



## **Shepherd Song Farm**

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# Production Method

- We kid and lamb once a year approx 30 days before grass greens.
- Economically we are most profitable kidding or lambing during April and May.
- Moms do not always agree with the plan and we do need some out-of-season kids.



**Goats are amazingly prolific**



**I have it handled—go away!**

## Savanna kids following a Spanish doe



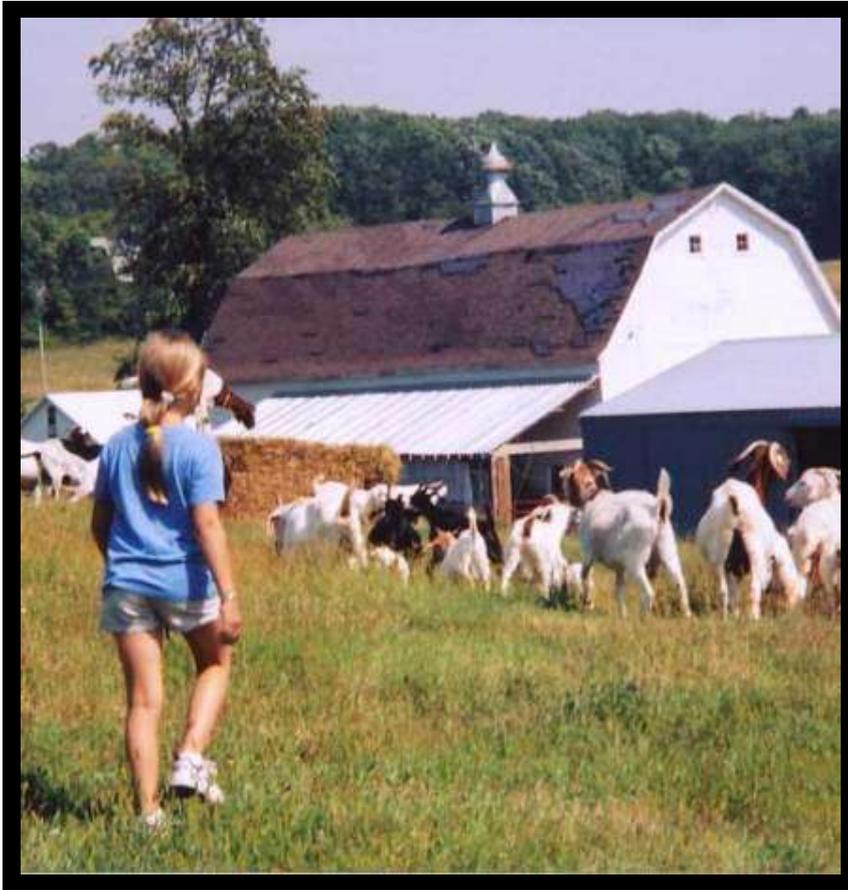
# Start with the End in Mind

## Lets reach our goals!

Many producers we talk to do not know.

- **Breakeven:** Enrich life, property tax relief, preserve heritage breeds?
- **\$5,000 / year:** Roth IRA fund or Vacation?
- **Business:** Income of a wage earner?

# Enriching Lives: Goats have been partners with people and children since time eternal



# Enterprise Options

- **Supplementary:** resources that might otherwise go to waste (beef & goats)
- **Complementary:** one enterprise contributes directly to another (vegetables/crops & goats).
- **Competitive:** requires same resources (sheep & goats?).

# Supplementary or Competitive?



Goats  
prefer  
70%  
browse.

Sheep  
prefer  
grasses.



