

GOAT DOWN FOR PROFIT

MARKET INFORMATION FOR LIVESTOCK FARMERS IN KAZAKHSTAN, KYRGYZSTAN, AND TAJIKISTAN

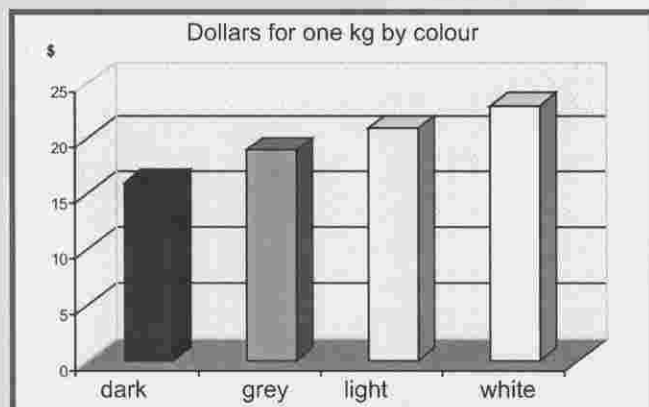
Your local goats can make money for you!



In the last few years, companies from other countries have been buying valuable down from local goats in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

PROCESSING

The cashmere has to be processed in factories before being made into sweaters and other garments. Most cashmere is exported unprocessed. Local traders in each country get orders from larger buyers in China, Mongolia or Iran. The traders buy raw cashmere from farmers and local markets and do some sorting before exporting.



Price for one kg of combed raw cashmere sold by Mongolian herders in 2003, by colour.

Down produced by local goats in winter is called **CASHMERE** and is very expensive on international markets.

In the Soviet Union period, other breeds of goats were introduced in Central Asia, for example Soviet Mohair, a type of angora goat. The fibre is not the same as cashmere; it is shiny and less fine, and has much lower prices internationally.



PRICES.

At present in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, there is no published market information on the prices that factories are offering for cashmere.

The same kind of local cashmere goats are found in Mongolia. Over the past few years, cashmere marketing and industry has developed with support from government, foreign investors and international projects. Mongolian livestock owners have been making most of their income from selling cashmere. In 2004, they sold raw combed cashmere on average for \$22 one kg.

Farmers in Kazakhstan mostly sold whole fleeces without combing, and got \$2-3 kg for fleeces or \$11-19 kg for combed down. In Kyrgyzstan, farmers got \$1-2 kg for fleeces and up to \$7 for combed down.



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Market information on cashmere



FARMERS SHOULD SUPPLY WHAT IS REQUIRED

Factories need cashmere with particular characteristics and will pay much more for better quality. Farmers must prepare raw cashmere to meet factory requirements.

➔ Cashmere should not have characteristics of angora fibre. Therefore farmers should not allow their angora goats to breed with local goats, or mix angora fibre with local goat down when selling.

➔ Farmers should comb the down in spring when goats are moulting. If the whole fleece is shorn and sold, farmers will get a lower price.

➔ One kg of whole fleece contains from 100-300 gm of down. Finer down is more in demand and more expensive. Fineness is measured by microns (1000 micron = 1 mm).

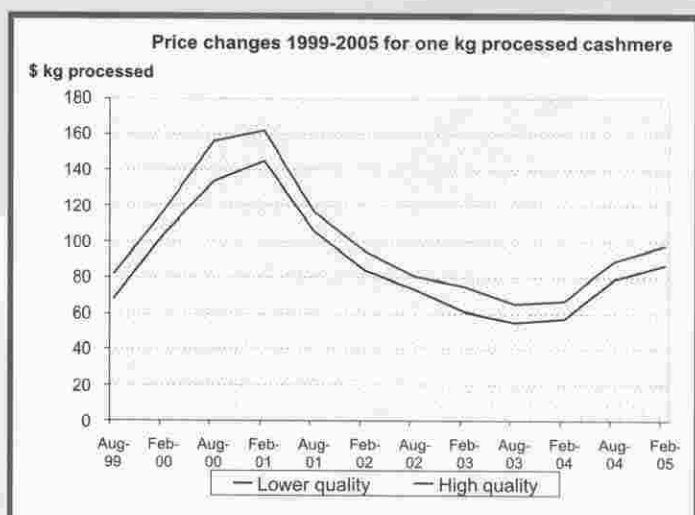
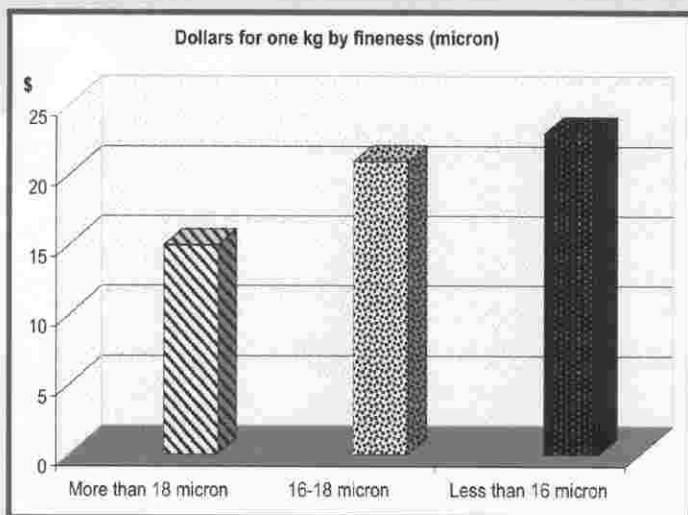
➔ The down length must be between 3-7 cm. If goats are sheared instead of combed, the down may be too short to be used by factories.

