

## **BOER GOATS**

The Boer Goat is a native South African breed. It was first introduced into the UK in 1987 following several importations from Europe. The British Boer Goat Society was formed soon after. Since then numbers have grown. Progress was relatively slow at first as the imported goats were bred with other breeds of goats and back crossed to the Boer and graded up to 100% Boers. Foot and Mouth Disease hit the UK in 2001 and numbers of Boer goats stalled or even diminished at that time as movement restrictions made breeding and selling virtually impossible. In approximately 2007 there were further imports of significant numbers of live animals from Canada, followed by others from The Netherlands and Germany. More recently, from 2012 onwards, there have been further significant importations of Boer goat embryos from Australia and the breed has seen numbers of purebred animals steadily grow.

Boer goats are the only pedigree breed of meat goats in the UK. As a breed they are characteristically short-legged stocky animals, that grow quickly and are broad with good muscling. Boer goats can breed virtually all year round. The only time the bucks quieten down and become clean is during April, May and June! This means it is possible for does to be mated and kid 3 times in 2 years, and also means Goat meat can become available all year round and not necessarily be only seasonally available.



Boer goats have particularly good muscling on their back ends!

Boer goats are docile in nature. They are naturally horned, although some breeders chose to disbud them for management reasons. A Traditional Boer Goat has a white body and a red head with or without a white blaze. There are also Red Boer Goats which are all brown/red in colour due to a double recessive gene, hence they are far less common. Only when two goats mate that both carry the red gene is it possible to get a red kid. Often the red gene is masked by the more dominant white (traditional) gene. Boer goats grow quickly but only really reach their full adult weight at 3 years old. Mature bucks can weigh 120-150Kg. Mature does can weigh 80-100Kg. Boer goats have thick coats in winter and are more “waterproof” than dairy goats so are harder when living outside.



Traditional Boers



Red Boers

Apart from being bred for meat, a Boer goat is also an excellent terminal sire. Using a Boer goat buck on other breeds of goat produces meat kids with improved meatier carcasses. Also, the cross bred kids grow very fast thanks in part to the hybrid vigour. Goat meat is a very lean red meat as goats do not put fat in the muscle but generally store it round organs etc. where it is easily removed. Goat meat is high in iron content and low in cholesterol so making it a healthy meat. Kid meat is generally relatively mild in flavour (cross between lamb and baby beef some say). Meat from older animals is darker and more gamey in flavour.



Goat carcass from 4-month-old crossbred kid

*British Boer Goats - Amongst the finest meat goats  
in the World*