
Farm goat welfare — Dairy, fibre and meat goats



Table of contents

1	Scope	1
2	Normative references	1
3	Terms and definitions	1
4	Minimum requirements	2
4.1	Responsibilities of the farm operators and workers	3
4.2	Farm location	4
4.3	Goat housing and facilities	4
4.4	Farm management	7
4.5	Goat health management	9
4.6	Goat welfare management	11
4.7	Goat transportation	11
4.8	Biosecurity measures	11
5	Review and evaluation of practices	12

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Introduction

The purpose of this Standard is furthermore to provide for science-based husbandry practices that are in line with international best practice, in order to ensure that the good welfare of animals in production systems is safeguarded.

An animal is in a good state of welfare when healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, able to express innate behaviour and able to move around in a spacious, clean, species-appropriate environment; furthermore, if the animal is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, discomfort, injury, fear and/or distress.

This Standard is developed in accordance with international best practice, including the Five Domains models, in accordance with which animals should be managed:

Nutrition: Access to sufficient, nutritious, species-specific, balanced, varied, clean, and good quality water and food in the correct quantities.

Environment: Factors that enable a comfortable physical environment, such as mild temperatures, suitable substrate, space, fresh air, appropriate light intensity, low noise, normal environmental variability, and predictability.

Health: Factors that enable good health through the absence of disease, injury, and functional impairment, with an appropriate body condition.

Behaviour: The ability to exercise agency by means of varied, novel, engaging environmental challenges, as well as pleasant sensory inputs, available choices, movement, exploration, foraging, bonding, rearing young, playing, retreat, rest, and others.

Mental State: The mental state of the animal shall benefit from positive states, such as pleasure, satiety, comfort, vitality, reward, calmness, sociability, playfulness, confidence, and others, while avoiding negative states, such as thirst, hunger, discomfort, breathlessness, pain, debility, illness, frustration, boredom, helplessness, loneliness, depression, anxiety, fear, panic, exhaustion, and others.”

Farm goat welfare — Dairy, fibre and meat goats

1 Scope

This Committee Draft African Standard sets out the general principles and good, humane practices and minimum requirements in the rearing of goat for food use.

Industry specific requirements for dairy, fibre and meat type of goat production system may be developed provided that it satisfies the minimum requirements set out in this standard.

Sentence not necessary in the scope

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1

abnormal behaviour

any behavioural change developed as a response to disease or poor management practice causing stress to the goat

3.2

goat

goats conventionally raised or reared for food and non-food (e.g. goat by-products such as leather, etc.) purposes

3.3

authorized

action which has been permitted by the competent authority

3.4

competent authority

entity/agency who has the knowledge, expertise and authority as designated by law

3.5

doe

female goat

3.6

dehorning

removal of horns after they have already formed

3.7

disbudding

removal or destruction of horn buds, done in young goats whose horns have not yet formed

3.8

establishment

given due permission, a firm authorized to operate

3.9

farm operator

person and/or entity who is in possession, custody, control or charge of an animal

CD-ARS 1859:2025

farm owner

legal entity who is responsible for the management and general operation of the farm

3.10

farm technician

certified trained personnel who is technically skilled and knowledgeable in the various aspects of specialized animal husbandry

3.11

farm worker

trained personnel directly responsible for the rearing of goats

3.12

feeds

any single or multiple materials, whether processed, semi-processed or raw, which is intended to be fed directly to goats

3.13

feed supplement

feed ingredient or mixture of feed ingredients intended to supply the deficiencies in a ration or improve the nutritive balance or performance of the total mixture

3.14

forage

plants or part of plants grown intended for use as goat feed, whether for grazing, cut-and-carry, ensiling, or haying

3.15

gait

way of walking or pace of the goats

3.16

ration

total amount of feed given to one goat for one day

3.17

rearing

act of raising of goats

3.18

vehicle

means of transporting goats, including but not limited to trucks, tractors, trailers, trains, ferries, ships and aircrafts

3.19

weaning

process of complete withdrawal of a kid from the doe and withdrawal of milk feeding

3.20

humane handling

act or practice that is exercised in a manner that shows compassion and benevolence, and inflicts the least pain and suffering possible

3.21

animal welfare

individual animal is mentally and physically coping with the conditions in which such animal lives

4 Minimum requirements

4.1 Responsibilities of the farm operators and workers

4.1.1 General skills and responsibilities

4.1.1.1 The farm owner/operator and farm workers shall undergo training on the necessary knowledge and skills about basic procedures of farm management including the correct handling of goat, pasture/forage development and conservation, feeding management, goat health management, the goats behavioural and welfare needs, and other routine management practices and usage of farm tools or equipment, as well as the goats' behavioural and welfare needs.

