Goat-keeping for beginners

J. A. Mallett
Department of Agriculture

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Goat-keeping for Beginners

By J.A. Mallett

Saanen does browsing in banksia scrub near Perth.

BREEDING, FEEDING AND MANAGEMENT

As a source of milk and meat and as a provider of supple skins and silky fibres for converting into rugs, tents and clothing, the goat has long played an important role in many countries. Although goats apparently received little attention at a time when Bakewell, the Colling brothers, Ellman, Quartly, Tomkins and others were achieving sensational results in the improvement of sheep and cattle breeds, selective breeding in Switzerland and other countries led to the evolution of high-yielding milch goats which have some amazing production figures to their credit.

Goats were brought to Australia in the early Colonial era and settlers augmented their flocks by purchases from sailing-ships which often carried a few of the animals to provide milk and fresh meat on long voyages.

In the hope of establishing a profitable mohair industry, numbers of Angora goats were later imported into Australia from the province of Asiatic Turkey which gives this breed their name. Angora goats are famed for the production of attractive lustrous, long-stapled fleeces which have a high commercial value, but although large flocks of Angoras were grazed on many stations, various difficulties were encountered and the mohair industry never achieved marked importance in Australia. The Angora flocks were eventually dispersed with the result that Angora characteristics appear in many of the scrub goats seen today. This is to be regretted as the Angora is not a good milch breed.

Flocks of goats showing a wide admixture of strains soon became a common feature of the early mining townships and construction camps. These "scrubbers" were often the only sources of milk, butter and fresh meat in isolated communities, and they managed to thrive and multiply under conditions in which few other domesticated animals could have even existed. Wether goats—big rangy beasts—were harnessed to "billy-carts" and used for light haulage work, while goat-racing became a popular sport among youngsters in outback communities.

BREED IMPROVEMENT

The New South Wales Department of Agriculture established a stud of Saanen goats at the Nyngan Experiment Farm in 1913 but this stud was disbanded when the farm closed down in 1933. Within recent years both Saanen and Toggenburg studs have been established at the Condobolin Experiment Farm in New South Wales, and a large number of privately-owned milch goat studs—mainly Saanen—have come into being in all States of the Commonwealth.

The photographs Figs. 1 to 10 inclusive are taken from the British Goat Society's Year Book for 1952. The drawings in Figs. 11, 12 and 13 are from "Modern Dairy Goats" by M. Douglas Gordon.
Pig.

1.-An Angora buck showing the silky covering for which this breed is famed.

The formation of the Goat Society of Australia, with headquarters at Endeavour House, 33 Macquarie Place, Sydney, has done much to improve the standard of Australian goats. The West Australian branch of the Society now has about 35 members and its headquarters are at the Royal Agricultural Society's office, William Street, Perth.

**MILK YIELDS**

Although the meat of young goats is almost indistinguishable from that of lamb, the main aim of goat-breeders has been in the direction of improved milk production. Yields of well over a gallon a day for every day of the year are not uncommon among good specimens of the Saanen and Toggenburg breeds. The first Australian doe to exceed 4,000 lb. of milk in a year was Rockalpine Marietta, a Saanen which gave 4,192 lb. of milk for 164 lb. of butterfat in 365 days under official test in 1949.

More recently in 1951, another Saanen, Carinya Janine created a new Australian record for butterfat with 205.91 lb. in 365 days. Her milk yield for the period was 4,178 lb. (4.8 test).

It will be seen therefore, that a good goat can produce more than many of the grade dairy cows in this State, but such does are by no means plentiful. A good type of goat that is well-fed and well-cared for should yield three to six pints a day for a lactation period of seven to ten months.

Although there is a considerable variation between breeds, and even between individuals of the same breed, goats milk is usually rich in fat, having a test of about 5 per cent. The fat is almost pure white in colour and the fat globules are very much smaller than those contained in cows' milk. For this reason, and because the milk curds are very fine and readily soluble, it is claimed that goats' milk can be digested in about one-sixth of the time needed to assimilate cows' milk.

Butter and cheese may be made from goats' milk and, although these are white in colour, they can be of excellent flavour and texture when made properly.

