

ANR FIELD SUCCESS STORY

(POW 2007-2011)

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Position/Title: Livestock Field Specialist

Administrative Area: Northwest

Fiscal Year Accomplished: July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008

POW Title and Number: 180 Other ANR Programs

Title of Success Story: Is the Meat Goat Enterprise Profitable & Sustainable?

Problem Statement: Meat goats sell for more money per pound than any other typical Midwestern livestock enterprise. This income is not sufficient to cover the entire cost of production in most cases. Record-keeping is such that total cost of production is not known or calculated. Without records it is difficult to determine if the meat goat enterprise is profitable or sustainable.

Programmatic Response: Producers have found that there are many “budgets” available for producers to ‘budget’ expenses and incomes to determine profitability. These “budgets” are not real useful, because producers have not gathered accurate information to fill in the blanks. “Accurate” information is different for every producer; so a uniform enterprise analysis program to track all income and expenses is needed.

Impact/Outcome: The Meat Goat Enterprise Analysis Program has been developed and utilized by five meat goat producers for the past year. The three greatest concern areas hindering the meat goat enterprise from being a more vibrant and sustainable food system are: First, producers find out that long term profitability and sustainability is difficult to maintain; the first three years seems to be the life span of many meat goat operations. Second, reliable breeding, feeding and health information is scarce or very hard to find. Third, profitable marketing opportunities are limited. The producer data indicated the four major leaks in profitability. These leaks are 1) high feed cost, 2) high miscellaneous costs, 3) low kidding percentage and 4) low income dollars. Also this year the doubling in feed cost has put an additional burden on meat goat producers to earn a profit. A spring 2008 survey indicates that 30-40 percent of the current meat goat operations are not going to continue their operations next year.

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