



FINAL REPORT- 2014

North Central Region

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education-SARE program

I. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

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'The Producer-Initiated Development of a Goat Meat Market in the Black Hills Region of South Dakota'

FNC-12-846
Two year project
April 22, 2014

II. PROJECT BACKGROUND

1. Susan and Tom live on 120 acres along Pleasant Valley southwest of Custer, SD. Susan's family homesteaded much of Pleasant Valley and her family has made a living raising cattle and horses in the area for over one hundred years. We have the privilege of continuing that tradition by raising quality meat goats.

We have divided our pasture land into seventeen paddocks with pipelines and tanks providing water. We have built sheds to give the goats protection from the elements, as well as predators. We have both coyotes and lions to contend with but, we use llamas as guard animals. We produce grass/alfalfa hay on forty acres giving us hay for the winter months. We use a seasonal, rotational grazing system to give us the best use of our pastures.

We maintain one herd of registered full blood Boer goats for our breed stock sales and a herd of Boer/Spanish crosses for the meat sales. The meat demand has grown so our operation is moving toward more meat sales and less sale of breed stock. There are new challenges ahead, but we are confident of the goat meat future.

2. We have used sustainable practices on both our land and our goats. We received the Conservation District's Soil Conservation award in 2012 for the practices that we have instituted on our Pleasant Valley Farm. We use a grazing system, fenced the riparian zone, use biological control for reducing noxious weeds and promoting wildlife habitat. We have always vaccinated our goats with CD&T and have recently started vaccinating for CL. We trim and clean hooves on a regular basis. We have necropsies performed on many of our farm deaths we can't identify. These practices provide health for both the land and the animals.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

INTENDED GOALS

1. Selected twenty wethers at weaning time (approximately eighty days) to be used in a feeding study.
2. The carcass evaluation was done in Colorado and we videoed one of these evaluation. The data and video will be made available to interested people.
3. We went to Minneapolis and Denver for visits to meat markets, restaurants, and meat processors.
4. Located businesses, organizations or events to serve goat meat to as many people as possible.
5. We are in the process of producing a DVD to distribute our findings.
6. Increased meat production from 400 lbs. to 1200 lbs. in 2013.

PROCESSES

The processes described below follow the list of **intended goals** numerically.

1. All goats used were from the Pleasant Valley Farm's Boer/Spanish cross bred herd. We weighed and used visual observation to select the twenty wethers for the study. All BCS scores were similar so that measurement was not used. We then grouped the goats into the ten heaviest and the ten lightest. We used this separation to establish the two feeding groups. One group would be fed grass/alfalfa hay and native grass pasture and the other would receive a half pound of goat supplement/day, grass hay and native grass pasture. A goat mineral was provided to both groups on a free choice basis and cool, clean water was always present. The analysis of the hay, mineral and goat supplement is available on request.
2. When the feeding program was completed we would take the eight selected goats to a USDA federally inspected facility and have the carcasses evaluated by an experienced meat specialist. After the evaluations the carcasses will be custom cut and packaged by a South Dakota inspected processor. Carcass evaluation data will be kept and possibly analyzed statistically. The relatively small sample number of carcasses gave us only a general idea of our feeding regimes.
3. We made two trips to metropolitan areas, Minneapolis/St Paul and Denver, to visit with processors, restaurants, meat markets and cooking schools. The trip to Minnesota was taken in conjunction with other business in April of 2012, prior to the final award of the SARE grant. The trip to Denver was in August of 2013. Prior to the trip an initial list was made so we could interview as many people as possible involved in the goat meat industry. Our first contact was the processor who assisted with our carcass evaluations. We then located other processors, restaurants who serve goat regularly, several cooking schools and Halal markets.
4. We wanted to, first, get as many people to taste goat or get people used to hearing that goat was available and very nutritious. We designed a simple survey (Figure A) for people tasting the various recipes. For the people receiving meat we prepared a more lengthy survey on how they prepared the meat, problems, and if they would buy the meat again (Figure B).



