

Dairy Goat Breed Comparison Chart

Breed	History	Size	Body Characteristics	Milk Production*	Potential Advantages	Potential Disadvantages
<p>Nigerian Dwarf</p> <p>Websites: www.andda.org www.ndga.org</p>	<p>Originated in West Africa. Recognized by the ADGA in 2005.</p>	<p>Miniature sized breed.</p> <p>Does: 17" – 22.5" Bucks 17" – 23.5" Weight: +/- 75 lbs.</p>	<p>Erect ears. Straight nose or dish shaped face. Short to medium hair. Can be any number of colors and patterns, often with moon spots. Blue eyes possible. Year round breeders</p>	<p>795 lbs. 6.4% butterfat 4.4% protein</p>	<p>Milk has high butterfat content. Goats are gentle and friendly. Excellent dual purpose (meat production). Year round breeding (not seasonal).</p>	<p>NDGs tend to be escape artists whose abilities are enhanced by their small size. Small teats can be hard for some people to hand-milk. Very prolific with early fertility.</p>
<p>Nubian</p> <p>Websites: www.i-n-b-a.org</p>	<p>Imported to the US in 1909.</p>	<p>Standard sized breed.</p> <p>Does: 20" and 135 lbs. minimum Bucks : 32" and 170 lbs. minimum</p>	<p>Roman nose. Pendulous ears extending 1" below the muzzle. Short, glossy coat. Can be any number of colors or patterns. Seasonal breeders.</p>	<p>2018 lbs. 4.9% butterfat 3.8% protein</p>	<p>Dual purpose milk and meat so can produce excellent cross breeds especially when paired with Boer goats. High butterfat and protein components, even if shorter lactations and less quantity than other breeds.</p>	<p>Nubians are LOUD! Their pendulous ears, which were an advantage when living in desert regions, often get wet in water buckets and have the potential to freeze in cold climates. These goats are incredible jumpers and clear fences with ease! Shorter lactations than other breeds.</p>
<p>LaMancha</p> <p>Websites: www.lamanchas.org</p>	<p>Developed in the 1930s in Oregon (US).</p>	<p>Standard sized breed.</p> <p>Does: 28" and 130 lbs. minimum Bucks: 30" and 160 lbs. minimum</p>	<p>Very little to no external ears. Short, glossy coat. Any color is acceptable. Seasonal breeders.</p>	<p>2298 lbs. 3.7% butterfat 3.2% protein</p>	<p>Calm. Good producers.</p>	<p>LaMancha are quirky and often act bossy. They're well known for pretending they cannot hear you.</p>
<p>Toggenburg</p> <p>Websites: nationaltoggclub.org</p>	<p>Oldest registered breed. Imported to the US in 1893 from Switzerland.</p>	<p>Standard sized breed.</p> <p>Does: 26" – 30" and 120 lbs. minimum Bucks: 28" – 33" and 150 lbs. minimum</p>	<p>Erect ears carried forward. Straight nose or dish shaped face are acceptable. Short to long hair, colored in shades of brown from tan to chocolate with light colored dorsal and facial stripes and light lower legs. Seasonal breeders.</p>	<p>2237 lbs. 3.1% butterfat 2.9% protein</p>	<p>Adaptable. Adventurous and inquisitive, though this could be a disadvantage also.</p>	<p>Toggs have exceptional agility. Their milk flavor is directly related to their diet. They seem to require quite a bit of copper, though some people overlook the faded coat indicating a need for copper because there is such a range of brown this goat can be.</p>

<p>Oberhasli</p> <p>Websites: www.oberhasli.us oberhasli.webs.com</p>	<p>Previously called Swiss Alpines and developed in Switzerland, Its named changed to Oberhasli in 1978. Conservation efforts: "At Risk"</p>	<p>Standard sized breed. Does: 28" – 32" and 120 lbs. minimum Bucks: 30" – 34 " and 150 lbs. minimum</p>	<p>Erect ears. Straight nose or dish shaped face are acceptable. Short haired. Color is bay (reddish brown) with black dorsal stripe, black facial stripes, and black lower legs. Does can also be solid black in coloration. Seasonal breeders.</p>	<p>1995 lbs. 3.7% butterfat 3.8% protein</p>	<p>Calm disposition. Quiet.</p>	<p>Propensity for parasites. Bold nature which can lead to competitiveness with herd-mates.</p>
<p>Alpine</p> <p>Websites: alpineinternationalclub.org</p>	<p>Originated in the French Alps and imported to the US in 1920.</p>	<p>Standard sized breed. Does: 30" and 135 lbs. minimum Bucks: 32" and 170 lbs. minimum</p>	<p>Erect ears. Straight nose. Short to medium length hair with widely accepted colors and patterns (white and Toggenburg coloration is discouraged). Seasonal breeders.</p>	<p>2715 lbs. 3.3% butterfat 2.9% protein</p>	<p>Quiet unless does are in heat. Smart and sociable. Winter hardy but adapted to many climates. Many will milk through without the need to be re-bred (3 years sometimes). We find them to be excellent mothers. Excellent milk production. They're versatile: show, milk, pack goats, and meat possibility.</p>	<p>Alpines are smart! Do not allow a goat kid in any manner you would not want a 200 pound adult acting.</p>
<p>Saanen</p> <p>Websites: nationalsaanenbreeders.org</p>	<p>Originated in Switzerland and arrived in the US in 1904.</p>	<p>Standard sized breed. Does: 30" and 135 lbs. minimum Bucks: 32" and 170 lbs. minimum</p>	<p>Erect ears. Straight nose or dish shaped face are acceptable. Short hair up to 1.5" in length. Light cream or white in color. Colored Saanen goats are now called Sables and are their own recognized breed within the ADGA. Seasonal breeders.</p>	<p>2702 lbs. 3.3% butterfat 2.9% protein</p>	<p>Quiet and calm. They're less likely to jump fences than many other breeds. Excellent milk production.</p>	<p>Saanens have a tendency to sunburn easily. Some references state that they are possibly not quite as hardy as other colored breeds.</p>

*Milk production averages are based on 2019 DHIR and used lactations ranging from 275 days to 305 days and not adjusted for the animals' age or number of kids birthed for that lactation. (A yearling goat is likely to produce less than a four year old. A goat with triplets is likely to produce more milk than one with a singleton.) Averages can be misleading and breed leader recordation by the American Dairy Goat Association shows what is possible for production with stellar genetics and management.

Bibliography

- 1.) Coleby, P. (2012) *Natural Goat Care*. Austin, Texas: Acres U.S.A.
- 2.) Belanger, J. & Thomson Bredesen, S. (2010) *Storey's Guide to Raising Dairy Goats*. North Adams, MA: Storey Publishing
- 3.) American Dairy Goat Association (2023) *ADGA Breed Standards*. Available at: <https://adga.org/breed-standards/> (Accessed: 7 Jan 2024)
- 4.) American Dairy Goat Association (2023) *Top Ten Breed Leaders*. Available at: <https://adga.org/top-ten-breed-leaders/> (Accessed: 7 Jan 2024)
- 5.) Pennsylvania State Extension (2024) *Dairy Goat Production*. Available at: <https://extension.psu.edu/dairy-goat-production> (Accessed: 7 Jan 2024)