

The Other "Pygmy" Goats

By Maggie Leman

Our Pygmy bucks are the most willing breeders! They figure strongly in the creation of 2 distinctly different recognized breeds in the US, the Kinder goat and the Pygora goat. For either of these breeds to be registered with their own registry the sires (the Pygmy half) must be registered with the NPGA for all first generation stock.

You may wish to explore the possibility of marketing your nice bucklings to persons interested in producing these breeds.

The Kinder Goat



Kinders are the result of breeding a Pygmy buck to Nubian does for the first generation (F1) and then breeding those crossbreeds in subsequent generations to firmly establish the desired traits of the breed. The pygmy contributes its smaller size making it easier to handle and house, pygmies have excellent feed conversion, they produce a very high protein and butterfat milk, they bring heavier muscling resulting in a meatier carcass, they are very hardy in a wide variety of climates and are naturally disease and parasite resistant, they are prolific, multiple births are the norm, and they breed year round.

The first Kinders were produced as a solution to a sudden need. Pat Showalter of Zederkamm farm had a small herd of Nubian does, and one elderly Nubian buck.

The old buck died suddenly in his sleep just as it was time to breed the does in the fall of 1985. So what to do? She didn't like the idea of hauling her does off the farm to be bred, and Pat had a very willing pygmy goat buck. With a bit of help, the pygmy got the job done. Briar Rose was born first, then Liberty and Tia in the summer of 1986. So began the Kinder goat breed. The kids grew fast and were quite attractive. In 1987 when Liberty freshened with triplets, Pat discovered she was quite the little milker producing the "best milk she had ever tasted". Liberty freshened 5 more times with 2 sets of quintuplets, a set of sextuplets, a set of triplets and a set of twins. She earned a milking star on an official milk test (DHIA) meeting the same requirements required of standard dairy goats. The Kinder Goat Breeders Association was founded in 1988 in Snohomish, WA. Kinders were introduced to the dairy goat world with a cover article in the United Caprine News in January 1989. They have steadily grown in popularity ever since.

The Pygora Goat



Crossing a Pygmy goat buck to an Angora goat doe produces a first generation (F1) Pygora goat. The Pygora goat is a fiber producing goat. This breed was purposely created by Katherine Jorgensen in the early 1980's on the Navajo Indian Reservation in Arizona. She noticed the Navajo had both colored and white Angora goats they used to make yarn for their weaving and other textile crafts. Katherine wanted to create a fiber goat that had the gray grizzled fleece the color of agouti pygmy goats with the fleece characteristics of both breeds. The pygmy goat's soft undercoat resembles cashmere and sometimes is actually fine enough to be classified as true cashmere. The Angora produces a long silky fleece called mohair. Pygora fleece shares the characteristics of both being incredibly soft and often having silky ringlets. By 1986, fleeces were often 5 inches long, had nice crimp and appeared in pure white, silver and grey. Unlike Angora goats, whose fleece gets harsher as the goat gets older, the fleece of a

Pygora stays soft even as the goat ages. The Pygmy also brought a smaller size, a certain hardiness and pygmy personality.

Pygora fleece comes in 3 basic types:

Type "A": (Angora type) - A long, lustrous fiber up to 6 inches long, hanging in long, curly locks. The hair coat is not obvious on a type "A" animal. This fiber is very fine mohair. Some type "A", "F1" Pygoras are single coated. These animals must be shorn.

Type "B": (Blend type) - A blend of the Pygmy goat undercoat which is cashmere and the Angora mohair. It is between 3 and 6 inches long, and it has a nice crimp (curl). The second coat is usually obscured by the type "B" fleece that is 3 to 6 inches long. Type "B" can either be lustrous (shiny), or have a matte (dull) finish. This fleece type is the most common, and these goats may be shorn, combed, or plucked.

Type "C": (Cashmere type) - A very fine fiber, with no luster, and length of 1 to 3 inches. The hair coat looks very coarse in comparison to the two types above. Type "C" can be acceptable commercial cashmere. These goats may be shorn or combed.