CHEVON (goat) TASTING SURVEY

1. Have you ever tasted chevon ? ___ Yes ___ No
2. Did you enjoy the flavor of the meat? ___ Yes ___ No
3. Did you know the nutritive value of chevon ? ___ Yes ___ No
4. If available would you buy and cook at home? ___ Yes ___ No

A USDA- SustainableAgricultureResearch & Education grant funded this survey to evaluate the goat meat market in the Black Hills.

Figure A

SURVEY FOR CHEVON (goat) PREPARERS

Was anything done to prepare the meat prior to cooking? Yes No

Did you remove any fat or connective tissue? Yes No

What temperature was the meat cooked at? _____

How long was the meat cooked? _____

Rank the doneness of your meat. Rare___ Medium___ Well

Number of times you have prepared chevon. _____

Would you purchase and prepare chevon again? Yes No

Are you aware of the exceptional nutritive value of chevon? Yes No

If available would you utilize a cookbook/spice advice? Yes No

Comments_____

Name of preparer_____Date_____THANK YOU

Funded by an USDA- Sustainable Agriculture Research
and Education Grant

Figure B

We started by serving a variety of dishes to Extension tours, community meetings and conservation district functions. We got almost universal approval of the meat. We then expanded our emphasis to larger events such as fairs, expos and shows. The Black Hills region is traditionally cattle so we were not sure what kind of reception we would receive serving goat. Again, we were very encouraged by the response.

5. When the final report is completed and submitted to SARE we will produce a DVD to be distributed to anyone who requests it. We will submit an abridged version of this report to our regional newspaper and a national goat publication is interested in publishing it.
6. We continue to sell meat to our regular customers, but put emphasis on distributing the meat from the grant funding. If asked, we provide cooking advice and recipes.

PEOPLE

- Al Rodriguez- The owner of two Indian cuisine restaurants in Rapid City. He was our first commercial customer and he helped me promote goat by having open houses and advertising on his 'in store' video feed.
- Butte Vista Farm- Doug and Carol Pavel were initially members of this grant, but through circumstances were unable to help complete the grant. Doug went to Minneapolis to investigate the goat meat industry in that area. They took care of ten of the study goats through most of the feeding period.
- Friends and neighbors whom assisted in many of the necessary chores.
- Members of Black Hills Meat Goat Producers, a group that I organized to help promote goat meat in the Black Hills.
- Fuchs Meat Locker of Martin, South Dakota, went the extra mile when processing our goats.
- Innovative Foods of Evans, Colorado, in preparing the carcasses for evaluation.
- Christie and Claude Smith of Black Hills Burger and Bun whom run a specialty sandwich restaurant in Custer, South Dakota. They served goat as their special burger of the week and it was a great success. They will continue to serve it in the future.

- Dr. Roger Gates, of SDSU Extension Service, was the most important contributor to this project. He provided facilities for the Black Hills Meat Goat Producers to meet and discuss problems and solutions. He is our sounding board on many issues confronting us at Pleasant Valley Farm.
- Dr. Dale Woener, Animal Science professor at Colorado State University, gave advice and arranged for one of his PhD students, Scott Howard, to do the carcass evaluations.
- Mindy Hubert, Small Acreage Coordinator at SDSU, assisted with finding venues to serve our many goat recipes, as well as listening and advising us in the various steps of the grant.

- Keith Underwood, Meat Specialist with SDSU Extension Service, provided information concerning meat laws and understanding the carcasses evaluation data.
- Paul Nettigna, Chairman of Custer County Conservation District, encouraged the grant by inviting us to serve goat at their meetings and tours.
- Dakota Rural Action for inviting me to participate in some of their functions as well as serve goat.

RESULTS

The results described below follow the list of **intended goals** numerically.

1. The first step of our grant was to select twenty Boer/Spanish cross breed wethers from the Pleasant Valley Farm's herd for the feeding study. Ten were fed 0.5 lb of Payback Goat ration per day, hay and Payback mineral on a free choice basis while on native pasture. The hay was a grass (70%) and alfalfa mix or just grass. The hay was analyzed and results are available, if requested. The goats were weighed at birth, first vaccination- three weeks, weaning, pre-harvest and hot carcass. The way we separated the original twenty wethers was through weight and Body Condition Score (BCS). But as we took these measurements we found the BCS's were too similar to help in the process so we used weight only. Taking the twenty weights we then divided them into the ten heaviest and the ten lightest. Next we put five of the heaviest and five of the lightest to create two groups of wethers for the project (Table I.). Using this data, we selected the two heaviest and two lightest from each group to harvest and evaluate the carcasses. Several factors in selecting the wethers were not taken into account. These were; if the doe was having her first kid, if the wether was a single, twin or triplet and castration was done at the same time regardless of the wether age. These factors could account for the weight difference.

