A PROGRAMME FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A GOAT MILK INDUSTRY IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Members of the goat milk industry in Australia are not as organized as producers of cow milk. This is changing, at least in NSW, where attempts are being made to develop an organized industry capable of creating markets and reliably meeting the requirements of these markets. Outlines of programmes designed to assist the industry attain this goal are provided here.

Between 1985-87 several surveys and workshops were undertaken by officers of the Departments of Agriculture and Health in NSW. The following statistics relevant to the industry in NSW were obtained.

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<th>Table 1 Commercial producer numbers, total and average production and sales, and goat numbers identified by surveying the NSW goat milk industry. Statistics relate to the year ended November 1984.</th>
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<td>Number of producers 63 (114)</td>
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<td>Milk sales - total 0.53 (1.09) x 10^6</td>
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<td>(litres) - per producer 8413</td>
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<td>- per doe 311</td>
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Figures in parenthesis are estimates based on proportion of responses.

Distribution of commercial herds identified was: Sydney Metropolitan (16), Far North Coast (11), Central Tablelands (10) and Southern Tablelands (7), with the remaining 19 producers located in all other regions of the state, except in the Western Division. It is recognised that market size is limited by poor microbiological quality of goat milk (McMahon 1986), small milk volume, high price ($1.50-2.50/litre), seasonal supply variation (only 40% of production in autumn/winter) and a lack of knowledge of potential markets (Greenwood 1985).

Recently the Goat Industry Milk Marketing Association was formed in an attempt to introduce quality standards and undertake an education program on quality control.

Other issues identified as important for industry expansion include:

(i) development of a goat milk manufacturing sector.
(ii) establishment of codes of practice for dairy buildings and hygiene.
(iii) acceptance of quality standards and adherence to these standards.
(iv) drawing up of guidelines on matters such as 'dairy design and function', 'quality milk production', 'disease control' and 'husbandry of the dairy goat'.
(v) provision of an advisory service, involving an officer of the NSW Department of Agriculture, on all matters pertaining to goat milk production.
(vi) market feasibility studies.
(vii) initiation of research into aspects of goat husbandry and disease, product development and marketing.

It is apparent that demand exists for goat milk in NSW. The successful development of a goat milk industry in NSW and indeed Australia will, however, require support in the forms outlined above.


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