4.1.1.2 The farm operator/worker shall be responsible for the management of the goats by providing the necessary requirements so that they are able to perform at their optimum levels without compromising the welfare of the goats.

4.1.1.3 The farm operator/owner shall provide farm workers with appropriate personal protective equipment.

4.1.1.4 The farm operator/owner shall provide working personal protective equipment, as prescribed by the farm bio-security protocol to visitors who need to be at the production area.

4.1.1.5 In cases of housed staff, the farm owner/operator shall provide comfortable accommodation for the workers.

4.1.1.6 The farm operator/worker shall always promote a safe and healthy working condition in the farm. Accident and emergency procedures shall be available with clear instructions for all workers. First aid kits, fire extinguishing equipment, and information on hotline numbers shall be easily available at all times, and placed conspicuously in strategic locations.

4.1.1.7 The farm owner/operator shall ensure that all farm operators and farm workers undergo annual routine health check-up/medical examination.

4.1.1.8 The farm operator shall report immediately or within 24 h to relevant authorities any incidence of abnormal behavioural changes, health conditions and mortalities in the farm or any characteristic of a reportable/notifiable disease outbreak (e.g. Caprine Arthritis Encephalitis, Hemorrhagic Septicemia, Bluetongue).

4.1.2 Legal responsibilities of the farm operator/owner

4.1.2.1 The farm owner shall conform to existing goat farming and welfare legislation. This includes but not limited to the management of environment issues, farm location, goat welfare requirements, disease control and reporting, dead goat disposal, production of wholesome food and occupational hazards associated with goat farming.

4.1.2.2 The farm operator shall conform to existing labour legislation.

4.1.3 Goat welfare responsibilities

4.1.3.1 Farm workers, owners and operators shall not cause or allow anyone to cause cruelty to animals, including, but not limited to:

- a) maltreatment of goats under his/her care and attention;
- b) neglect of goat, such that it experiences pain, suffering or distress;
- c) failure to implement the proper feeding program to maintain the live weight of the goat within the normal physiological range for the species type, age and sex;
- d) removal of any part of the anatomy without adequate anaesthesia, whenever applicable;

- e) putting to sleep (euthanasia), confine, handle or transport any goat in a manner causing pain, suffering or distress; and
- f) keeping a goat alive, especially that which is pronounced physically or physiologically incapacitated, unless it is under the direct care of a licensed and registered veterinarian.

4.1.3.2 The farm technicians, owners and workers shall not neglect goats according to but not limited to the following criteria:

- a) freedom from hunger, thirst and malnutrition. Feed withdrawal of goats destined for slaughter shall follow the guidelines set by the competent authority;
- b) freedom from physical discomfort and pain;
- c) freedom from injury and disease;
- d) With due consideration to the differences in the production system (confined and free-range/grazing), goats shall be given enough freedom to conform to essential behaviour patterns; and
- e) Freedom from fear and distress.

4.2 Farm location

4.2.1 Site selection

The farm shall:

- a) be strategically located within the approved land use plan of the local government and shall be compliant with relevant regulations.
- b) have a reliable supply of adequate power, potable water and good access road.
- c) not be prone to flooding. Perimeter canals that drain to a closed lagoon may be constructed to prevent runoff from contaminating bodies of water and/or adjacent farms.
- d) be accessible to major facilities of production (i.e. feed mill, water system, forage area).
- e) with exception for those practicing integrated farming with their own postharvest facilities, the farm shall be at an appropriate distance from service/public slaughterhouses as stated in relevant regulations
- f) existing farms shall have full control of the risks and ensure that there are mitigation measures in place. New farms shall comply with the above provisions.