Tuberculosis is extremely rare in goats and does not appear to have been recorded in Australia, therefore goats' milk is frequently used unsterilised. Of course, it can be contaminated just as easily as cows' milk and the utmost care should be taken to avoid this by observing scrupulous cleanliness. Goats' milk is frequently prescribed in cases of infantile eczema, pink disease and asthmatical conditions or digestive troubles which may be aggravated by the ingestion of cows' milk.

**BREEDS OF GOATS**

Throughout the world there are many different breeds of goats which vary widely in size, colour, appearance and conformation. Some are horned while others are naturally hornless; some have small erect ears while others have large pendulous ears which—in the case of the Lerri goat of India—may be 24 in. in length.

![Fig. 2.—This half-bred goat sired by a British Alpine buck yielded 6,518 lb. of milk in the 365 days commencing four days after kidding.](image)
Apart from the Angora goat whose fleece is marketed as mohair, there are many breeds which carry outer-coats of silky hair and soft woolly undercoats which are valued as textile fibres. Such an animal is the Kashmir goat whose soft undercoat is used for making the famous Cashmere shawls.

Several countries have highly productive breeds of milch goats but the best-known are the breeds which originated in Switzerland, particularly the Saanen, Toggenburg and Alpine strains. All these breeds have been introduced into Britain and have given rise to strains which carry the prefix "British" such as British Saanen, British Toggenburg, etc. These strains have been obtained by "grading up," generally by using Swiss bucks on British does.

There is a strong resemblance in general conformation in all the milch breeds and strains mentioned above, differences being mainly in colour and markings and, in the case of the Alpine, in the larger size.

**Saanen.**—Goats of the Saanen breed are usually white in colour although pale cream or very pale biscuit colour is encountered. The ears should be erect or pointing forward and the facial line should be straight or slightly dished. Saanens should be hornless and the neck of the animal should be long and thin with or without "tassels".

The coat is preferably short and fine but there is often a fringe of longer hair extending along the back and down the hindquarters.

**Toggenburg.**—The Toggenburg is very similar to the Saanen in general outline but is drab or mouse-coloured with white facial stripes extending from above the eyes to the muzzle. White also appears on the tips and edges of the ears; on the legs from the knees and hocks downwards; on the rump and on or about the tail.

Like the Saanen, the Toggenburg is hornless and may be with or without tassels. The coat is short and may have fringes of longer hair as described for the Saanen. Colour may vary to dark chocolate in the case of the British strains.

**British Alpine.**—This breed also resembles the Saanen and Toggenburg in general outline but is larger. It has a short fine coat, black in colour, with white markings resembling those of the Toggenburg.

**Anglo-Nubian.**—This breed was evolved in Britain from an admixture of African, Asian and English breeds and differs markedly from the Swiss types. The Anglo-Nubian is usually larger than the other breeds mentioned and its ears are long and pendulous, framing a face with a pronounced "Roman nose". Usually hornless, the Anglo-Nubian has no tassels on the neck and its colour ranges from black and tan to reddish-brown with or without black and white markings. Various combinations of these colours are encountered including some quaint spotted designs but the white "Swiss" facial markings are not regarded favourably in this breed. The Anglo-Nubian is not famed for high milk yields but its milk is very rich in butterfat.

Some of the scrub goats seen in outback Australia strongly resemble the Anglo-Nubian type, being descended from a similar blend of English and Oriental bloods. Where there has not been too great an admixture of Angora blood, such animals should provide good material for breeding improvement programmes as the Oriental goats would probably be better suited to Australian climatic conditions than the Swiss breeds.

### The Standard for the Milch Goat in Australia

The standard set out in the Goat Herd Book of Australia, as at October 1, 1947, is given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Doe</th>
<th>Buck</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Size and Weight</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saanen—Buck 35 in. and up, 180 lb.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toggenburg—Buck, 33-36 in., 150-175 lb.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does, 25-28 in., 100-135 lb.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Polled</strong> (naturally)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doe</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buck</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Twenty points should be deducted for horned bucks, and 10 points for newly disbudded bucks.)

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SELECTING A MILCH GOAT

There are many points of resemblance between a good milch goat and a high-producing dairy cow.

