

Show Boer Goat: Tips on what to look for during selection

Estimated reading time: 7 minute(s)

One of the tools used in the selection of show Boer goats is visual appraisal. Which refers to the **physical observation** and making a meaningful decision as a result of having the requisite knowledge and skills to select the most correct animals in accordance with the race standards (Malan, 2011).

The name **Boer goat** (*Capra aegagrus hircus*) derives from the Dutch word “boer” meaning farmer and was **used to distinguish the native goats from the Angora goats**. Boer goats were developed in the 1950s by the interbreeding of ecotypes for optimal meat production by M. T. B. Jordann in Somerset East district of the *Eastern Cape, South African* (Campbell, 2003).

Boer goats are purely indigenous to Africa.

At this present day Boer goat appeared in the early 1900’s when ranchers in the *Eastern Cape Province* started selecting for a **goat that can be farmed for meat purpose**.

The improved **South African Boer goat is the [most prevalent breed of all goats across the world](#)** because of their high fertility, fecundity and capacity to breed in harsh conditions with minimal supplementation feeding (Webb and Pophiwa, 2017). Boer goats are *horned breed with lop ears, with a colour pattern of white and brown/red*. The mature Boer Goat bucks weighs between 110-135 kg and does between 90 and 100 kg.

Characteristics to look at when selecting a goat (Boer) for show

The does

1. The does must be judged starting from the head; which **should be feminine. Feminine Does indicate that they will be able to produce top-performing bucks.**
2. The front quarters should be strong and straight with the hooves not bent inside or outside.
3. The back of the does should be *long, straight and fury.*
4. **The tail should come out straight from the dock.**
5. The udder should be well attached with only two teats and separated.
6. Whereas **the rear legs should be strong.**

The buck

1. The Buck must be judged starting from the **head**; which **should be large and strong with a nose that is slightly curved.**
2. The horns should be *round, solid, dark in colour and curved backwards*; without injuring the goat when it lifts up its head or when leaning backwards.
3. **The eyes should be soft and brown in colour.**
4. The ears should be *broad, smooth and of medium size hanging downwards from the head.*
5. The permanent **teeth should be strong** and in their correct anatomical position.
6. The neck should have skin folds, which is more desirable in bucks than in does.
7. **The front legs should be of medium length** and in proportion to the depth of the body.

Show Boer Goat: Tips on what to look for during selection

8. The front and hind legs should be *strong and straight, with well-formed hooves that are dark in colour.*
9. The rump should be broad, long and should not be sloping too much.
10. The scrotal circumference should not be less than 25 cm and if there is a split present it should not be more than 5 cm.
11. **The tail must be straight**, growing out of the dock and swing to either side of the buck.
12. The skin under the tail should have a pigmentation of 75%.

Conclusion

The Daily management remains the key activity to have success. It involves a number of important tasks. Your goat depends on you for proper care. Make it a priority in your schedule to provide the daily nutrition and care needed to produce a champion.

References

Anonymous (1996). [Breeds of Livestock](#).

Malan S. (2011). S. A study of the SA Boer goats. Michelle Kruger. South Africa.

Campbell Q. P. (2003). [The origin and description of southern Africa's indigenous goats](#). Journal of Animal Science 4, 18-22.

Webb E. C., Pophiwa P., (2017). Goat meat production in resources-constrained environments and methods to improve quality and yield. 195-206. Unpublished.