4.2.2 Site history

If there are available data/information from relevant government agencies or organizations on the prior land use, then it shall be used to establish that the site is not a possible source of physical, chemical and microbiological hazards. However, when these data are not available and uncertainty exists as to the suitability of the land for agricultural use, it is recommended to have the site analysed for all associated risks/hazards.

4.3 Goat housing and facilities

4.3.1 Housing

4.3.1.1 The farm building shall be designed and constructed appropriately for the intended purpose be well maintained.

4.3.1.1.2 Housing shall allow natural light to enter. Goats shall not be subjected to dim and/or continuous lighting, nor permanent darkness. The use of artificial lighting is permitted, subject to it not exceeding a maximum day-length of 16 h.

4.3.1.2 The building intended for keeping goats shall be constructed in the orientation that minimizes the adverse effects on goat performance and welfare and eliminates possible hazards to its surroundings.

4.3.1.3 The building shall be designed and constructed using materials that shall not cause any injury or impart hazard to the welfare of the goat:

- a) provide comfort;
- b) can be easily cleaned and disinfected;
- c) can be easily replaced when damaged;
- d) create efficient stock management; and
- e) enhance biosecurity.

4.3.1.4 There shall be an effective drainage system in place at the building.

4.3.1.5 Goats shall be provided with sufficient floor space/size suitable for their age, body weight and size.

4.3.1.6 The feeding and drinking equipment and facilities shall comply with the standards/requirements for each species and shall be constructed and conspicuously placed such that:

- a) goats are able to eat and drink freely, allowing them to behave normally; and;
- b) contamination with goat faeces and urine is prevented.

4.3.1.7 Pens and pathways shall:

- a) be designed and constructed to prevent goats from escaping; and
- b) be free from protruding objects or structures (e.g. nails and bolts) that may cause injury to the goats, farm operators and workers.

4.3.1.7 Housing design (particularly roof height and sides) shall provide proper ventilation (whether natural or artificial) to maintain a comfortable environment.

4.3.1.8 Goat buildings shall have adequate lighting to ensure that goats can be thoroughly inspected as required.

4.3.1.9 Electrical installations and wirings shall be protected and shall not be accessible to the goats.

4.3.1.10 Floors and pathway used by the goats shall be elevated and made from non-slippery materials, safe, stable and well-lighted to prevent injury or abnormal gait to the goats.

4.3.1.11 The design of alleys and chutes shall allow effective management of the goats:

- a) floors of alleys and chutes shall be properly built to provide good footing, preventing slippage and injuries; and

- b) alleys and chutes shall have sides of sufficient height to prevent goats from jumping off or falling.

4.3.1.12 The farm shall provide effective and appropriate facilities to restrain or handle goats without causing undue stress and injury to both goats and farm workers.

4.3.1.13 The premises shall be kept clean at all times to prevent disease occurrence, establishment of breeding ground for pests and avoid environmental degradation.

4.3.2 Facilities

4.3.2.1 Holding pen

4.3.2.1.1 Sufficient pens and floor space shall be provided to prevent overcrowding and permit necessary segregation of goats.

4.3.2.1.2 Pen floors shall be, rough finished for cemented flooring, grass finished or sandy flooring and well-drained to provide good footing and prevent slipping or tripping.

4.3.2.1.3 The holding pen shall be constructed in such a way that it will adequately protect the goats from adverse weather conditions and will provide sufficient ventilation.

4.3.2.1.4 The holding pen shall have proper facilities for goats to feed and drink.

4.3.2.2 Pasture area and paddocks

4.3.2.2.1 Grazing goats

4.3.2.2.1.1 There shall be enough space for the goats.

4.3.2.2.1.2 Shade or shelter within the pasture area shall be provided.

4.3.2.2.1.3 Pasture area shall be properly maintained and managed to avoid being over grazed and polluted or heavily infested by parasites. Rotational grazing may be practiced, i.e. the herd is moved after one pasture lot has been grazed for some time.

4.3.2.2.2 Confined goats

Those practicing cut-and-carry shall establish their own forage or obtain a steady supply of forages.

4.3.2.3 Storage facilities

4.3.2.3.1 The farm shall have a facility for proper storage of all feeds and forage materials; for machinery and equipment and other toxic substances.