Both have the wedge-shaped outline which usually signifies good milk production—the deep, roomy abdomen with ample space for a generous food intake; the broad hips, prominent hip-bones and wide stance of the hind-legs to give plenty of "udder-room", tapering off to a fairly light fore-end, slim neck and neat head.

Goats are sexually precocious animals, and the does have been known to come into season and conceive when only three months old. Such early matings are undesirable as they often lead to stunted growth and impaired health. It is not advisable to mate them until 15 to 18 months old.

In their wild state, goats have a definite breeding or "rutting" season and generally mate in the autumn months so that the kids are dropped when the spring herbage is at its best. Under domesticated conditions the rutting season is frequently irregular or extended and kids may be born at other times of the year.

Gestation.—The gestation period of the goat is five months or approximately 150 days. The accompanying chart will serve as an indication of expected kidding dates for various dates of service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Service</th>
<th>Date of Kidding</th>
<th>Time of Service</th>
<th>Date of Kidding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Jan.</td>
<td>31 May</td>
<td>9 July</td>
<td>6 Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Jan.</td>
<td>7 June</td>
<td>16 July</td>
<td>13 Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Jan.</td>
<td>28 June</td>
<td>6 Aug.</td>
<td>3 Jan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Feb.</td>
<td>5 July</td>
<td>13 Aug.</td>
<td>10 Jan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>26 Feb.</td>
<td>26 July</td>
<td>3 Sept.</td>
<td>31 Jan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Mar.</td>
<td>2Aug.</td>
<td>10 Sept.</td>
<td>7 Feb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 April</td>
<td>30 Aug.</td>
<td>8 Oct.</td>
<td>7 Mar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 April</td>
<td>13 Sept.</td>
<td>22 Oct.</td>
<td>21 Mar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 April</td>
<td>20 Sept.</td>
<td>29 Oct.</td>
<td>28 Mar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 April</td>
<td>27 Sept.</td>
<td>5 Nov.</td>
<td>4 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 May</td>
<td>4 Oct.</td>
<td>12 Nov.</td>
<td>11 Apr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 May</td>
<td>11 Oct.</td>
<td>19 Nov.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 May</td>
<td>18 Oct.</td>
<td>26 Nov.</td>
<td>25 April</td>
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<tr>
<td>28 May</td>
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<td>3 Dec.</td>
<td>2 May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 June</td>
<td>1 Nov.</td>
<td>10 Dec.</td>
<td>9 May</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 June</td>
<td>8 Nov.</td>
<td>17 Dec.</td>
<td>16 May</td>
</tr>
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<td>18 June</td>
<td>15 Nov.</td>
<td>24 Dec.</td>
<td>23 May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 June</td>
<td>22 Nov.</td>
<td>31 Dec.</td>
<td>30 May</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 3.—Note the extraordinary development of the ears in this female Lerri goat. It is one of the lesser-known Indian breeds.

Heavy fleshing is not common among good milkers, whether they be cows or goats. The good producer is inclined to be lean but hard and healthy-looking, with a glossy coat and loose, supple skin.

The udder of a good goat should resemble that of a good cow in many of its characteristics. It should be capacious and well attached to the body so that it hangs gracefully. The goat's udder is rounder than the ideal cow's udder and only has two teats, compared with the cow's four. These teats however should be large and well-placed, pointing downward and slightly forward.

The udder should run well up at the rear and be broad in its attachment at this point. When empty it should be soft and fine-textured, not fleshy.

A mild but alert and intelligent eye; sound teeth with good jaw formation; strong shapely feet; sweet breath, and a healthy red colour in the membranes of the mouth and nose are other important indications of general health.

Fig. 4.—A prizewinning Saanen doe that is typical of this popular breed.

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Oestrus.—The "heat periods" or periods of oestrus occur in the doe at 21-day intervals during the rutting season and last for anything from 12 hours to three days. There is a fairly wide variation of the intervals and heat periods in individual animals.

The principal signs that a doe is "in season" are a peculiar note in the bleating which will be readily recognised by the experienced goat-keeper; general restlessness with a continual switching of the tail, and a swelling and reddening of the vulva. Sometimes only one or two of these symptoms are obvious.

