

Organic Sheep and Goat

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Abstract: *In organic farming, one objective is to achieve animals wellbeing through animal welfare oriented husbandry and appropriate use. A complete exploitation of the performance potential, entirely possible by neglecting these limits, is consciously rejected. Curtailing freedom of movement (keeping animals tied inside the stable, keeping animals in stables throughout the year), sensory deprivation (environmental stimuli such as light, weather), and unsocial ways of husbandry, not allowing any contact with animals of the same species, or forcing too close a contact, are not permitted in organic farming. Furthermore, animals are not adapted to husbandry conditions by removal of horns, shortening of beaks docking of tails, or cutting of teeth. Instead, husbandry conditions are adapted to the animals.*

Keywords: *organic farming, plant, organic agriculture, good quality, sheep, goat, production.*

Organic Agriculture should sustain and enhance the health of soil, plant, animal, human and planet as one and indivisible. This principle points out that the health of individuals and communities cannot be separated from the health of ecosystems - healthy soils produce healthy crops that foster the health of animals and people. Health is the wholeness and integrity of living systems. It is not simply the absence of illness, but the maintenance of physical, mental, social and ecological wellbeing. Immunity, resilience and regeneration are key characteristics of health. The role of organic agriculture, whether in farming, processing, distribution, or consumption, is to sustain and enhance the health of ecosystems and organisms from the smallest in the soil to human beings. In particular, organic agriculture is intended to produce high quality, nutritious food that contributes to preventive health care and well-being. In view of this it should avoid the use of fertilizers, pesticides, animal drugs and food additives that may have adverse health effects [1].

Organic Agriculture should be based on living ecological systems and cycles, work with them, emulate them and help sustain them. This principle roots organic agriculture within living ecological systems. It states that production is to be based on ecological processes, and recycling. Nourishment and well-being are achieved through the ecology of the specific production environment. For example, in the case of crops this is the living soil; for animals it is the farm ecosystem; for fish and marine organisms, the aquatic environment. Organic farming, pastoral and wild harvest systems should fit the cycles and ecological balances in nature. These cycles are universal but their operation is site-specific. Organic management must be adapted to local conditions, ecology, culture and scale. Inputs should be reduced by reuse, recycling and efficient management of materials and energy in order to maintain and improve environmental quality and conserve resources.

Organic agriculture should provide everyone involved with a good quality of life, and contribute to food sovereignty and reduction of poverty. It aims to produce a sufficient supply of good quality food and other products.[2] This principle insists that animals should be provided with the conditions and opportunities of life that accord with their physiology, natural behavior and well-being. Natural and environmental resources that are used for production and consumption should be managed in a way that is socially and ecologically just and should be held in trust for future generations. Fairness requires systems of production, distribution and trade that are open and equitable and account for real environmental and social costs.[3]

Sheep and goat breeding is an important area of the economy, because this turnout get valued products, even those using the natural resources where human feet rarely goes down. Integrating sheep and goat into a farming operation can contribute to the economic and environmental sustainability of the whole farm. The relatively small investment required, and the gradually increasing size of the flock, make sheep and goat production a good choice for the beginning small-scale or part-time farmer for the established farmer seeking to diversify, sheep offer a number of benefits.

Goats are ruminants. They have horizontal slit-shaped pupils and consume, on average, 2 kg of dry matter per 50 kg of body weight per day. In some climates goats, like humans, are able to breed at any time of the year.

In northern climates and among the Swiss breeds, the breeding season commences as the day length shortens, and ends in early spring. Does of any breed come into heat every 21 days for 2 to 48 hours. A doe in heat typically flags her tail often, stays near the buck if one is present, becomes more vocal, and may also show a decrease in appetite and milk production for the duration of the heat.

Bucks (intact males) of Swiss and northern breeds come into rut in the fall as with the doe's heat cycles. Rut is characterized by a decrease in appetite, obsessive interest in the does, a strong heat.

In addition to live breeding, artificial insemination has gained popularity among goat breeders, as it allows for rapid improvement because of breeder access to a wide variety of bloodlines. Gestation length is approximately 150 days. Twins are the usual result, with single and triplet births also common. Less frequent are litters of quadruplet, quintuplet, and even sextuplet kids. Birthing, known as kidding, generally occurs uneventfully with few complications. The mother often eats the placenta, which, with its oxytocin, gives her much needed nutrients, helps staunch her bleeding, and is believed by some to reduce the lure of the birth scent to predators. Freshening (coming into milk production) occurs at kidding.

Sheep are not very different from goats. They are kept in flocks — in pens, in a barn or on pasture. Sheep are active grazers where such feed is available at ground or low levels. They are usually given feed twice a day from troughs or they are allowed to graze in a pasture. Sheep need fresh water from troughs or ponds. Upon being weaned from ewe's milk, they eat hay, grains and grasses.

The lambs are weaned due to increasing competition between the lamb and ewe for food. Sheep are most comfortable when the temperature is moderate. Sheep breeders look for such traits in their flocks as high wool quality, consistent muscle development, quick conception rate (for females), multiple births and quick physical development. Sheep may be kept in a fenced-in field or paddock. The farmer must ensure that the fences are maintained in order to prevent the sheep from wandering onto roads or neighbours' property. Alternatively, they may be "hefted" (trained to stay in a certain area without the need for fences).

The hardy Herdwick breed is particularly known for Gerold Rahmann, Pillnitzer Sommerakademie 2007 4 its affinity for being hefted. A shepherd and a sheep dog may be employed for protection of the flock. On large farms, dogs or riders on horseback or motorcycles may herd sheep[4].

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