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Northeast Goat Export Project - Status Report From: Lydia Ratcliff March 1997

Our grant application to the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program has been approved to continue the Goat Export Project in 1997.

In 1996 this grant permitted us to contact some of the top goat breeders (5 breeds) in our Northeast region to discover how many quality goats would be available for export. We developed a loose association of approximately 20 herds in Maine, VT., Conn., Mass., N.H., N.Y., PA., and N.J. and a mailing list of prospective participants and other interested individuals.

We put together a wide variety of promotional materials including photographs and fact sheets, and responded to about a dozen serious queries in Oman, Taiwan, Venezuela, South Africa, Marocco, Belgium and elsewhere; developed detailed price estimates for several prospective customers; contacted truckers, freight forwarders, USDA, AID, APHIS, and acquired full health regs for all countries inquiring about dairy goat imports from the U.S.

We also researched the international market for Jersey heifers, including contacts with the American Jersey Cattle Assn. in Ohio and concluded that this market is being very competently covered by the cattle people.

We developed lines of communication with nearby dairy goat associations - state associations, Extension people, the Vt. Dept. of Agriculture and Federal Vet. Dr. Wayne Zielenga, North East Caprine Semen Cooperative, Semen Processor Roger Ives, and several veterinarians. A great deal of time was spent on the telephone and on mailings. The project has created considerable interest on the part of goat breeders throughout our region; some believe this is their best (or only) hope for financial survival in this era of "agri-squeeze."

We contacted livestock brokers - in Texas, Missouri and Virginia - who are likely to get contracts to put together large orders for goats. We have been selected as a "finder" to fulfill an order from the Philippines Dept. of Agriculture for 860 dairy goats. The Northeast component of the Philippines shipment would represent about \$100,000 in business for breeders, veterinarians, truckers, etc. Tentative shipping date May, 1997. We expect to be looking for as many qualifying Nubians and Saanens as we can find (call or write me if you wish to participate). Age range 8-22 mos.; CAE negative; bred if possible. *

To date, our Northeast Region has been almost completely overlooked by foreign goat buyers (we are geographically "off the beaten track"). Most of the sales have been made in the West, Midwest, Southern and Southwest regions. We are now well enough organized to find out about such buying efforts and to participate fully.

We have completed a sizable semen collection project in Vermont and New York State, drawing bucks (four breeds) with dams in the 4,000 lb. range (exceptional production). The SARE grant paid veterinary costs of export blood testing. The Vt. Dairy Goat Promotion Board also has made a major contribution (\$1,000) toward these costs. Approximately 1,600 straws of

* This project was postponed + postponed, changed over + over and finally moved to a midwestern Exporter. We did, however, spend a lot of time on it - and learned a lot!

semen are "in the bank" - with major emphasis on quality of semen and superior genetic potential for milk production.

I am now publicizing the availability of this semen to countries we believe may wish to purchase it. The European Union is now in the process of finalizing its health regs for goat semen imports.

Now that much ground has been broken, we would like to:

Continue to develop foreign markets for our caprine genetics, and to be ready with goats and semen if and when customers (and brokers) actually start placing orders.

Contact U.S. Embassy/Agricultural Attaches in "goat friendly" countries to enlist their help in reaching buyers.

Develop contacts with AID/agricultural people, particularly in Africa (initial contact made with two key individuals at USDA) where capriculture is a focal point of livestock development and foreign aid is still flowing into agricultural projects.

Continue semen collection efforts and promotion next fall: if and when semen sales are made, a portion of the proceeds would be earmarked to expand semen collection efforts into Maine, PA., Conn. etc.

Encourage all goat breeders in our region to emphasize milk production in their breeding programs so as to have more animals available for the developing international markets.

Start an occasional, brief newsletter (we have a mailing list) to send to goat breeders, with export news.

Expand and improve mailing list.

Encourage serious foreign buyers to place deposits on animals (i.e., kids) they wish to reserve for shipment 9-12 months later when they are reaching an age at which they can be bred and shipped. That would compensate a breeder for raising kids they might not be able to afford to raise and breed on speculation.

Do what we can to provide input for USDA personnel who are negotiating trade rules with "goat friendly" nations on barriers which might be eliminated in the interests of making goat and semen exports easier for us and less costly for the buyers. Also keep working on "goat awareness" in the USDA, particularly since goats are far more numerous and a far greater source of meat and milk in the world today than any other type of livestock.

Ag Department to Explore Livestock and Animal Genetics Exports

by

Steven F. Justis
Marketing Specialist

Vermont Department of Agriculture, Food & Markets

Dairy cows and bovine genetics have been a significant part of Vermont's agricultural exports for well over 20 years. That industry has been well-served by several state, regional and national organizations during that period. As a result, top quality Vermont dairy cows, embryos and semen have been sent to countries around the world.