Care of the Pregnant Doe.—Goats are hardy animals and no "coddling" is necessary during pregnancy. The in-kid doe—whose condition will probably be first revealed by the fact that she fails to come into season after service—should be given ample supplies of good food and clean water. Her own appetite will be the best guide to quantity but she should not be allowed to get grossly fat towards the end of the pregnancy.

Adequate exercise is important to maintain muscular tone but she should not be bustled or made to indulge in any violent exertion. She should have shelter from cold winds and rain.

Parturition.—Goats seldom need assistance when giving birth to their young. First-kidders often have only one kid, but twins and triplets are common at subsequent kiddings. Four at a birth is not uncommon and fives and sixes have been known, but the average goat can only rear two kids efficiently.

When the doe is due to kid, she should be placed in a clean loose-box or small shed, and given some clean dry straw as bedding. The bedding should not be so thick that a newly-born kid can be lost in it.

A day or two before kidding, the doe will decrease in size. From being round and barrel-like, she will become somewhat hollow-flanked due to the lower position of the kids. The udder may increase in size several days before kidding but will usually fill out noticeably in the 24 hours before the kid is born.

As the time draws near, the doe will become restless, frequently changing her position and bleating. The vulva will be swollen and puffy and may show a slight discharge.

Pawing of the bedding and increased restlessness, with the doe often lying down and rising again usually precede the actual birth.

With a normal birth, the first visible sign is usually the appearance of the membraneous end of the "water-bag" in which the muzzle and forefeet of the kid may be seen. The bag bursts at
the next strain and the kid falls to the ground. Sometimes the water-bag bursts internally but this seldom makes much difference to the birth.

The umbilical cord will be broken naturally in most cases and seldom needs attention. In either case a quantity of colourless liquid will be ejected.

There may be an interval of ten, twenty or thirty minutes between the birth of the kids in cases of multiple births, and normally the “cleaning” or expulsion of the “afterbirths” is completed within a few hours of the last birth.

After kidding, a bran mash will be relished by the doe. Place a double handful of bran in a receptacle and add a teaspoonful of salt and two tablespoonsful of treacle or molasses. Pour on some boiling water and cover with a lid or cloth and stand aside to cool. Bran mash should be “crumbly moist” not sloppy.

REARING THE KIDS

The following advice on rearing the kids is taken from the booklet, “The Milch Goat” published by the N.S.W. Department of Agriculture.

The kids may be left with the doe for the first two or three days in order to obtain the colostrum, and this is recommended. Alternatively, they are not permitted to suckle their mother at all, and the colostrum is milked from the doe and fed to the kids through an ordinary infant’s feeding bottle.

The usual method of hand-rearing kids is to commence with a feeding bottle, and gradually teach them to drink from a pail or dish. There should not be undue haste in removing the kids from the bottle. When the latter stage is reached, care must be taken to see that the kids do not gulp the milk down too rapidly, as this may lead to digestive trouble.

Milk fed to kids should be warmed to 95 deg. Fahr. and fed four times a day until they are a month old, and then twice a day. A later evening feed is very desirable for very young kids. Feeding bottles, dishes and any other utensils used in connection with feeding of the kids must be kept thoroughly clean. The amount of milk required daily by the kids until
they commence to graze is about 1½ to 2 pints a day. Whole goat's milk is preferable, but cow's milk is an excellent substitute if the goat's milk is otherwise needed.

When the kids are a month old, calf meal may be fed dry in a pail after the milk feed, in gradually increasing quantities, and the feeds can be reduced to two a day. A calf meal such as the following is suitable for kids:

Crushed wheat, maize or barley ... 1 part by weight
Crushed oats ... ... ... 1 part by weight
Crushed wheat, maize or barley ... 1 part by weight
Bran ... ... ... 1 part by weight
Linseed meal ... ... ... 1 part by weight

Salt, 2 ounces, and bone meal or bone flour, ½ lb., should be added to each 25 lb. mixture.

The goat is naturally a browsing animal and likes to nibble leaves and twigs from various shrubs rather than to graze at or near ground level. It likes variety in the diet and is easily surfeited if such variety is not forthcoming.

