

# Small ruminants – Goat breeds

- In the same way as sheep breeds there are goat breeds that are specifically adapted to a particular production sector (meat, milk or fibre) as well as some that are bred as multipurpose animals
- Looking at the animal is a quick way to work out what their main outputs are likely to be e.g. haired goats are unlikely to produce any useful fibre or a goat that is lactating that has a relatively small udder is unlikely to be primarily a milk animal



# Fibre goats

- Goats are used to produce two types of fibre
  - Mohair (from Angora)
  - Cashmere (from a range of breeds with much from wild type goats in Australia)

These fibres are quite different and the goats that produce them are very different in appearance



# Angora goats

- Angora goats produce mohair, not Angora! Angora fibre comes from a rabbit!
- Imports from Texas and South Africa to increase fibre production and growth rates
- Up to 200,000 in Australia
- Many small flocks often periurban
- Shear twice per year
- Fleece weigh 1-2.5kg
- Wean rates up to 160% (twins)
- Fibre diameter – commences 23 micron
- Increases with age



# Cashmere

- Not a breed of goat
- Range of goats can produce cashmere
- Australian cashmere originated from feral goats and selecting those that produced a higher amount of the soft cashmere fibre
- Cashmere fibre under 19 micron (usually 14-18 micron)
- Produce 100-500g per animal
- Range of potential colours – white = ideal
- Usually shorn June/July in Australia
- Combed in other countries



# Meat breed goats

- There are a large range of goats bred for meat around the world and in all systems (milk/fibre) goats will generally contribute to the meat sector at some point e.g. when culled
- Pure meat breed goats tend to have hair, rather than useful fibre like cashmere or mohair (albeit Australian range goats are regularly used for meat and also may have limited cashmere in wild type animals)



# Boer

- The most common meat breed goat in Australia is the Boer goat (originating from South Africa).
- Arrived in Australia in 1980s and 90s
- As with other goats is a good browser, rather than grazer (like a sheep)
- Hardy, good fertility, high growth and muscle, good dressing percentage
- Can produce 3 kid crops in 2 years





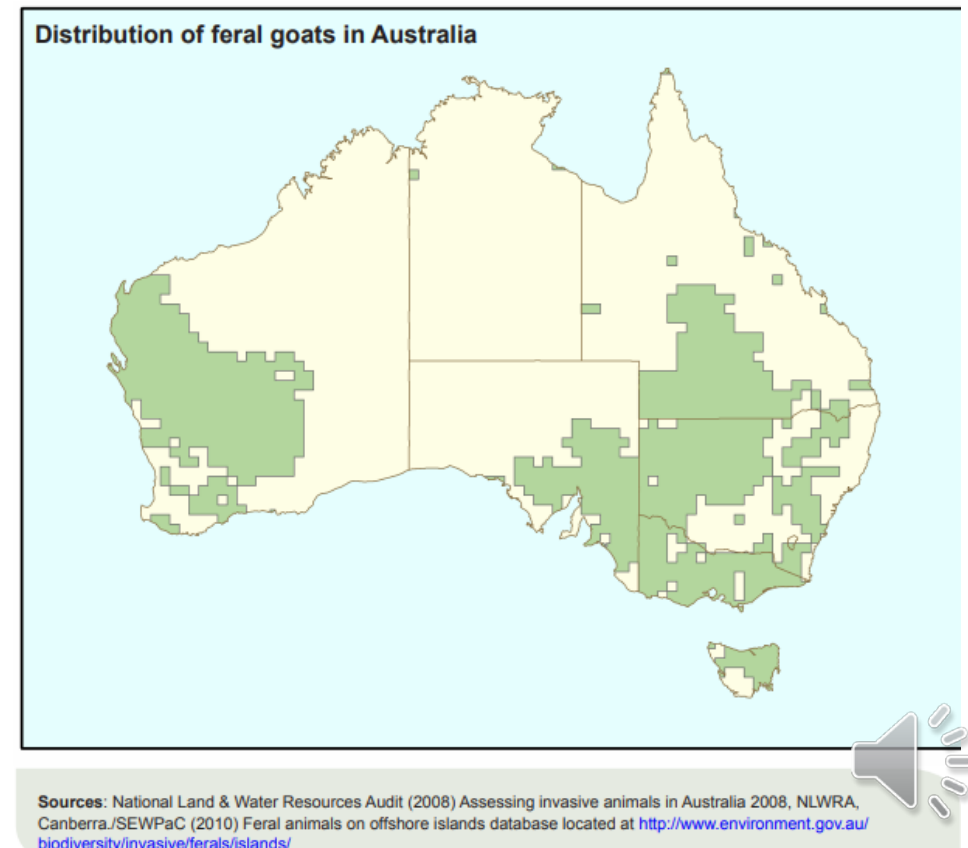
# Kalahari Red

- Red, medium to large framed lob-eared meat goat
- Horned
- Mature female weight 75kg



# Feral goats

- Generally considered an invasive pest, but recently transformed into significant source of income and managing sustainability better
- Range in colour and type
- Generally free ranging
- Rounded up for sale





# Dairy breed goats

- It is not uncommon in periurban areas to find small properties with a milking doe to provide milk for a household as production matches needs
- Range of health issues can occur so not uncommon for these to be presented to “city” or city fringe veterinary clinics
- Huge range of dairy goats around world so focusing on common species in Australia



# Dairy goat breeds

- Essentially all dairy goats are selected on similar needs of good milk production for a long period while there may be some degree of co-selection on body type for meat as well.
- Along with milk production looking at udder/teat conformation, behavioural traits etc
- The dairy goat breeds society of Australia recognises 10 breeds of dairy goat in Australia including **Saanen, Toggenburg, British Alpine, Anglo Nubian**, Australian Melaan, Australian Brown, Nigerian Dwarf, **Lamancha**, Alpine and Sable
- We will cover the highlighted ones that in most areas are more common



# Saanen

- White or cream in colour with tan skin
- Original stock from France, Switzerland and England
- (come from Saanen valley in Switzerland originally)
- Generally polled but occasionally some with horns (can be some issues with infertility associated with polledness in goats)
- Females about 65kg
- Big range in milk production but up to 1000 litres or more



# Anglo Nubian

- Originated in UK from breeding stock from Middle East/India hence the name of the breed
- Anglo Nubian in UK prior to arrival of Saanen
- Generally higher meat qualities than other dairy breeds
- Suited to slightly warmer climates due to background genetics
- Can be any colour, recognisable by long pendulous ears
- Generally polled but some kids horned

[https://learnnaturalfarming.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Anglo\\_Nubian-e1554316018699.jpg](https://learnnaturalfarming.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Anglo_Nubian-e1554316018699.jpg)



# Toggenburg

- Originated in Obertoggenberg, Switzerland (hence the name)
- Arrived in Australia in 1940s (one of a number of goat breeds at state research farms)
- Not well suited to tropical conditions, better cool climate goat
- Slightly smaller than other dairy breeds (does about 55kg)
- Colour varies from deep brown to pale fawn with white markings
- Some polled and some horned

<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/goats/breeds/toggenburg>



# British Alpine

- Originally developed from Swiss breeds imported into Britain and crossed with local goats
- Temperate goat
- Primarily black, with white markings
- Some polled, some horned
- Erect ears





# La mancha

- Easiest way to check breed is very short or non-existent ears (this is a natural feature of the breed, not an injury!)
- American breed
- Polled or horned
- Can be any colour