2012 Goat Feeding Data- SARE Grant

DOB	Wt.	12-Jun Wt.	PR	AW	ADG	10/4 Wt.	ADG	H#	17- Oct Wt.
4/20	7.2	34.2	142	54	0.50	70.5	0.29		
3/28	8.2	37.6	56	77	0.38	55.4	0.14		
3/22	6.9	39.5	115	83	0.39	64.6	0.20		
3/21	8.4	44.4	121	84	0.42	74.6	0.24	6	73.4
3/22	7.7	49.2	144	83	0.50	78.2	0.23	5	78.8
	38.4	204.9			0.44	343.3	0.22		152.2
3/21	6.1	29.8	69	84	0.28	47.8	0.14	7	47.2
4/3	5.4	30.4	101	71	0.35	49.8	0.16	8	47.4
4/10	5.9	31.6	114	64	0.40	52.8	0.17		
4/9	6.2	32.6	116	65	0.41	54.4	0.18		
3/27	7.1	33.4	102	78	0.34	57.6	0.20		
	30.7	157.8			0.36	262.4	0.17		94.6
3/25	8.8	28.6	85	80	0.25	72.0	0.35		
3/20	7.4	37.4	107	85	0.35	74.3	0.30		
3/24	8.6	38.6	114	81	0.37	71.5	0.26		
3/22	7.5	43.0	125	83	0.43	82.7	0.32	1	82.4
3/24	8.6	47.8	140	81	0.48	77.1	0.32	2	80.2
	40.9	195.4			0.38	377.6	0.31		162.6
4/14	8.2	33.0	123	60	0.41	63.9	0.25	3	63.4
3/21	5.9	28.8	69	84	0.26	61.4	0.26	4	63.8
4/12	7.7	30.2	109	62	0.36	68.6	0.31		
4/11	6.8	31.0	112	63	0.38	71.4	0.33		
3/21	6.4	32.2	92	84	0.31	71.0	0.31		
	35.0	155.2			0.34	336.3	0.29		127.2

Legend

- #1=Hay,pasture
- #2=Hay,pasture&grain
- DOB=date of birth
- Wt.=weight-lbs
- PR=Performance ratio-100 is average
- AW=Age at Weaning-days
- ADG=Aver.Daily Gain-lbs
- H#=animal harvest number

Table I

The data shows at date of weaning (Jun 12) little significant difference between the two groups, but after they were separated and fed their designed rations, the data shows better weight gain with the grain supplement. Because of the limited number of goats in the study we can only look at trends, but as producers we would look at feeding the lighter group a grain supplement.

2. Dr. Dale Woener, of Colorado State University, assigned Scott Howard (a PhD student) to do the evaluations. Tom Barnes delivered the eight goats to Innovative Foods (a USDA inspected facility) in Evans, Colorado, on October 19, 2012, for harvest. The carcasses were hung in the cooling room over the weekend and then Tom Barnes and Scott Howard met at the processor to evaluate the carcasses. We videoed one of the evaluations and that will be included on the DVD to be produced later this spring. Scott had previous experience doing Boer goat evaluations. We took eight measurements (Table II.) from each goat and the data was analyzed (Table III.). Upon completing the evaluations the carcasses were frozen and then transported back to South Dakota. We used a refrigerated (-30 degrees) trailer to take them to Fuchs Locker (a SD inspected facility) in Martin, South Dakota, for cutting and packaging. The meat was cut to meet the perceived demand during the meat distribution phase of the grant.