Like the dairy cow, the milch goat needs sufficient food to maintain the normal bodily functions—a "maintenance ration"—plus extra food which is converted into milk—in other words, a "production ration". Naturally, the higher the potential milk yield, the greater will be the quantity of food needed for the production ration.

Good pasture is the most economical feeding-stuff. At its best, that is when it is young and consists of a well-balanced selection of legumes and grasses, it is almost a complete food in itself, providing the bulk, proteins, carbo-hydrates and minerals needed for both maintenance and production.

Such perfection is seldom attained and certainly cannot be maintained for long periods, so the average goat-keeper must attempt to provide the necessary nutrients in other ways.

Good hay and chaff will provide bulk and make a valuable contribution towards bodily needs. They will need to be augmented by concentrates, especially on the production side.

If legume hay (clover and lucerne) or chaff is available, the concentrates can consist mainly of crushed grains (oats, wheat, barley or maize) with bran or pollard to build up the proteins. Suggested concentrate mixtures where legume hay or chaff is available are:

Crushed grains
Bran or pollard ... ... ... 1 part

or

Crushed grain
Bran ... ... ... 1 part
Pollard ... ... ... 1 part
Linseed meal ... ... ... 1 part

(Parts by measure in each case)

Proprietary dairy meals or dairy nuts could be substituted for some of the concentrates, and the mixtures can be varied according to the other fodders available and the needs of the individual animals.

Variety in the feed can be obtained by grazing and browsing and by the provision of leafy branches of suitable shrubs. Vegetables, both leafy and root varieties, may be fed, and goats will often appreciate kitchen scraps such as stale bread, fruit cores and fruit and vegetable peelings.

Fig. 9.—This head study of two young Anglo-Nubian does shows how greatly this breed differs from the Swiss types.

If the milk can be spared and first-class stock are being reared, it is advisable to continue feeding milk up to three or four months of age.

The kids should be provided with plenty of room for exercise and play—in a well-grassed paddock for preference. Boxes, barrels and a see-saw are objects with which kids will readily play.

FEEDING

Scrub goats are anything but selective in their feeding habits. They will consume with apparent enjoyment, all kinds of rough herbage and even paper, rags and odds and ends gleaned from the town dumps.

Even their more aristocratic relatives often exhibit similar appetites, yet in some respects they are fastidious feeders, promptly rejecting fodders that are soiled, stale or musty.
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**FEEDING CONCENTRATES**

About 1 lb. of concentrates to each 3 lb. of milk produced is a fairly good guide to feeding a milking goat, but this will of course vary according to the quantity and quality of the pasture available, and the size of the animal.

Dry stock will usually benefit by receiving about 1 lb. of concentrates daily in addition to pasture and/or hay.

**MINERALS**

Phosphates, lime and salt are the principal minerals needed by goats and to augment the supplies received in the rations it is a good plan to make a mineral mixture available or to incorporate a mineral supplement in the feeds. Two parts of sterilised bone-flour, di-calcic lick, or ground limestone with one part of coarse salt will make a suitable lick.

**WATER**

Goats are often fastidious concerning their drinking water and will not drink water that has been left standing or has been soiled. Frequent changes of water are necessary and the containers should be kept scrupulously clean.

**HOUSING AND MANAGEMENT**

In this State, no elaborate housing arrangements are necessary for goats and for most of the year the animals will thrive under open-air conditions.

A shed to provide shelter from rain and cold winds would be a definite advantage during the winter months and shade should be available in summer.

Hayracks are most essential to avoid waste as goats will refuse trampled hay and prefer to feed from head-high racks.

For the goat-keeper who has no grazing-paddocks available small yards and shelter-sheds will provide comfortable homes for his animals.

Tethering, while frowned upon by many goat-keepers, will often provide a welcome change for the animals, but do not merely peg the animal on a short chain and leave it exposed to the elements for long periods.

It is preferable to use two pegs with a wire between them. The goat wears a broad soft leather collar or preferably a small head-stall and its chain ends in a ring which slides on the pegged-down wire.

Goats are amazingly strong, so the pegs should be long and well driven in; chains should be light but strong and fitted with swivels in two places so that they cannot twist and shorten.

