

# Organic goat farming:

## Best way forward to farmers livelihood

Hina Ashraf Waiz\* and Lokesh Gautam

Rajasthan University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Vallabh Nagar, Rajasthan 313 601

*Goat farming in India has a long history, dating back to about 10,000 year. Today, India stands first in terms of goat population and milk production. Goat's milk is traditionally known for its medicinal properties and has recently gained importance in human health due to its proximity to human milk for easy digestion and its all-round health promoting qualities. Demand for goat milk and milk merchandise for internal consumption and export is predicted to rise in upcoming years. Goat production in the country is gaining momentum day-by-day in the form of a commercially viable enterprise as evident by increasing interest of young entrepreneurs to develop knowledge and skill in this species. Not only milk, meat is also the main product from goat enterprises. In the developing countries, goat meat production is very important and scientists are currently trying to improve the indigenous breed with respect to growth, milk production and reproduction. This flexibility allows the producer to plan and operate a more stable economic production unit. In some parts of the world, all breeds may be raised for fibre, meat, milk and cheese production. Keeping in view the importance of goat farming, this article covers the basics of raising organic goats as well as requirements of organically certified goats.*

**Keywords:** APEDA, Goat farming, Meat, Pasture, Supplement

INDIA is the largest exporter of Sheep and Goat meat to the world. The country has exported 21,950.71 MT of sheep and goat meat worldwide worth ₹ 837.76 crores during 2015-16. The demand for meat, milk and fibre is increasing progressively and expected to further rise in future in view of sizable increase in per capita income and health consciousness of people. Worldwide consumers are preferring products that are clean, green and ethical. As such goat producers are shifting to organic husbandry practices that do not compromise the welfare of animals.

### Organic goat production

Organic goat milk or meat is from goats that are raised in accordance with the standards of the National Organic Program and certified by an accredited state or personal agency. It refers to food products that are

grown without any chemical fertilizer, drugs, hormones with a large number of rules directed towards a high status of animal welfare and care for the environment. Making the switch to raising goats organically might not be simple, and for a few farmers, it might be impossible. Some farmers may find the requirements for organic certification difficult to meet, depending on their farm and the local conditions, but they can at least begin moving in that direction.

### Living environment

- A conventional goat herd can be converted into organic conditions on meeting all the requirements for 12 months. For the first time, certification agencies should agree that animal's environment should be taken into account to fulfill their behavioural needs as well as basic requirements of being free

from the use of prohibited substances (synthetic chemicals, etc.). Additionally goats should not be kept with horned animals because chances of injuries are higher due to fighting with each other.

- The shelter provided must promote the healthy and natural behaviour and maintenance of the goats. This includes guaranteeing that they're safe (minimize hazards to stop injury), are protected against severe temperature and have appropriate bedding (clean and dry). The standard also requires that they have shade, shelter, exercise space, fresh air and direct sunlight.
- The kids should suckle their mother in a natural way for at least a week and preferably longer if optimum health is to be achieved. In other words, the kids should suckle for the first 4-5

days, then bottle feeding and leaving them where they can be seen, smelt and heard but not suckled.

### Pasture requirements

Goats must be raised on pasture that is organic. This requires that no pesticides, herbicides, chemical fertilizers or other restricted materials be used. Therefore, in the case of goats, there should be a provision for browsing for many years. Another important aspect of raising organic goats is the need to avoid overstocking which will lead to overgrazed pasture land. Overgrazed pasture, or pasture otherwise lacking vegetation, is not considered pasture under the certification standards any more than a feedlot.

Organic producers must consider the two systems for keeping goats, viz. pasture rotation which is extremely important because using most chemical dewormers is prohibited. Pasture rotation discourages parasite overspill, especially in warm, wet regions, as well as discouraging overgrazing and allowing time for vegetation to rest and regrow. Secondly, goat barn with access to different grazing areas. In winter, animals should be confined to a smaller outside exercise space. Barns ought to be airy and dry with enough bedding. Goats are usually quite hardy animals if fed adequate fibre. If shed are too well insulated, the goats will never develop the winter undercoat and will prefer to be indoors rather than outside.

### Feed and supplements

Organic livestock may be fed natural hay, grasses and grains. This means that it should not be genetically changed and will not contain artificial hormones, antibiotics, coccidiostat or different feed materials.

Restricted materials for organic livestock include animal drugs and synthetic hormones, urea, slaughter by-products, excessive amounts of feed supplements or additives and synthetic amino acids.

### Healthcare

- Caring of goats may be one of the

foremost difficult aspects of organic goat rearing basics. A goat can't be certified organic if it's been treated with antibiotics, or an artificial or non-synthetic substance that's prohibited by the law. One of the foremost tough healthcare issues encountered with organic goat farming is controlling parasites. Farmers should use herbal dewormers to treat sick animals for parasitic infestations.

- The Organic Health standards conjointly needs that physical identification ways, like tattooing, disbudding and castration is also done by a method that promotes the welfare of the goat and minimizes pain and stress.
- Organic goat farmers ought to educate themselves and make certain that their physician is attentive to organic standards in reference to medications that are usually suggested or prescribed for goats. That way producer can determine how best to treat goats when they do get sick and not mistakenly give a prohibited drug.

### Considerations for organic goat farming

Farmers should think about the subsequent issues for economical organic goat farming.