Trait	Treatment		Standard Error	P-Value
	Grain Supplement	Pasture and Hay		
Live Weight, lbs	72.5	61.7	5.0	0.05
Hot Carcass Weight, lbs	32.3	26.5	2.7	0.05
Dressing Percentage	44.4	42.4	0.9	0.24
Ribeye Area, in ²	1.61	1.33	0.12	0.15
Fat Thickness, in	0.06	0.04	0.01	0.20
Kidney, Pelvic, and Heart Fat, lbs	0.71	0.81	0.14	0.48
Conformation	1.5	1.8	0.18	0.39
Leg, cm	30.0	25.6	1.1	0.006
BW	0.44	0.40	0.04	0.32

Table II

CARCASS EVALUATION-CSU 10/12

<u>Eval. #</u>	<u>L.Wt.</u>	<u>HCW</u>	<u>DP</u> Dressing Percentage	<u>REA</u>	<u>FT</u>	<u>KPH- lb</u>	<u>Conf</u> .	<u>Leg- cm</u>	<u>BW</u>
1	82.4	38	46.117	1.8	0.1	1.1	1	31.5	0.65
2	80.2	36	44.888	1.7	0.08	0.87	1	31.0	0.4
3	63.4	27	42.587	1.3	0.02	0.46	2	28.5	0.35
4	63.8	28	43.887	1.65	0.02	0.4	2	29.0	0.35
Mean (Average)	72.45	32.25	44.37	1	6	0.70	1.5	30	4
Std Dev	10.2597920	5.5602				0.33			
	7	8	1.4979	0.22	0.04	5	0.58	1.472	0.14
Std Error	5.12989603	2.7801				0.16			
	5	4	0.749	0.11	0.02	7	0.29	0.736	0.07
5	78.8	36	45.685	1.7	0.05	1.09	1	27.0	0.55
6	73.4	32	43.597	1.65	0.05	1.29	2	28.5	0.45
7	47.2	20	42.373	1.0	0.02	0.61	2	23.5	0.3
8	47.4	18	37.975	0.95	0.02	0.24	2	23.5	0.3
Mean (Average)	61.7	26.5	42.407	3	4	0.80	1.75	5	0.4
Std Dev	16.7733916	8.8506				0.47			
	3	1	3.2562	0.41	0.02	4	0.5	2.529	0.12
Std Error	8.38669581	4.4253				0.23		1.264	
	3	1	1.6281	0.2	0.01	7	0.25	5	0.06
Std Dev	14.0963774	7.5011				0.38			
Population	5	9	2.5702	0.34	0.03	4	0.52	3.023	0.13
Std Error	4.98382204	2.6520				0.13		1.068	
Population	2	7	0.9087	0.12	0.01	6	0.18	8	0.04
T Test	0.04618162	0.0462		0.1		0.47		0.006	0.3
	8	3	0.2386	5	0.2	9	0.39	9	2
S2	456.463333	131.91				0.40		2.000	
	3	7	12.033	0.31	0.03	4	0.54	5	0.13
Pooled Std Dev	21.3650025	11.485				0.63		1.414	
	4	5	3.4689	0.56	0.17	6	0.73	4	0.36
Pooled Std Error	15.1073381	8.1214						1.000	
	7	7	2.4529	0.39	0.12	0.45	0.52	1	0.26

Table III

3. The trip to Minneapolis was done in conjunction with a business trip and taken prior to the grant being finalized. Several restaurants were visited and it was learned that goat was served only on the weekends and they were supplied by food service suppliers. This meat is imported from New Zealand and Australia where feral goats are harvested and the carcasses are diced with bone in, flash frozen and then shipped to the US. The price in 2012 was approximately \$3.00/lb and has now risen to \$3.80/lb. The restaurant owners would love to be supplied by local producers, but the price cannot be met. A meat market was visited where it was learned that the main ethnic group was Somali and prices were in the \$5.00/ lb range. The cooking school that was visited was very enthusiastic about goat meat and feels that if a consistent, high quality product was available; it would sell on its own merit.