**They love the woods!**



**Another form of browse—thorn bushes.  
This takes precise lip and tongue coordination**

# Unhappy goats but will graze

Pasture Height – 80% of the internal parasites found in bottom 2 inches of vegetation



# Making Money

**Marketing**

**\$\$\$**

**Production**



# Marketing Your Goats

## **1st Level: Live Animal Sales**

- Example: Diverse Families**

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Level: Processed Meat**

- Example: Local Restaurants**

## **3<sup>rd</sup> Level: National Markets**

- Example: Online Sales**

# Marketing Your Goats

## 1st Level: Live Animal Sales

- Commodity Auctions
- Direct-Farm Diverse Families
- Custom Locker Sales
  - Farmer Market pre-orders
  - Friends, Family, Co-workers, Network
- Direct to a Processor or a Buyer
- Breeding Stock

# Breeding Stock

- High value
- Significant record keeping labor
- Attention to appearance of farm setting
- Knowledge of genetics



**Savanna Meat Goat Buck**

# The Families Knocking at Your Door



Selecting the “Perfect Goat” for Daughter’s Birthday

# Your Customer may be a:

- Foreign-born U.S. citizen
- Naturalized citizen
- Refugee
- Immigrant
- Visa: student, work, travel
- Family reunification
- Green Card
- Guest or temporary worker
- Migrant worker
- Undocumented worker



An honored village elder may  
not be as respected here

# So, where is slaughter done?

The customer is ultimately responsible. Hopefully a Custom or State Licensed Slaughter Facility. But may be:

- Garages, basements, back yards
- DNR land (how does this differ from deer hunting slaughter?)
- Shower stalls (hog in a bathtub: St. Paul, MN)
- Car wash (took down the plumbing)

# Marketing Your Goats

## **2nd Level: Processed Meat** (retained ownership)

- Restaurants
  - Whole Carcass
  - Cuts
- Natural Food Stores
  - Whole Carcass
  - Cuts
- Farmers Market

# Your Major Competitor



Over the last ten years Australia and New Zealand have increased their exports of frozen goat meat to the U.S. at a rate of over 10-15% per year.

# The Australian Goat

The Australian goat: The large number of feral or wild goat has presented a problem in Australia since the turn of the century.

Goats thrive, raising twins, in even the drought conditions that cause severe reduction of sheep flocks

An increasing number of Australian producers are running goats in conjunction with sheep, as a means of controlling weed and scrub growth.

**Solution:** Entrepreneurs are utilizing the Australian goat for profitable overseas export of meat and skin.

Source: Handbook of Australian Livestock,  
Australian Meat & Livestock Corporation, 1989, 3rd Edition



Sample of the  
Australian  
imported goat  
carcass for sale at  
Restaurant Depot,  
St Paul, MN  
\$2.19-2.89 / lb



Note the exposed bone and meat on the carcass.  
Shown as displayed for sale at Restaurant Depot.

# Marketing Your Goats

## 3rd Level: National Markets

- Producer Listservs
  - **Pro:** Marketing is part of the service
  - **Con:** Service charge
  - **Con:** Competition from other listings
- Farm Website
  - **Pro:** More control of “*Farm Story*” to differentiate
  - **Con:** SEO marketing knowledge or consultant
  - **Con:** Maintenance & Updates

# Marketing Logistics

## 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Level

- Slaughter Facility
  - Scheduling, Transportation, Quality Inspection
- Storage
  - Licensed facility (rent or own)
- Inventory Management
  - All cuts need to be sold (Your profit is the inventory)
- Delivery (cold chain)
  - Special vehicle may be necessary
- Invoicing & Collecting
  - Lag time causes cash flow shortages

# How Many Goats to Reach Your Goal?

**Example:** Commodity Auction: average gross profit for sheep producers over a 10 year period is \$10 / breeding ewe (ASI).

- **If you are average**, commodity only sales would require 500 head of ewes to reach the \$5,000 gross profit goal

**How will you market?**



**Central Highlands Does, Ethiopia**



## **Live Animal Market, Rural Village in Ethiopia**

**The customer's value may include the desire to touch, check for conditioning, health and choose the preferred color.**

# What's For Dinner?



**Fresh GOAT**

**Outside an Ethiopian rural restaurant**