- Manure management may be a matter of concern, counting on the land area and variety of goats being unbroken. Provisions ought to be created to stay manure out of waterways. This may cause problem for large farms than small farms.
- Record keeping is crucial to raising goats for organic goat milk and meat. Goat farmers ought to come upon with a record keeping system before applying for organic certification. Required records embrace all records of the operation, and that they should be comprehensible and accessible for examination. A number of these records embrace identification for every goat together with whether or not it had been born on the farm or purchased, all veterinary and different health records for every goat, and feed data, which has keeping all feed tags from feed

that is purchased. These records can also serve a secondary purpose of tracking health issues to determine whether a certain goat should be culled.

- The standards conjointly address necessity for process of goat product. For instance, product may not come in contact with non-organic meat and no artificial materials is used throughout its process. Farmers ought to assess the quality to see whether or not different needs for food process can have an effect on their operation and whether or not they may be met.
- Make certain that animal should not suffer from any foot infection. For that purpose shelter and yards ought to be unbroken, clean and dry. Good drainage is very important. Trim feet often, once in every six weeks.
- For treatment of mastitis, homeopathic remedies like *Belladonna*, *Aconite*, *Apic mellifica*, *Bryonia alba*, *Arnica montana*, *Phytolacca etc.* can be used. Herbal product like Mastilap cream can be used externally.
- *External and internal parasites:* Neem oil and Ash topically and herbal dewormer like garlic, pumpkin seeds, mustard seeds and copper sulphate (mineral substance regulated to use in organic production) has strong action against stomach worms.
- *Skin infection:* Aloe vera as a food additive can be used. Some herbal cream or capsules can be used.
- *Poisoning:* Goats with regular access to a good kind of plants are selective and do not eat toxic plants, however those that escape from confinement area are seemingly to be poisoned.
- A conventional farm must follow organic standards within 12 months period and then only it will fall into the category of certification.

### Certification process for raising organic goats in India

The National Standards for Organic Products was established in 2000 which ensures the authenticity of the organic product. The



APEDA and the India Organic trademark

certification is issued by testing centers accredited by the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), under the National Program for Organic Production of the Government of India. APEDA is responsible for allotting organic certification label to organic products after thorough validation process, which certifies that product grown through organic farming is free from synthetic hormones, chemical fertilizers or pesticides. A trademark, India Organic will be granted on the basis of compliance with the National Standards for Organic Production (NSOP). Communicating the authenticity as well as the origin of the product, this trademark will be owned by the Government of India.

#### Steps for Procurement of organic certification

- Find a certifier in your state (organic agent).
- Complete an application form.
- Cost of the label will be calculated depending on application fee, site inspection fee and an annual certification fee which can be between ₹ 10,000-60,000 depending on the type of product, size of the production operation and the accredited agency one chooses.
- Describe in writing, practices and procedures to be used.
- Make a list of each substance you will use in production, noting its composition source, and where/how it will be used.
- Describe how the plan will be implemented and monitored.
- Describe the record keeping system(s) that will be used to comply with requirements.
- Describe practices and procedures to be used to ensure that organic and non-organic products are not mixed.
- Schedule an on-site inspection

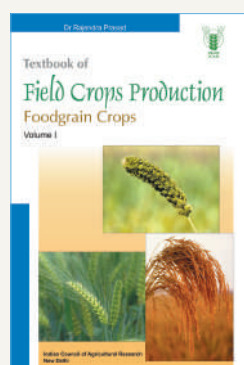
by a certifier.

#### SUMMARY

Organic goat production can improve animal welfare, protect the environment, and sustain satisfactory rural lifestyles. The future of organic goat production is to continue sorting out alternatives that are environmentally friendly, human health conscientious and animal kind. Understanding organic goat farming from economic, ecological, and animal welfare views can increase the probability of success. Goat farmers who want to get into organic goat production should learn everything they can about organic certification under the national laws. While executing this farming, farmers have time to think through and create their required Organic System Plan, talk with someone who can help them to get organic certification, start thinking through policies and procedures to be implemented, and develop a good record keeping system. If the aforesaid methods will be adopted, it will surely help a farmer to achieve a higher price for milk, meat and dairy products.

\*Assistant Professor, Department of Livestock Production Management, CVAS, Vallabh Nagar, Udaipur. Corresponding author e-mail: drhinavet@gmail.com

## Textbook of Field Crops Production – Foodgrain Crops



(Volume I)

The first edition of Textbook of Field Crops Production was published in 2002 and there has been a heavy demand for the book. This book is now being brought out in two volumes. The chapters cover emerging trends in crop production such as System of Rice Intensification (SRI), export quality assurance in the production technology of commodities like Basmati rice, organic farming, resource conservation technologies, herbicide management etc. Good agronomic practices must judiciously inter-mix the applications of soil and plant sciences to produce food, feed, fuel, fibre, and of late nutraceuticals while ensuring sustainability of the system in as much possible environment and eco-friendly manner. The advent of hydroponics, precision farming, bio-sensors, fertigation, landscaping, application of ICT, GPS and GIS tools, micro-irrigation etc. is in the horizon. The textbook covers both the fundamentals of the subject and at the same time inspire and prepare both teachers and students for the emerging frontiers.

#### TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

No. of pages : i-xii + 396 • Price : ₹ 700 • ISBN No. : 978-81-7164-116-1

For obtaining copies, please contact:

#### Business Manager

Directorate of Knowledge Management in Agriculture  
Krishi Anusandhan Bhavan-I, Pusa, New Delhi 110 012  
Tel : 011-25843657, Fax 91-11-25841282; e-mail : bmicar@gmail.com