



Goats

Why keep goats?

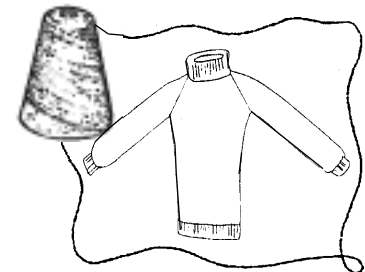
Goats have many uses and can be kept for the following reasons:

Meat

Because goats are small it is easy to prepare and consume an entire carcass. This is ideal, especially when meat cannot be kept for long periods because there is no way to keep it cold.

Hair

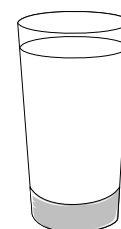
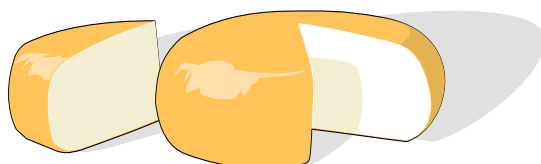
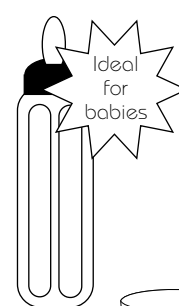
- ◇ Angora goats produce mohair
- ◇ Boer goats, Savanna goats and Gorno Altai goats produce cashmere.

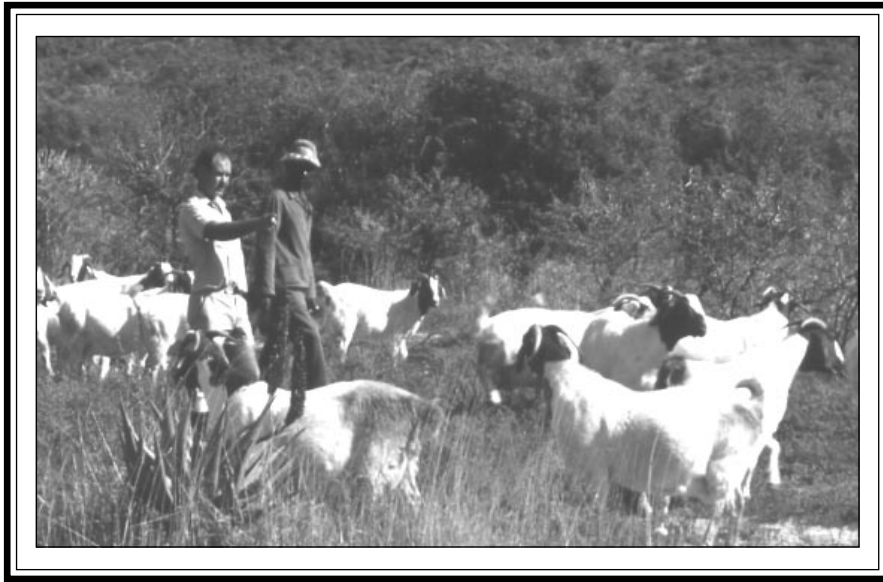


These fibres are washed and spun and then woven or knitted into warm, lightweight clothing.

Milk

- ◇ Goat's milk is very tasty and nutritious
- ◇ It is also more digestible than cow's milk
- ◇ It is often used for children who are allergic to cow's milk
- ◇ Goat's milk can be used for making cheese or yoghurt
- ◇ Goats can also be milked as often as needed.





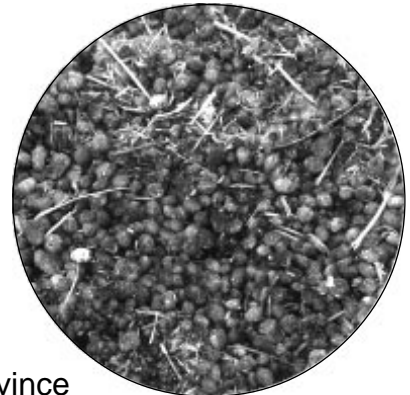
Goats can be used to combat bush encroachment

Hide

The hide of a goat can be used to make articles such as shoes, handbags, etc.

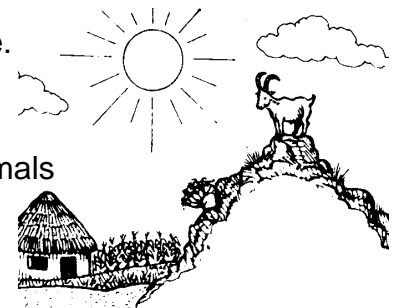
Other uses

- ❖ Goats can be used as pack animals
- ❖ Their manure can be used to fertilise vegetable gardens and as a source of fuel
- ❖ Goats are often used to clear weeds in forestry areas
- ❖ They can also be used to combat bush encroachment, especially in the Northern Province and the Northwest Province
- ❖ When weeds and unwanted plants are removed by goats, other plants which are of greater use (such as grasses) can grow in their place.