4.3.2.3.2 The storage facilities shall be kept clean at all times.

4.3.2.3.3 The storage facilities shall be secure, have adequate ventilation, adequate protection from moisture to prevent growth of moulds, and shall be vermin-proof.

4.3.2.3.4 Effective stock rotation shall be practiced, i.e. "FIRST IN – FIRST OUT" rule.

4.3.2.4 Breeding facilities

The breeding facility and equipment shall be properly designed to provide the goats a comfortable and conducive environment for reproduction.

4.3.2.5 Isolation area

There shall be a separate area intended for sick, quarantine, pregnant, injured and disabled goats which require necessary veterinary attention.

4.3.2.6 Condemnation/disposal facility

There shall be a separate area for disposal of condemned material or mortalities that is enclosed and isolated, and shall conform to existing environmental waste management regulations.

4.3.2.7 Fencing

4.3.2.7.1 The fence, including its posts (e.g. concrete, iron, hardwood and live posts) and gates, shall be erected and effectively designed to prevent entry of stray animals, predators and escape or injury of the goats.

4.3.2.7.2 If electric fence is used, it shall be operated as per manufacturer's instructions.

4.4 Farm management**4.4.1 Breeding, lactation and weaning**

4.4.1.2 Only sexually mature goats of appropriate age and weight, and free from any disease or probable inherited abnormality shall be bred.

4.4.1.3 In natural mating, appropriate ratio of male to female goats shall be practiced; general recommendation is no more than 1 male for 25 females.

4.4.1.4 Only duly trained certified personnel by relevant competent authority shall perform assisted breeding techniques (e.g. artificial insemination, embryo transfer and ovum pickup) on the goats.

4.4.1.5 The kids shall be weaned only at a recommended body weight and age.

4.4.1.6 Weaning shall be conducted with minimum stress to both the doe and its young.

4.4.1.7 The farm operator shall provide the basic facilities for the newly weaned goats.

4.4.1.8 The farm operator/owner shall maintain individual goat records that contain their health, lactation, breeding and reproductive performance.

4.4.1.9 Breeding programs and activities shall be properly recorded, maintained, monitored and evaluated.

4.4.2 Goat sourcing, identification and traceability

4.4.2.1 animals shall be procured from reputable sources and records shall be maintained to ensure traceability.

4.4.2.1.1 Ear tagging, microchips and tattooing are the recommended methods of branding. Methods that are likely to cause the least amount of pain and distress to the goat should be used. Personnel shall be trained in the method of application.

4.4.2.2 Goat identification shall be routinely done (ear tagging, chips, tattooing and other forms of identification that are compliant with goat welfare regulations) and the records of identification for the goats shall be kept properly.

4.4.2.3 If the establishment imports goats, records of pertinent documents shall be kept.

4.4.2.4 The farm operator shall record all movement of goats in and out of the farm. This includes records of veterinary protocols as prescribed by the competent authority.

4.4.3 Feeds and nutrition

4.4.3.1 Goats shall be provided with optimum level of nutrition at all times, as required for their respective functions and well-being.

4.4.3.2 There shall be adequate and continuous access to potable water.

4.4.3.3 Safe, clean, and adequate rations or feeding materials (silage, grasses, legumes and concentrates) suited for goats shall be provided.

4.4.3.4 When giving commercial feed, farm operators shall use feed that have been officially registered with the competent authority.

4.4.3.5 In case of farm-mixed feed formulation, farm operators shall only use ingredients from authorized and traceable suppliers. Records of purchases shall be kept.

4.4.3.6 The farm may also keep a record of available forage.

4.4.3.7 Banned chemicals, feed additives, supplements and any form of medication in the diet of the goats, including those disallowed by the authorities or importing countries, shall not be used.

4.4.3.8 Feed from animal origin shall be prohibited except for milk and milk products.

4.4.3.9 The feed mixing equipment shall be kept clean at all times and have regular preventive maintenance schedule.

4.4.3.10 The farm operator shall provide a daily feeding schedule or routine.

4.4.3.11 Procurement documents of feed concentrates and ingredients shall be kept and updated properly to include:

- a) supplier or source of feed concentrate and its registration number;
- b) type of feed and supplements;
- c) quantity;
- d) declaration of ingredients;
- e) document of feed analysis;
- f) date of delivery; and
- g) date of manufacturing and batch number.

