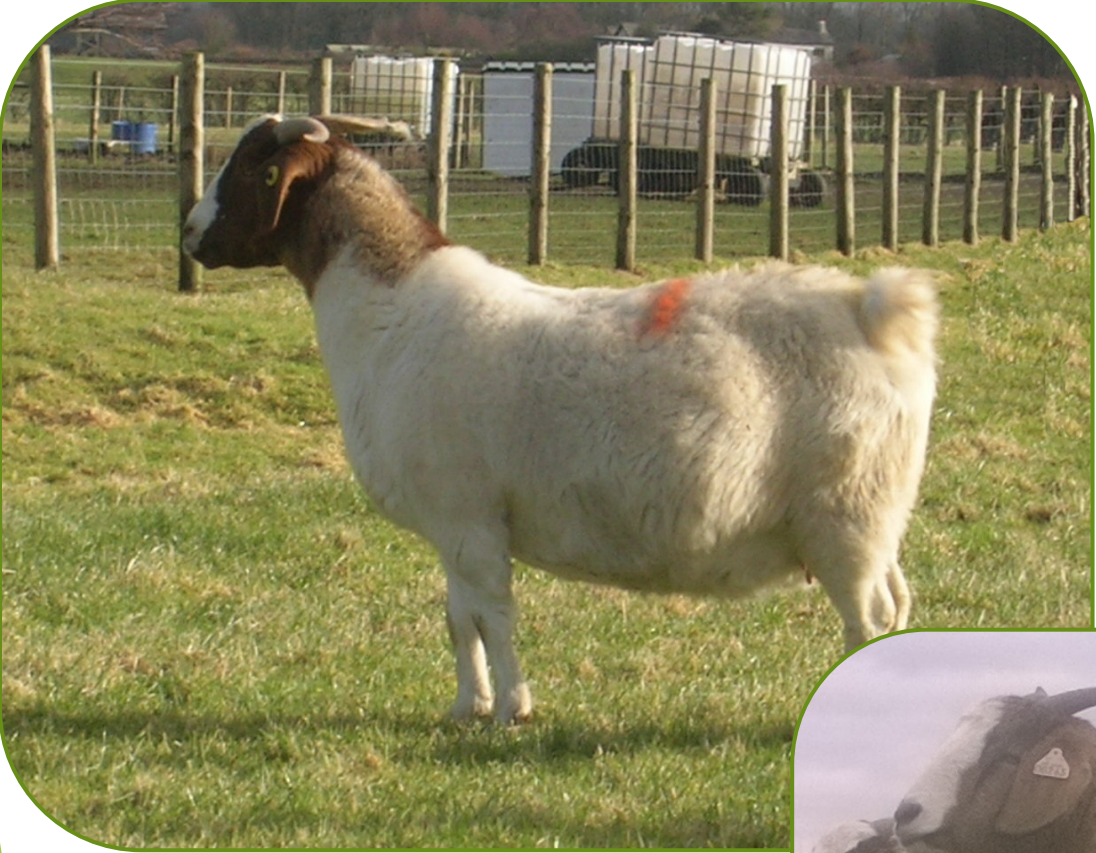


Cockerham Goats British Meat Goats

Striving for sustainable goat meat production since 2006



**Boer
Goat**



Cashmere

**British
Meat Goat**



Sustainability traits

- Hardiness/Warm coat
- Low forage requirements
- Low feed requirements
- High kidding percentage
- Kidding ease
- Mothering ability
- Survivability rates
- Disease tolerance
- Worm tolerance
- Longevity



Hardiness - Crossing with the Cashmere has caused a significant increase in hardiness. Our British meat goats are now able to live year round outdoors with access only to natural shelter.

They out winter rather than the need for winter housing our original goats required.

This reduced the need for Bedding and its associated environmentally and financial impact.



Low forage requirements - living out year round on well managed pasture means our British Meat Goats have low forage requirements more akin to that of sheep than housed cattle.

Low feed requirements. - British Meat Goats no longer need year round feed supplementation. Rather they have been selected for doing well off limited hard feed.

Feed is given for just 3-4 weeks pre tuppung, 4 weeks pre kidding and 2 weeks post kidding. In 2020 we have removed all pre-tuppung hard feed, to assess the impact of this cut.

Reduced hard feed significantly reduces the environmental impact by cutting soya use and massively reducing fuel use for feed transportation.



High kidding percentage - Selection has taken place in the herd for twin births. This ensures high outputs from the same inputs reducing environmental and financial impact. Increased productivity has meant it is possible to reduce the total head on the farm reducing the impact of the breeding herd without impacting the outputs.



Kidding ease - Crossing with Cashmere has lead to slightly lower birth weights from our British Meat Goats meaning an easier kidding. Assistance rates have fallen from approximately 45% between 2000 - 2008 to approximately 8% In 2019.

Reduced assistance impacts medicine use, specifically reducing the need for antibiotics, used to prevent infections of wombs where intervention was necessary.

Mothering ability - Crossing with cashmere has increased a mothing instinct. Natural selection in the history of the Cashmere has selected for goats with better mothering tendencies. Human selection tends to forget that need.



Survivability rates - Selection for higher health mothers has increased survivability in kids from birth to 6 months.

Survival rates to 6 months in 2014 were just 89% gradually increasing over the years, due to selection, to a rate of 96.5% in 2019.

Higher health mothers give birth to higher health kids with a better tolerance for illness.

This higher health significantly reduces medicine use. Reducing the need for treatments but also cutting the need for preventative medicine use.

Survivability also maintains the outputs from the herd with reduced breeding stock.



Disease tolerance and worm tolerance - Crossing with cashmere has shown a marked improvement in tolerance to sickness. Historical natural selection in the Cashmere has selected for animals which maintain their own health in natural British grazing situations.

This has again helped to reduce medicine use both in preventative treatments for worms etc. but also in treatments used to try to cure illness.



Longevity - Selection from within the herd for Longevity has meant each doe has a longer more productive life.

Our oldest doe is now 14 and has been productive for us for 12 years.

The longevity trait she carries is shown in the number of our goats which can be traced back to her genetics.

Longevity can only be achieved if the animal has been healthy throughout its life which is easier to achieve with the levels of natural tolerance we are now seeing.

Longevity helps with sustainability by increasing lifetime outputs from the same levels of inputs needed to get the animal to its first breeding age.

Longevity also reduces the “waste” from the herd with each animal remaining productive for longer.



Future plans

Cockerham Goats will continue to strive for sustainability.

More work is needed on feed reductions for young stock.

More selection for the sustainability traits described will take place.



Cockerham Goats
British Meat Goats