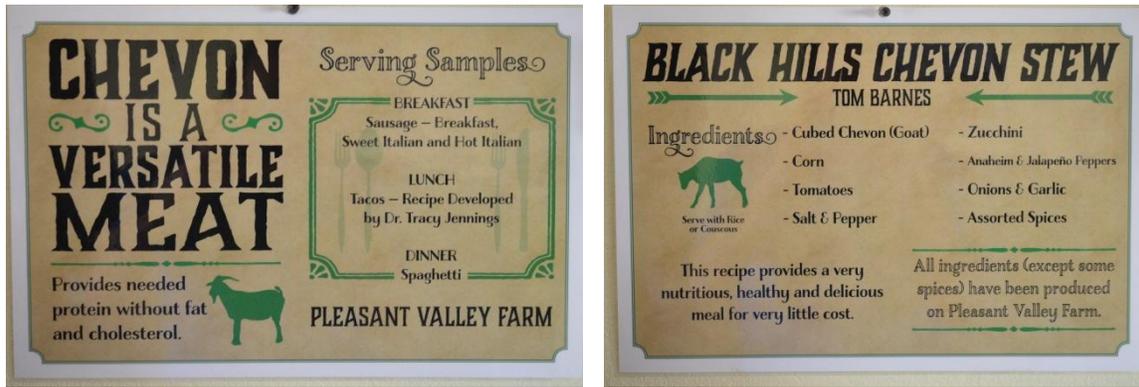
The four day to trip to Denver was dedicated to investigating all phases of goat meat from processor to the table. A list of potential businesses to visit was prepared and included two processors, five restaurants, two meat markets and three cooking schools. As these businesses were visited the list changed with advice from business owners. We visited a Mexican, Afghan, Bengali, an upscale restaurant and two Indian restaurants; some served goat regularly, some on weekends and one would cater functions with goat. Prices of the meals were in line with beef, chicken or pork meals. We visited two meat markets; one bought fifty goats a week and custom cut them for ethnic customers. The prices ranged from \$4.50 to \$7.00/lb and the store bought all their goats from one supplier. That supplier purchases several hundred goats per week from the main processor in Denver. Three cooking schools were visited and the highlights are as follows:

- A. One chef said that the beef, chicken and pork industries have changed, not to the good, the meat so he felt that goat has great potential. But goat producers need to keep the production free of hormones and unnecessary antibiotics.
- B. The second school did not have anyone on staff familiar with cooking goat but saw it as a possible mainstream meat source.
- C. The last school was very enthusiastic about goat and had a chef on staff that was considered one of the best meat chefs in the Rocky Mountains. He has since left the school to start his own consulting business to advise clients on meats and their preparation. We are in the process of utilizing his service to further our goat cooking skills.

One of the processors was north of Denver and harvested a limited number of goats, but it has steadily increased over the years. The second processor is the major operator in the region. They harvest only lambs and goats. They would not say how many, but while there, three truckloads of lambs were delivered. The supplier to the ethnic meat market bought most of his goats at this processor.

The trips to the two metropolitan areas showed us that if marketed correctly goat could and should be a regular protein source for the mainstream population. We must emphasize the nutritional value and the versatility of preparing the meat.

4. This goal was the major part of the grant. We made sure we served hot, healthy and tasty food. We served mini-tacos using a recipe developed by a SDSU student, a Moroccan dish, three flavors of sausage, spaghetti and a recipe developed by the grant leader. We entered a cooking contest with this recipe. The contest was for chili, soup or stew in three categories-traditional, chicken or specialty meat. Our Black Hills Stew got the People Choice award.



We were featured as supplier of the month at Curry Masala, an Indian restaurant. Black Hills Burger and Bun, a local Custer restaurant, featured a goat burger as their specialty burger of the week. It was very well received and will be offered again. Tom was a guest on KOTA-TV, where he cooked his Moroccan goat dish. At many of the events where goat was served we made available some of our favorite recipes. We visited and extolled the virtues of goat meat throughout the Black Hills region.



Dakota Expo-2013

Typical booth setup

Goat meat was served at three conservation district meetings, two extension tours, two Dakota Expos, two restaurant tastings, an Arabian Horse show, a cooking show and 8 private dinners. We estimate we served between 500 and 600 people during the grant period and received back 219 Tasting Surveys (Figure A.) and 10 Preparer Surveys (Figure B.) were returned. The results of the Tasting Survey (Table C.) and general comments made to Tom while serving food were positive and shows there is a market to be tap. The results from the Preparers Survey are in narrative form. Agriculture based people made up the majority of the food samplers and we

learned from our trips to the cities that ethnic groups and “foodies” are their main consumers. This suggests to us that the Black Hills has potential for substantial growth.