4.4.3.12 The type and quantity of ration being fed to the goats shall be recorded.

4.4.4 Milk production for dairy goats

4.4.4.1 Proper and appropriate equipment and tools for milking shall be provided.

4.4.4.2 The milking equipment and tools shall be kept clean and sanitized before and after use.

4.4.4.3 Proper training shall be provided to all milkers.

4.4.4.4 There shall be chilling and storage facilities for the immediate post-harvest handling of milk, and maintained at the proper temperature requirement.

4.4.4.5 Milk should be drawn from animals that do not show any evidence (signs or analytical results) of infectious or zoonotic diseases as governed by the WOAH Terrestrial Animal Health Code. The animals shall be officially free of brucellosis, tuberculosis, and leptospirosis, as evidenced by annual testing. If not officially free, then milk should originate from herds or animals that are under official control and eradication programmes for brucellosis and tuberculosis.

4.4.5 Other management practices

4.4.5.1 The farm personnel, when performing the management practices listed below, shall use the appropriate tools and equipment, observe proper procedure (including provisions for restraint and pain management), and shall keep records of such activities:

- a) Hoof trimming.
- b) Disbudding/dehorning.
- c) Castration.
- d) Other routine management practices.

4.4.5.2 Guard and Herding dogs shall be properly trained and vaccinated.

4.5 Goat health management

4.5.1 The farm operator shall be responsible for maintaining good health of the goats at all times, through proper management practices that include prevention, treatment and disease control and containment measures of the disease affecting the goats.

4.5.2 There shall be a written goat health program in place that is updated regularly and supervised by a licensed veterinarian, in accordance with the requirements of the competent authorities.

4.5.3 The health status of the goats in the farm shall be monitored and recorded regularly by the farm, and veterinary assessment of the establishment shall be carried out annually by a licensed veterinarian and/or by a competent authority.

4.5.4 The vaccination program shall be adopted against the diseases as required by competent authorities.

4.5.6 Drugs, medicines, and vaccines shall be administered by a licensed veterinarian or trained personnel under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian.

4.5.7 Drugs or medicines shall only be used for prophylactic (dairy goats) and treatment reasons. The use of growth promoters is prohibited.

4.5.8 The use of illegal and banned medication (growth promoters) and vaccines shall be prohibited.

4.5.9 Drugs, medicines, and vaccines shall be stored and identified properly; proper disposal of these items shall be followed to prevent contamination to the environment.

4.5.10 Instructions of medication of each specific drug being administered shall be strictly followed, particularly the withdrawal period before goats are sent to market.

4.5.11 The farm operator shall keep and maintain complete records of farm operations, management routines, and goat health records like disease monitoring and medication. These records shall be easily retrievable.

4.5.12 Records include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) vaccination program;
- b) deworming;
- c) disease condition;
- d) diagnosis;
- e) intervention or treatment done;
- f) control measures;
- g) post-mortem findings;
- h) surveillance; and
- i) disposal.

4.5.13 The farm shall maintain updated records of medicine purchase and administration that shall be readily available for inspection.

4.5.14 The procurement records shall have:

- a) date of purchase;
- b) name of the product (generic compound);
- c) quantity purchased;
- d) batch number;
- e) expiry date; and
- f) name of supplier.

4.5.15 Administration records shall consist of the following:

- a) type of drugs or medication used;
- b) batch number;
- c) quantity of medicine used;
- d) date administered;
- e) route of administration;
- f) identification of goats/group treated;
- g) number of goats treated;
- h) date of completion of treatment;
- i) withdrawal period; and
- j) name of the person who administered the medicine.

4.6 Goat welfare management

4.6.1 Proper techniques shall be applied to handle and restrain goats. Goats shall always be handled and restrained in such a way to protect them from fear, stress, pain and injury.

4.6.2 Appropriate and functional facilities, equipment, and tools shall be used for effective goat handling and restraint, in order to minimize stress and injury against goats. The operators shall acquire the skills and techniques to use the tools properly.

4.6.3 Sick, injured or disabled goats shall be separated from healthy goats and shall be given the necessary veterinary attention, including euthanasia if required and following the rules and regulations in euthanasia.