➔ Farmers need to sort the down into different colours, because each colour has a different price.

➔ Farmers should remove dirt and burrs from the down before selling. Dirty down gets lower prices.

These are the prices that Mongolian livestock owners got for raw combed cashmere in 2003. There are also different prices for different colours, but pure white and fine down has the best price.

Prices change every year, according to demand by factories. In 2004, prices increased and are expected to increase again in 2005. Traders often increase the prices offered to farmers as the buying season advances in spring, due to competition between traders to meet their orders from the factories.



Wool Record, Bradford UK



HOW CAN YOU GET BETTER PRICES?

- ➔ Understand the market
- ➔ Comb, not shear goats, and at the right time
- ➔ Don't breed local goats with Angora
- ➔ After combing, sort cashmere into different colours
- ➔ Make groups to sell your cashmere together in larger amounts to traders
- ➔ Arrange with a buyer in advance to check the quality and quantity of your groups' cashmere



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Market information on cashmere



Farmers who comb and sort the down should get higher prices from traders, who should get higher prices from factories.

HOW TO COMB GOATS



From the beginning of spring, goats moult their undercoat of down. You can see this emerging from under their top coat. This is a gradual process. Finer down comes off first, then the coarser down. You have to comb this off with a special comb see the photo and diagram.

Tie the goat by three legs, or ask somebody to hold it by the horns or tie its head to something strong. Then comb the down starting at the neck, continue on both sides of the back and stomach. The down from the bottom area is dirty and has to be kept separately. It takes 20 to 30 minutes to comb a goat and does not hurt them.

When all the down is combed from one goat, take out any large pieces of rubbish like twigs or manure, and put the down separately in a small bag. When you have finished combing all your goats, combine all the down of each colour: light brown, grey and white. Each colour will have a different price.



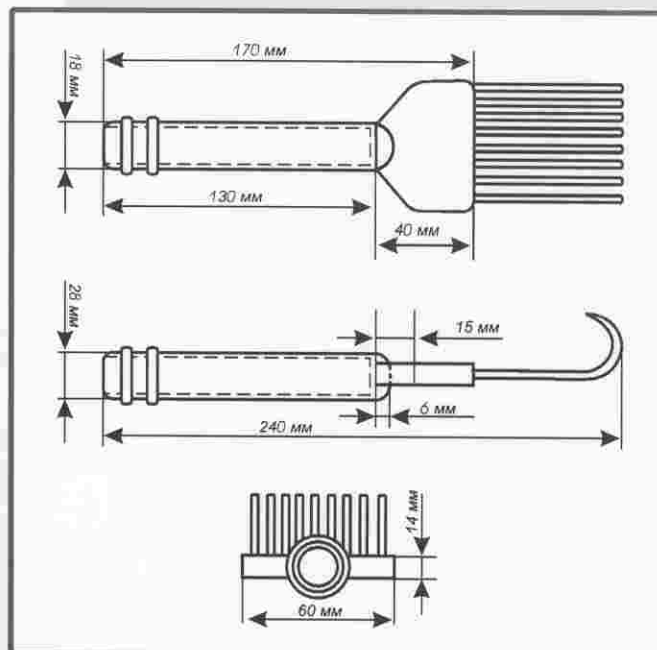
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Market information on cashmere



HOW TO LOOK AFTER GOATS OVER WINTER

Cashmere-producing goats are ordinary local goats and can be managed as normal, but they will benefit from getting some extra nutrition over winter. This could be barley grains, wheat or maize residues, clover, alfalfa, esparset, or locally-cut hay of good quality. Their winter sheds should be kept clean and dry, with adequate ventilation. If kids are born in winter or early spring when it's cold, they need to be kept warm.



Cashmere sweaters like this sell in Europe for \$400-\$500 or more

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