Results from the Tasting Surveys

	YES	NO	PERCENTAGE
Question #1-Tasted previously	87	132	40% yes
Question #2-Enjoy flavor	211	8	96% yes
Question #3-Knew nutritive value	56	163	26% yes
Question #4-Buy and cook	219	20	91% yes

Figure C

We received twenty seven written comments on the survey sheet, They varied from awesome to great flavor to my wife doesn’t know how to cook it.

Results from Preparer Survey

We received 10 surveys back and we were not able to put the responses into table form so they are discussed narratively. Cooking temperatures ranged from low and slow to med/high and fast. The doneness was almost universal at medium. Most people had not cooked goat before. Most people did not know that goat meat was as healthy as it is. Everyone said that if goat was available they would prepare it on occasion and most would benefit from a cook/spice book. The comments were all on the positive side.

5. We will produce a DVD later this spring. It will include a video we did of a carcass evaluation and photos of the wethers we used in the study. The DVD will be directed at meat goat producers. Interested individuals can contact us at pvgfiwp@gwtc.net.
6. We used eighteen goats or 450 lbs., average age was seven months, in the meat distribution segment of the grant. Pleasant Valley Farm sold 850 lbs to their commercial and private customers. Butte Vista sold about 200 lbs giving us 1500 lbs of sales and give away . Our goal was to sell or distribution 1200 lbs. The bestselling cuts(in descending order) were; 1” diced and boneless, ground, three kinds of sausages, boneless loins, chops, ribs, soup bones and liver.

DISCUSSION

The discussion below follows the list of **intended goals** numerically.

This project was extremely interesting because of all its moving parts. We live in an area cattle are the main protein source so to get people to eat and then buy goat is a challenge. We knew that goats are browsers/grazers which fits well with the Black Hills. There are many small acreages that will not support cattle but small ruminants are well suited. We also knew that goat meat was very healthy compared to many of the mainstream meats. So we emphasized these points to promote the grant.

1. The feeding part of the grant was important giving us a good starting point and helping us understand diet as related to weight gain. Since we had a limited number of goats we can only report trends and not do much statistical analyses. The Black Hills was in a drought during the summer of 2012 and it affected our pastures so we depended on hay more than we would have liked. Butte Vista Farm had so little pasture that we had to move those ten goats to Pleasant Valley Farm where that part of the study was continued. We selected our final eight goats for harvest by using final weight only and other factors could have been considered.
2. Originally we were going to have the goats harvested at a local processor and have a meat specialist come from NDSU to do the evaluations but this proved to be too expensive. So we contacted Dr. Dale Woener of CSU to do the evaluations and Innovative Foods of Evans, CO to harvest the goats and both did a great job. We were then able to put more money into the outreach and meat distribution parts of the grant. We had not seen a carcass evaluation prior to this and it was very interesting. We videoed one of them and Scott Howard explained each measurement. Again because of the limited number of carcasses we can't analyze the data but it does show what a seven month old wether has for meat. We delivered the goats to Fuchs Locker in Martin for processing. They do all of our goats and they know how to custom cut the goats to spec.
3. The trip to Minneapolis was taken by Doug Pavel while on personal business. He was able to learn how the goat meat market worked there and got several good suggestions. Because the trip was taken prior to the grant being finalized there was no cost involved. The trip to Denver was dedicated solely to investigating the market and all its aspects. It appears that Denver is further along in consumption of goat. The main take away was keep the product high quality and consistent while emphasizing the nutritional value. Almost everyone said that if they could get fresh local meat at a reasonable price they would eat or serve more of it. So it would seem demand is greater than supply.
4. We started by writing letters to restaurants to determine interest in receiving free meat. We soon realized that it had to be personal contact. We let organizations know that we would serve meat at cost, they just needed to fill out surveys. The more we got the word out the more questions were asked by the general public. That led us to have people into our home for meals. Often we would give meat to a guest so they could cook their own meal. The response was so good that we began to look for public events to serve goat. The 1st Annual Dakota Expo we served a Moroccan recipe with diced goat, tomatoes, fruit and nuts-very delicious. The 2nd Annual Dakota Expo we served three kinds of sausage for breakfast, tacos for lunch and