4.6.4 Sticks or canes shall not be used to restrain the farm goats.

4.7 Goat transportation

In accordance with the following measures shall be observed during the transport of goats:

- a) Soiling and cross-contamination with faecal material shall be minimized.
- b) Records that include goat identification and place of origin shall be carried during transportation.
- c) Undue stress and/or risk from injury during loading, transport and unloading shall be avoided.
- d) Whenever necessary, separate each goat to avoid injury during transportation.
- e) Whenever necessary, under loaded vehicles shall contain partitions to avoid injury of goats during transportation.
- f) If the transport vehicle has more than one deck, goats shall be protected from cross-contamination.
- g) Adequate ventilation for the goats shall be maintained throughout the journey;
- h) Transport vehicles and crates shall be cleaned and sanitised as soon the goats have been unloaded.
- i) To mitigate the abrupt changes in weather condition, the transport vehicle shall be fitted with supplies, including but not limited to containers with potable water, truck blanket or cover, and other tools to include water hose, sprinklers, pail, and shovel, whichever is needed.
- j) Transport vehicles shall be provided with supplies necessary for emergencies such as tools, spare tires, etc.
- k) Transport vehicles shall comply with the requirements of the competent authorities.
- l) Prior to slaughter, resting period of goats shall follow relevant guidelines for resting. The recommended time for resting is 8 h from the time of loading for transport by road.
- m) The maximum allowable time for goats to be in transit, from loading until off-loading to rest is 8 h.

4.8 Biosecurity measures

4.8.1 The farm shall have a written protocol of biosecurity measures. Proper warning signage shall be provided.

4.8.2 Biosecurity procedures shall be well implemented and continuously monitored to prevent introduction of disease into the farm and/or to control its spread within the farm.

4.8.3 The biosecurity measures shall take into consideration the relevant diseases identified by local regulations/authority.

4.8.4 The farm shall have the appropriate and functional lay-out and infrastructure to ensure effective implementation of the biosecurity measures. These shall include facilities for disinfection, with appropriate concentration of disinfectant, at entry (e.g. wheel bath or spraying, shower for visitors, handwashing facility, etc.)/exit point of the farm and the building (footbath).

4.8.5 All incoming goats shall undergo the appropriate quarantine measures.

4.8.6 Stray goats shall not be allowed within the premises.

4.8.7 Imported goats and goat products shall be accompanied by official documentation from the competent authority.

4.9 Farm sanitation program and environmental management

4.9.1 Farm premises shall be kept clean and free of potential conditions conducive to breeding of pests, goat parasites and disease outbreak. This is to avoid negative effects on the landscape, environment and goat welfare.

4.9.2 Organic materials shall be regularly removed from all livestock contact surfaces (i.e. floors, pen partitions). Where bedding is used, it shall be appropriate and regularly replaced.

4.9.3 The farm shall have a proper and functional drainage system towards a waste water treatment facility. Solid and liquid waste shall be managed and disposed according to existing relevant guidelines imposed by competent authorities.

4.9.4 The farm shall have proper handling and disposal system for sick, injured and dead goats, and shall be in accordance to existing regulations of the authority.

4.9.5 The farm shall have a written sanitation program that includes integrated pest management, e.g. fly control, rodent control, etc.

4.9.6 The farm operator shall take necessary measures to ensure that activities related to goat rearing do not contribute to the degradation of the environment (i.e. land, water, air) and cause destruction to bio-diversity.

4.9.7 The farm operator shall maintain and display clear instructions on procedure for disposal of farm solid and farm chemical wastes (e.g. paint, expired pesticide and containers, etc.).

4.9.8 The farm operator shall be familiar with the proper procedure for disposal and schedule of actions to be taken, especially at times of emergency.

4.9.9 Waste shall be regularly removed to would discourage ammonia build up and promote better air quality within buildings.

4.9.10 The farm shall take appropriate measures to minimize excessive odor coming from the farm, especially those that may be associated with waste decomposition.

5 Review and evaluation of practices

5.1 Practices shall be checked for compliance and evaluation for effectiveness and do-ability on a regular basis.

5.2 In cases where provisions are no longer applicable, they shall be amended.