A growing number of Vermont farmers have expressed interest in exploring export markets for other *livestock genetics* (a term which here, for brevity, includes both animals and genetic material) as an additional source of farm revenues. Horses, goats and sheep are among the species of livestock having potential for export development from Vermont.

Facts and Figures on Exports

At a recent livestock export workshop in Pennsylvania, USDA marketing specialist Thomas Poerstel noted that U.S. livestock genetics exports have been increasing since 1994, and are now approaching \$300 million annually (excluding poultry, which accounts for an additional \$150 million).

Pennsylvania's Agricultural Secretary, Mr. Samuel E. Hayes, Jr., pointed out that Mexico alone needs 9,000 replacement heifers annually. Other opportunities exist for equine, ovine and caprine genetics. Top markets for U.S. livestock genetics currently include Japan, the European Union, Canada and Mexico. By the year 2000, Mexico, Brazil, Canada, Argentina and China are expected to be top markets.

Farm Income

Semen exports offer a unique opportunity for additional farm income, without depleting farm herds. Northeast Dairy Associates in Chester, Vermont recently shipped over 800 straws of goat semen to Taiwan, at an average straw price of about \$14. One New York farmer received over \$3,000 for semen from two dairy goats. High quality animals can also bring good returns. Taiwanese buyers recently purchased 150 Airedale kids from the New York-New England region, at a total price of over \$87,000. Essential to developing overseas markets, however, is having official production records on dairy animals. Animals lacking production records are of little or no interest in most markets.

Getting Organized

The Vermont Department of Agriculture is looking into the possibility of joining the U.S. Livestock Genetics Export, Inc., a not-for-profit organization including livestock organizations and a growing number of state departments of agriculture. USLGE is the

DAIRY GOAT SEMEN

FROM
EXPORT - TESTED BUCKS



OUT OF DAMS WITH:

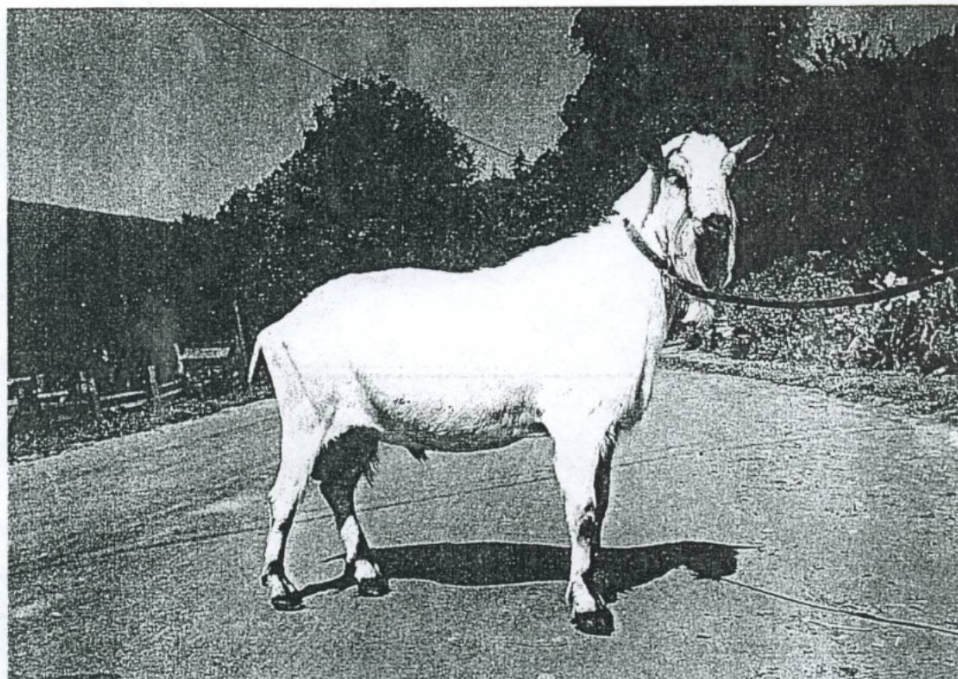
- *HIGH PRODUCTION
- *EXCELLENT CONFORMATION
- *OFFICIAL MILK RECORDS

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BARRACUDA

Alpine



*B ROEBURN'S PROFET BARRACUDA AO835363

Sire: GCH Redwood Hills Marvelous Profet
PT1 +119 ++*B

Dam: GCH Roeburn's P Dolly Varden 2*M
Classification 6-5 FS90 (VEVE)

Milk Record

| | | | | |
|-----|----------|-------|-----|------|
| 2-1 | 305 | 2765 | 117 | |
| 4-2 | 305 | 2727 | 122 | 4.5% |
| 4-2 | extended | 4,818 | | 4.7% |

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