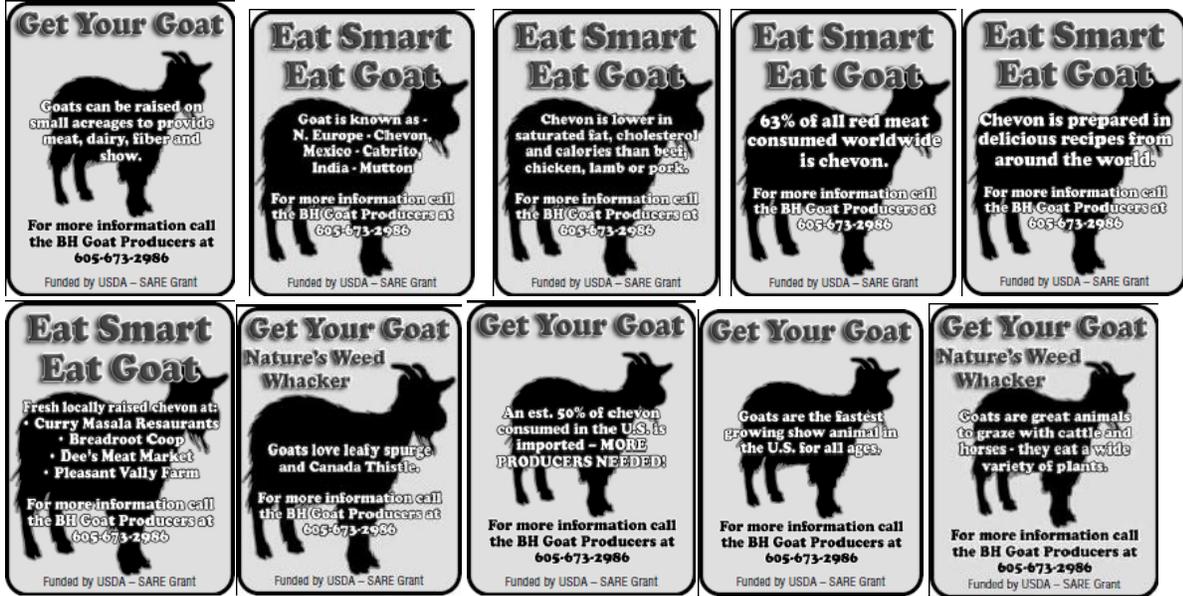
spaghetti for supper. This was a big hit with the public, we got to visit a lot about the wonders of goats and goat meat. At an Arabian Horse Show we served tacos and this was our only real disappointing experience. There were few vendors and the people were just not interested. All the other opportunities gave us a little more insight into how to develop a market. We always had our tri-fold display which featured goat husbandry, goat cookery and our farm. We also had many handouts including recipe cards and refrigerator magnets which were part of the grant funding. In summary the meat distribution was a great success, we were able to talk to hundreds of people which created a lot of interest.

5. We are going to put a DVD together showing and explaining the highlights of the grant. It will be directed toward producers but it should be of interest to everyone. This will be done on our own time and expense.
6. In addition to meeting the goal of the grant of 1400 lbs. we have created a much bigger market. Pleasant Valley Farm has customers that order small amounts on a weekly basis or whole goats annually. We will sell all of our production here in the Black Hills and won't need to use any auctions.

IV. OUTREACH

Succeeding at the outreach program was the reason for the success of the grant itself. We started by always explaining the benefits of goat vs other meat sources. We found the major obstacles to the program were people's prejudice and misinformation concerning goats. As we moved from informal setting to a more formal setting we began to see how and what information we needed to provide to educate the public.

We setup ten small ads to be run in the regional newspaper. They had two themes; five were about the use of goat as a food source and five were on versatility of raising goats as a profitable livestock animal. We ran two of these a week and they rotated through twenty five week contract. We received over forty phone calls wanting more information. These ads lead to a front page photo and article about the SARE grant and Pleasant Valley Farm.



At all the public events we had handouts and our trifold display board along with recipes. We always served tasty and hot food which drew people to our booth. The opportunity to be able to cook goat on the regional TV station also gave us added exposure. When we won the People Choice award at the cooking contest, we had many inquiries for the recipe.