

AKGA

The Kiko Meat Goat “Kiko Cornerstones” and Breed Guidelines.

July 2017

The Kiko Goat has proved itself as the most useful meat goat breed overall in the North America. To help the breed maintain its focus on being a balanced performer capable of maternal production and terminal sire duties, the AKGA offers the following guidelines for Kiko Goats to offer guidance to its members in their Kiko Goat breeding operations. As the original Kiko Breed Association, the welfare and success of the breed is a long term concern of all AKGA members.

To define “performance”, firstly we must define the ideals of “The Kiko Meat Goat”.

Once we clearly identify the ideals of the breed, only then can we hold our goats up to those ideals to assess their performance. We can then define the breed using those ideals and that will allow us to compare our goats to the ideal “Performance”.

The Kiko Goat:

The Kiko is more difficult to “define” than most breeds. As a breed, it is typically not shown and there is no breed standard. This is deliberate to allow for different “types” to adapt to the multiple environments across the United States. The Kiko is “A jack of all trades”. Famously a maternal breed but also used as a terminal sire. The primary expectations based on the breed are as follows:

Expected to “grow fast”

Expected to be “hardy”

Expected to be low maintenance

Expected to be productive does and effective sires

To help new breeders quickly understand the expectations placed upon the breed and offer guidance to current breeders in their production goals, the AKGA Breed Guide Lines were developed. A review of expectations placed on livestock which perform under appropriately minimal inputs in common commercial production environments was conducted.

During that review, several points arose. There was no need to “reinvent the wheel”. Other breeds from around the world offered insights for us to follow.

Many performance dog breeds offer insights, including Livestock Guardian Breeds. There are hundreds of “Landrace” Livestock Breeds which are regionally adapted and useful to the farmers of their areas. Performance Horses of all sorts have been bred across the world.

There are also some modern production focused (not “show”) livestock breeds. Many of these production focused breeds were founded by one breeder with a clear vision. They are breeds developed with terminal and maternal focus. There was strict adherence to culling standards. This led to a strong breed culture

For example, Katahdin Sheep.

A review of other breeds and their expectations also made it clear that defining performance expectations will keep a breed focused on performance. It is clear that “Pretty is as pretty does” in performance focused breeds. To achieve a sustainable breed in the long term, a breed needs a clear outline of performance expectations. Those expectations will help the breed move forward and keep numbers and data in perspective.

After the review, four main areas of focus were identified. These are called the “Kiko Cornerstones”. In outlining expectations under each “cornerstone”, a set of breed guidelines emerged.

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THE FOUR “KIKO CORNERSTONES” AND BREED GUIDELINES

Hardiness

Weight

Conformation

Doe Productivity

The points outlined after each “Cornerstone” are suggested goals for each breeder and the implementation of the culling necessary to achieve the goals are to be determined by each breeder in a manner in keeping with their own breeding practices.

1. Hardiness

A Kiko thrives and produces kids with minimum appropriate assistance in its environment

Minimal medical intervention

Minimal kidding assistance

Zero Mastitis

Zero Foot Scald

Zero “Hoof Rot”

2. Weight

Desirable Kiko Goats achieve maximum weaning weights compared with their peer group (with minimum appropriate inputs in their environment)

The two main weights that are encouraged for use in production assessments are:

1. Weaning weights compared to peers
2. "Yearling" or pre-breeding weights in peer group

Note – Body Condition Score evaluation under "Conformation"

3. Conformation

Note: There is no Kiko Breed "Standard"

Correct functional body structure and proportions are desired

Easy movement and structural soundness are considered valuable traits

High Body Capacity is desirable

Productive Longevity is desirable

Feed Efficiency is desirable

Good Body Condition Scores (3 plus on 1-5 scale) under appropriate minimal input conditions is expected.

Good BCS is necessary for Fertility, Prolificacy and a high degree of muscling.

4. Doe Productivity

Doe Fertility:

A mature does should conceive twins in the first cycle of exposure to a buck

Kiko does should twin in every year starting as a two year old

A single kid is acceptable when born in the dam's yearling year

A single in successive years, or twice in three years is a cull fault

Kiko does should demonstrate fast BCS recovery after weaning

A BCS of 3-plus should be maintained on a sufficient maintenance diet

Milk Production:

A kiko doe should have a well attached udder

An ideal udder should completely retract/shrink back to less than 4" long. Some minor allowance can be made for age.

All kiko does should have "1 x 1" teats (only one teat on each side of the udder)

Teats should be no longer than 2" and no wider than 1" when doe is lactating

At a minimum, the does which produce the lowest 10% of kid Weaning Weights should be removed annually from the doe herd to encourage improvement in the herd.

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The Four Kiko Cornerstones encourage balance

Many breeds fail to gain acceptance and fade away

Many breeds become unbalanced in their qualities

Most breeds are “minor” breeds and don’t fit in the market place

The Kiko Meat Goat has a large opportunity in the current market

Using the “Kiko Cornerstones”:

Covers all the essentials of production

Defines the breed

Keeps an emphasis on efficiency

It keeps life easier for the producer

The animals which are balanced in the “Kiko Cornerstone” traits will be desired by all buyers and add value by making both males and female replacements desirable from the Kiko Breed. This is because the guidelines are developed by using the ideals of meat goat producers to define the breed.

Definition of the Kiko Goat:

Using the “Kiko Cornerstones” of Hardiness, Weight, Conformation and Doe Productivity to define the breed gives the AKGA the following definition to offer to its members.

“The Kiko Meat Goat is a hardy and fast growing goat with good body condition, is a structurally sound goat and is capable of producing twin kids suitable for slaughter or replacement stock.”