.

Unlike sheep, goats easily revert to feral or wild condition given a chance. In fact, the only domestic species which will return to a wild state as rapidly as a goat is the domestic cat.
Breed Selection Decisions

• Spanish goats are characterized as hardy and adaptable, excellent foragers, and excellent mothers.

• However, their flighty disposition – if raised extensively – may make them hard to handle, and they are generally slower-growing and lighter-muscled than other types.

• Some lines of Spanish goats have been highly selected and will be far superior to the average.
Some Meat Breeds

Kiko

Dwarf

Boer

Spanish

provided by Dr. An Peischel
Dairy Breeds

• **Dairy breeds** may be crossed with Spanish goats to produce a larger kid, and the resulting cross will produce more milk. However, the larger udders of the dairy breeds will cause problems in brushy areas.
Some Dairy Breeds

Toggenburg

La Mancha

Saanen

Provided by Karen Lee
Stocking rates

- It is generally believed that six mature goats equal one cow on improved pastures and that ten goats equal one cow on browse or brushy areas.
Nutrition – *Pasture grazing*

- The most efficient system is ‘controlled grazing’.
- Pastures are divided into smaller units (paddocks)
- Forage is grazed to a predetermined height
- Goats prefer to eat forage no taller than 6 inches.
- Paddocks should not be grazed lower than 2 inches.
Tips for success

• Offer a quality product and understand what the buyer prefers.

• If the buyer wants 45-pound kids, it will not pay to feed them to 80 or 90 pounds.

• Also, goats do not marble; extra fat is simply waste, and is very expensive to put on the goat and also expensive to remove from the carcass.

• To understand what the buyer wants – ask!
Don’t turn upside down...when your goat is behind you!

www.mdavid.com.au
Thanks!