

# Kabulya Meat Goat

## Best Breeding Practice Version 1.01

### Introduction

The rules for breeding Kabulya Meat Goats have not yet been finalised. Once that has been done, these guidelines will be reviewed to ensure that they are in line with the Breed Rules.

These guidelines are aimed at large-scale breeders who are managing the goats on open-grazing. However, they also give useful help to groups of medium-scale breeders.

### Best choice of male

Very few males are needed, compared to the number of females. But the males make an equal contribution towards the next generation. That makes it very important to choose the very best male for breeding. There may be many males to choose from that are all registered with the same Kabulya Grade, but they will not all be the same.

The most important factors in choosing the male are its growth rate and health. The Performance Grade, as determined by weight at 9 months of age is the first thing to consider when choosing breeding males. No male should be selected purely on its Kabulya Birth Grade.

If a male has had to be treated for worms or heartwater, it should not be considered as a stud male.

Finally, once growth rate and disease resistance/tolerance have been considered, appearance can then be taken into account.

### Worm tolerance

One of the main reasons for the development of the Kabulya breeds is the poor worm-tolerance of exotic goats compared to local goats. This is especially important for meat goats, which are not normally zero-grazed.

When goats are regularly dewormed, the worms develop resistance to anthelmintics (dewormers) quite quickly. That is why the FAMACHA system was developed to assess which goats most need treatment, instead of deworming all of the goats very frequently.

If possible avoid routine deworming completely, but if routine deworming is found to be necessary, use the lowest frequency that you can get away with. That is good practice for avoiding anthelmintic-resistance, and it also gives an opportunity to assess which goats are the most worm-tolerant.

The signs of a goat needing deworming are: poor growth, thinness, rough fur and anaemia. Anaemia can easily be tested by pulling the lower eyelid down and looking at the back of it. It should be a full red colour, but if it is pale then the goat is anaemic. This is the basis of the FAMACHA system. If you regularly check your goats in this way, you will easily develop skill at this test.

Any male goats that need extra deworming on the basis of the above observations should not be used for breeding or sold as breeding stock. They should be treated, fattened and sold for meat.

The fastest-growing and healthiest-looking of the remaining goats are likely to be the most worm-tolerant ones. This tolerance will also be passed on to their offspring.

## Avoiding in-breeding

If the total number of goats that you own – whether as an individual or a group – is more than 200 breeding females, you should be able to avoid in-breeding without getting any males from outside. You need to have 6 or 7 males for breeding. Each male should have its own group of females. After the males have been used for a while – no longer than 15 months – sell off the mature males and replace them with young ones. But place each young male in a different group from the one that it was born in. If one of the older males is particularly good, and you want to keep it for breeding, it should be moved to a different group and only used for one more period, after which it must be sold.

If your total number of goats is 500 breeding females or more, you do not need such very careful division of the goats into groups. But still change the males frequently, and try to avoid having males mating with their close relatives.

If your total number of breeding females is less than 200, you will need to sometimes get males from elsewhere. The fewer females, the more often you need to get unrelated males. With 30 or fewer females you only need one male, and you will need to get a new one from outside every time you need to change it – i.e. after every 15 months. Take care when you buy a goat from outside, or if you exchange one of your young males with another group – that other group should be paying as much attention to its breeding programme as you are.

## Colour

Selecting for colour will inevitably slow down the selection for milk production and disease resistance. However, if it is done carefully, the impact will not be too great. Remember to give the highest priority to the **measured** Kabulya Grade, then health, and finally appearance.

If you start with 50% crossbred goats that were produced from mating local females with a pure Boer male, the colours will mostly resemble those of Boer Goats. But once the cross-bred goats are mated among themselves the offspring can show a wide variety of colours. Do not be discouraged. Apply the above rules and be patient. It will take many generations but each generation will have more goats having the chosen colour pattern until eventually a majority of the breeding stock is looking like you want it.