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Fig. 10.—These two prize-winning Anglo-Nubians show the wide colour range of this breed.

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The good milch goat should show a wedge-shaped conformation like that of a good dairy cow.

There should be no trees, shrubs, stumps or other obstacles which the chain could wind around as the goat ranges over the area.

DE-HORNING

Most goats of the Swiss breeds are now naturally hornless, but where English and Angora blood enters into the genetical make-up, large horns are often encountered. Adult goats may be de-horned but the most popular and more humane method is to "dis-bud" the animals as kids.

Have the following solution made up by a chemist:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chemical</th>
<th>Concentration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antimony trichloride</td>
<td>28 per cent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salicylic Acid</td>
<td>7 per cent.</td>
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<td>Flexible Collodion</td>
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When the kid is two to four days old, clip the hair away from around the horn-buds and clean the area with methylated spirit. Paint the solution on the horn-buds, where it will dry quickly. This method is preferable to the caustic potash pencil as it does not smear and does away with the necessity of keeping the kid from getting wet, or taking precautions against transferring the caustic to the dam's udder.

The hot iron is widely used for disbudding as it enables kids to be treated successfully when a fortnight old. A special iron or converted soldering iron is used in which the copper portion is circular in shape with a cup-like depression in the centre. It is heated to a bright cherry-red and held over the bud for five seconds and lightly rotated. It causes very little pain as most of the tissues involved are insensitive.

CARE OF THE FEET

Goats are active animals used to leaping about on stony ground. Their hooves grow rapidly and when kept housed or only allowed to exercise on soft ground, the hard wall of the hoof often grows long and turns under the sole. Feet should be regularly trimmed with a sharp knife and the wall pared down level with the sole.

MILKING

Like dairy cows, goats should be milked at regular intervals. Heavy producers are often milked three times a day, but most does will be
milked twice daily. Milking should be carried out as nearly as possible at 12-hourly intervals.

As when milking cows, the aim should be to obtain a free and regular “let-down” of milk. The use of a soft cloth dipped in hot water, wrung out, and then used to wipe the udder and teats makes for clean milking and stimulates the “letting-down” of the milk.

The udder should then be emptied quickly before the stimulus fades. Do not tug at the teats, rather lift the hand and teat slightly upward before squeezing and allowing the hands to come down to, but not below, the normal milking level. When milk ceases to flow freely, massage and press the udder then strip rapidly but gently with one or two downward movements of the thumbs and forefingers.

Goats are usually milked from the off-side, as when hand-milking cows, but some people milk from the rear—a practice which seems to have little to recommend it.

Be gentle, for a goat has a much thinner skin than a cow and the udder soon becomes tender; milk regularly for this helps to maintain production, and be speedy for this encourages higher yields by emptying the udder effectively without causing discomfort.

Where several goats are in yield, the animals are often trained to walk up on to a milking stand—a platform about 18 inches from the ground. This is sometimes fitted with a miniature ball to hold the animal during milking.

BUYING A GOAT
At this stage it may be advisable to sound a note of warning. Don’t expect to buy a pedigreed milch goat for a song. You will have to pay anything from 45 guineas upward for a reasonably good pure-bred doe—and the seller will not be guilty of profiteering.

The chances are that he has paid high prices in the Eastern States for his breeding stock and then had to pay costly freight charges to get the animals over here.

The cost of buying and maintaining a stud buck, the expense of feeding the does throughout the gestation period, a few veterinary fees, insurance premiums and other incidentals, and the cost of keeping the kids to the mating age—all these add up to a high figure.

Remember too, that only about half the kids will be does, and that there is little demand for bucks except from breeders.

On the other hand, there are many good “scrub” goats which, when mated to pedigree bucks, will throw useful kids. A few generations of “grading up” with stud bucks will produce animals indistinguishable from pure-bred stock. A good half-bred goat would probably meet the requirements of most households at a reasonable price.

There are several inexpensive books on goat-keeping available from booksellers in this State. Two which can be recommended are, “The Modern Dairy Goat” by Joan and Harry Shields (Price 9s.) and “Modern Dairy Goats” by M. Douglas Gordon (Price 8s.).

Both these are written for English conditions but contain much useful information that is equally applicable to Australia.