The Israeli dairy goat industry

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Israel's milk dairy goat production

- Produces 25,000 tons of milk per year, 14,000 tons under the quota system
- There are **3,300 sheep** farms and **1,800 goat** farms. These farms include **1,454 commercial sheep** farms (including more than 100 head, 330 heads on average) and **186 commercial goat farms**. There are **80 industrial farms**
- There is no direct government support, but the government controls imports to provide partial protection
Israel's milk dairy goat production
(continue)

- A milk price is negotiated among producers and processors under the direction of the milk board.
- In industrialized farms with 500 – 1,000 goats, 800 litters of milk are produced per animal, which is marketed to large and medium dairies.
- Other farms have small, boutique, intensive or semi-intensive goat herds with about 100 goats that process their own milk, and some offer agrotourism.
- With a shortage of pastures, shepherds, and workers, as well as a high cost of these workers, intensive farming is necessary today.
Intensive dairy goat farming in Israel

- The vast majority of goat milk in Israel is produced in large, intensive farms
- In industrialized farms, goats are housed all year round, feed tailored to their special needs, their reproduction is controlled, kids are raised separately, and then fattened
- The farm is managed by a computerized management system
- There are a few kidding seasons throughout the year, goats give birth once a year, and long lactations are also practiced
- Main breeds – Alpine and Sannen
Semi-intensive dairy goat farm

- Local or cross breeds
- Pasture supplements
- Process milk
- Agrotourism
Practices of feeding

- Production and processing of farm feed (roughages, such as hay, silage, straw). Pellets and whole grains should be purchased.
- You can feed it as is or mix it as a TMR - Total Mix Ration.
- The TMR can be purchased from a feed center ready to use.
- Deliveries every day or every few weeks (packed TMR)
Roughages for Lactating goats

- High quality hay (Legumes – Alfalfa, Vetch, Clover)
- Medium quality hay (Grass – Wheat, Barley, Oats)
- Good silage (Wheat, Corn, Barley)
- Very rough (Straw – Grasses or Legumes)
Lactating pellets

- Diverse protein sources
- Vitamins/minerals according to a specific farm
- Feed additives – Yeast, sodium bicarbonate, salt
- Protected fat
- By-pass protein
- Whole grain – Corn and Barley
Lactating TMR (high yield)

- High quality roughages – Legumes, or grasses (Alfalfa, Ryegrass, Wheat silage, Clover)
- High NDF roughage (small amount)
- Whole grain/s (Corn, Barley)
- Protein contributors (pellets or powder), includes Vitamins and minerals
Packed TMR (The alternative for remote and small farms)

- Ready to use, 25 or 400 kg per unit, includes all
- Roughages
- Whole grain/s (Corn, Barley)
- Protein contributors (pellets or powder), includes Vitamins, minerals and feed additives
Alternative to high quality roughages: growing sprouts indoors

- There's a lack of land and water, so we need quality roughage alternatives.
- The sprouts are cultivated in a completely controlled indoor facility, on trays in vertical stacks that reduce the use of land. In conventional agriculture, about 5 tons of silage are grown annually per dunam (1/10 hectare). With sprouts method, it is possible to grow over 3,000 tons (~600 times more) of sprouts annually per dunam.
Feeding animals with barley sprouts

- The sprouts have been tested on a number of ruminants and have been found to be effective in use as far as production performance and feed efficiency are concerned.
- It was also found to be effective in replacing all alfalfa in the diet of high yielding dairy goats.
Optimal support during pregnancy

- Good body condition peri conception up to kidding
- Supplement high quality feed (Protein, Energy) at the adequate timing
- Roughages, concentrates – good quality, vitamins minerals
- Good (but not over) body condition
Rearing the young goats' offspring
Challenges associated with raising goat kids

- Goat kids are milk fed until they are 50 - 60 days of age
- Several cycles per year and many kids in each cycle
- There is a limited amount of space available and young animals are sensitive
- After weaning (coccidia, pneumonia)
- Nutrition for optimal growth; Avoid obesity
- During transitions, watch out for coccidia
A summary of the main points

- Due to a shortage of pastures, shepherds, and workers, as well as a high cost of workers, intensive farming is necessary.

- Large, intensive farms produce the majority of goat milk in Israel. Herds of goats with about 100 goats that process their milk themselves, as well as some that offer agrotourism.

- Intensive farms house goats year-round, supplement them fully, control reproduction, raise their kids separately, and fatten them. A computerized management system is used to manage the herd. There are several kidding seasons throughout the year, and goats give birth once a year. Also, long lactations are common.