

Increasing the Awareness of Goat Meat and Value-added Products While Providing Healthful Red Meat Alternatives

Uford A. Madden¹, Jean Beaudouin, and Godfrey Nurse

Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Florida A&M Programs
Florida A&M University, Tallahassee, Florida 32307

Sustaining agriculture in rural communities is not only critically important for the livelihood and self-sufficiency of farm families, but will strengthen families and maintain stability and quality of life in these long-standing communities. Small farm agriculture continue to make important contributions to Florida and national aggregate agricultural production, and Florida A&M University continue to provide appropriate research and extension education activities to small livestock producers that will result in improvement of on-farm technologies and management systems, enhanced production, efficiency, profitability and long-term survival of these farms. In 1997, 78% of Florida's farm sales came from farms with total annual sales of less than \$50,000. The 2004 United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service (USDA/ERS) fact sheet data for Florida showed that farms comprised of 1 to 99 acres represented 70.4% of all farms in 1992 increased to 76.5 in 2002. Farms with sales of less than 10,000 dollars represented 57.5% of all farms in 1992 and 63.4% in 2002, and farms with sales ranging from 10,000 to 49,999 dollars was responsible for 22.0% in 1992 and 19.4% in 2002. The results suggested that farms with sales of less than 50,000 dollars were responsible for 79.5% of all sales in 1992 and 82.8% in 2002. Goat producers contributed to the increased number of small farms and increased sales reported in fact sheet data for Florida. Improvement in management systems, enhanced production along with increased marketing of goat meat and value-added products will result in increased, efficiency, profitability and long-term survival of these farms

In an effort to increase the involvement of Goat Producers and Meat Processors and continuously improve outreach services to our clientele, Florida A&M University (FAMU) Extension Program collaborated with County Agents in three counties, (Jackson, Calhoun and Bay) in participating in the 19th Annual Goat Day held in Blountstown, Calhoun County, on Saturday, October 16, 2004. The activities began at 8:00 am (Central Standard Time) at the Sam Atkins Park and were sponsored by the Blountstown Rotary Club. Seven representatives of FAMU (Faculty and staff and undergraduate students) participated in the Goat Day activities.

Producers and processors displayed their animals and products and shared information about their operations and how they address the various challenges encountered on a day to day basis. Animals that were displayed included breeds such as Boer, Tennessee fainting (Myotonic), Spanish, Nubian and mixed animals (crossbred) produced from crossing two or more breeds. The animals were placed in pens and interactions of animals with children and other people were conducted by producers.

Various cuts of goat meat were displayed using a refrigerator with a glass door. Patrons received information and some purchased meats to prepare at home. Four goat meat

products (Curried goat, Goat Sausage, Goat Hamburger Mixed (goat, pork, emu), Curried goat burrito) were prepared and offered to patrons for sampling and for sale. Free bite size samples of each product were offered to visitors to food booth. Patrons were asked to evaluate each of the four products by rating them on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, based on their preference of the following criteria: taste; color and appearance; texture; how they like them; and would they buy them. Observations showed that most patrons preferred to sample three products whereas a small amount sampled one or two specific products. Preliminary results revealed that majority of the patrons preferred the Curried goat, Goat Sausage, and Goat Hamburger Mixed (goat, pork, emu). Further analysis of the data is needed to determine which product was preferred most by the patrons and the criteria of the greatest acceptance among the patrons involved in the evaluation.



Goat sausages and hamburger



Processing of goat sausages



Curried goat and curried goat burrito



Processing curried goat

Information was prepared on goat production and included information provided by each producer or processor and recipes for goat meat products. A brochure entitled “Eating Healthy. Enjoy, Goat Meat: A Desirable Red Meat Alternative” was produced which contained various facts on goat meat, recipes and nutritional comparison of goat meat to other commercially available and exotic meats. An agenda of the day’s activities was prepared with the theme “Growing Healthy Animals.” These documents were available as handouts for producers, processors and other people attending the Goat Day and should serve as tools for educating the public and other people who are interested in getting into rearing goats and consumers of goat meat, goat meat products and milk.



A patron sampling a goat hamburger



A producer enjoying curried goat



A processor with an enthusiastic patron



Gathering information from patrons

The information that will be gained from evaluation of various value-added products will increase our understanding of how well people like these goat meat products and will be incorporated in future activities involving product development and marketing. We anticipate that this information will lead to increased knowledge of goats and goat meat and goat meat products and increased public acceptance of goat meat as an alternative food source.

¹All correspondence should be addressed to Dr. Uford A. Madden, Assistant Professor, Food Safety Specialist, College of Engineering Sciences, Technology, and Agriculture, 202-D Perry-Paige Building South, Florida A&M University, Tallahassee, FL 32307. Tele: (850) 412-5253 Fax: (850) 561-2151 E-mail: uford.madden@famu.edu