

US-SABGBA Breeders Policy (AKA-copied SA Boer Goat Breeders Policy)

(Reviewed: Conrad Herbst April 4th, 2024)

Definitions:

Ram = Buck

Ewe = Doe

Boer Goat = Boer Goat, Kalahari Red and Savanna

In terms of clause 3.3.5 of the **Constitution**, the **Council of the US-SABGBA** must compile a **Breeding Policy** that complies with the requirements contained in the Constitution:

- Objective measurement of all measurable economically significant traits.
- Standard of excellence for visual evaluation.

A sound breeding policy for a meat production goat must be based on the following requirements:

1. Reproduction

Reproduction rate is the most important trait that affects the profitability of stock farming. The factors that affect reproduction rate, among others, and for which breeders must select in their breeding policy are the following:

1.1 Net Reproduction Rate

Fecundity is an important economic trait.

- Every Boer goat ewe (doe) must have a lambing interval of fewer than 365 days.
- Rams (buck) contribute 50% to breeding in any flock, and it is therefore very important that breeding rams are fertile.
- High libido and mating skill are requirements for breeding sires.
- Prolificacy and milk production must always be measured relative to one another as in an ewe production index (EPI).
- The goal must be to have ewes that regularly wean heavy lambs and raise them with ease.
- Be particularly careful of ewes who often have multiple births but are incapable of raising them properly.

1.2 Milk Production

The quantity and quality of the milk of a lactating ewe, is measured by the growth capacity of her lambs.

- The lactating udder must be well attached and developed with good teats, that lambs can easily nurse from.
- Milk production and mothering traits are the basic components of meat production on which commercial goat farming is based.

1.3 Mothering Traits

This mystical trait of an ewe to be able to care for her lamb can be measured only in the weight of the weaned lamb.

- It provides the mother with a special ability to overcome shortcomings or defects, such as calabash teats, vermin, etc.
- This trait must be number one during selection and may NEVER be ignored in any selection programme.
- Week-on-week weighing, and data capturing is paramount.

2. Production

2.1 Growth Capacity

The majority of goats in the USA are marketed based upon weight. Profitability is determined by the total weight of lambs weaned per year.

In selecting meat goats for growth capacity two factors must be considered:

- **Weaning weight.**
Weaning weight is largely an indication of the ewe's milk production and mothering traits, but it also gives a good indication of the lamb's own growth potential.
- **Post-wean weight.**
The increase in weight after weaning is an indication of the lamb's genetic ability to produce progeny that will weigh heavier at weaning age. Although it is less important than weaning weight, this weight can be used to monitor late maturing animals, as well as identify animals that adapt well under **NATURAL** production conditions.
- Weigh weekly and capture data for reference and comparison to enhance selection.

2.2 Hardiness and Adaptability

The animal's growth in the post-wean phase is a good indication of its genetic ability as regards these traits.

- Great emphasis must be put on the importance, during this period, of not using feedlot conditions only, in selecting breeding animals.
- Boer goats must have the capacity to produce and reproduce under different natural pasture, and climatic conditions.

3. Conformation - Standard of Excellence

Since 1959 (now 65 years) Boer goats have been strictly selected and improved to measure the ideal Boer goat against the breed standards as compiled by the **SA Boer Goat Breeders' Association**. On this similar historical foundation, the breed standards of the **Kalahari Reds** and **Savannas** were also taken up in the **Standard of Excellence** of the **SA Boer goat**. As members of this **Alliance**, we affirm that these breed standards will always be striven toward in the improvement of our goats.

In applying these breed standards, the following must be particularly noted:

- The emphasis is on **Functional Effectiveness**. Traits such as movement, muscling, vitality, and traits that are signs of prolificacy, etc.

Non-functional traits: Poor or no movement, no visual muscling, fat localisation, unfeminine and unmasculine conformation, etc.

- The extent of phenotypical defects determines the disqualification of the breed standards.

4. Recording of Boer Goats

Members of the association may own one or more flocks that consist of:

- A recorded flock (Group C or B).
- A registered flock (Group A).
- OR both.
- Group D (no recording and no registration).

The method according to which registration or the recording system will take place is fully set out and discussed in the Regulations to the Constitution. This process of registration and recording also forms the basis of our Breeding Policy, as underwritten by the Alliance.