Feeding

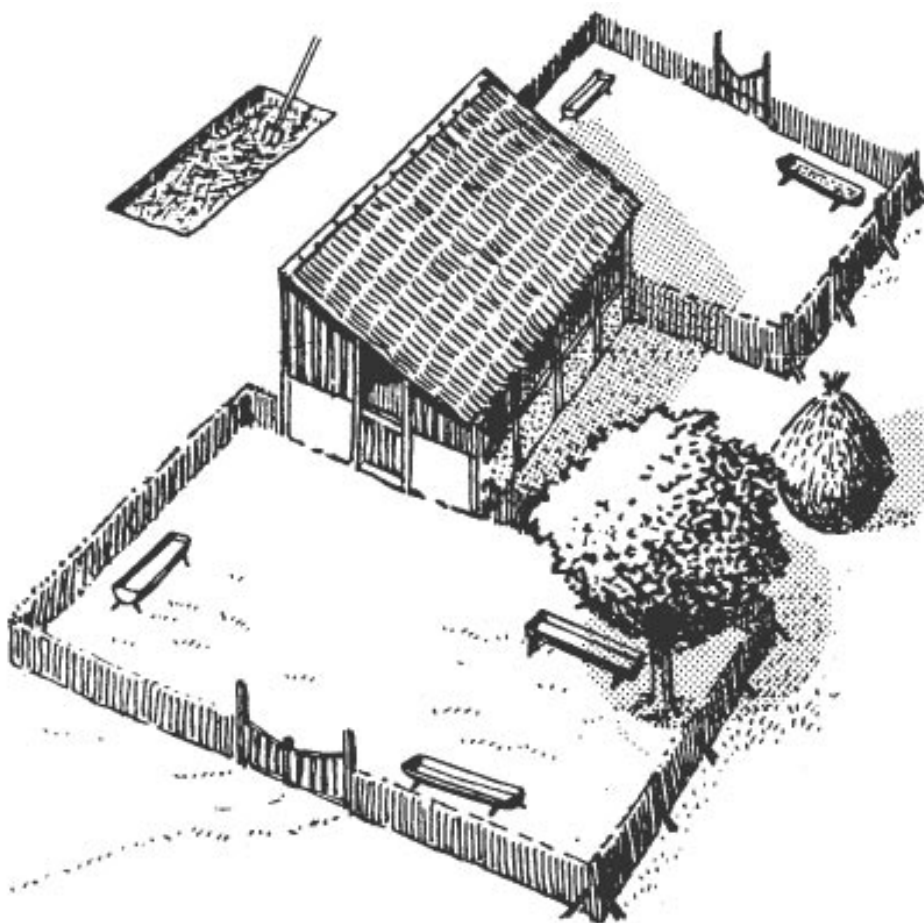
- ❖ Goats eat many kinds of food that other livestock do not like. This makes them very valuable because they clear weeds and encroaching brush and thornbushes
- ❖ Goats are also capable of grazing in areas where other animals cannot reach. They graze well in rocky, mountainous terrain. If they cannot reach certain plants, they will stand on their hind legs to get to it
- ❖ They will feed on plants that other animals do not eat such as wattle trees as well as vegetable scraps from the kitchen
- ❖ Goats also eat plants which are poisonous to other animals, such as lantana.





Management

◇ Proper management is very important because goats can cover a wide area in a day in search of food. They are also intelligent and can get through fences and into other people's vegetable gardens!



◇ One system is to let them range free during the day and to keep them in kraals at night. In this case, however, you will need the help of a goat herd.

◇ Goats can be kept in sheds permanently. In this case they are kept in a small yard where a hut is provided for shelter. This system requires a lot of work:

- food must be taken to the goats
- water must be supplied
- the yard must be cleaned regularly.



Saanen goats



Angora goat

Breeds

- ◇ Boer and Savanna goats are used for meat, but can also produce small quantities of cashmere
- ◇ Angora goats produce mohair
- ◇ Saanen, Toggenburg and Alpine goats are mainly kept for milk production
- ◇ Gorno Altai goats produce cashmere
- ◇ There are also several indigenous breeds in the country. These goats are very well adapted to South African conditions. They do not often get foot rot and some types are also resistant to hartwater.

Goats can be an important farming enterprise for smallholder farmers.

**For more information on the subject, contact Merida Smuts-Ayers
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