

The Week in the Meat Goat Markets

October was a good month for the meat goat industry: Selection 1 kid prices were up 4% from last October on the back of higher slaughter numbers. Selection 1 kids in San Angelo gained 1% to 2% year-on-year, but 80-lb. to 100-lbs. kids gained 10% from last October to an average \$106.30/cwt. Last week, Selection 1 kid prices were mixed in San Angelo, but significantly stronger in Lancaster. Reportedly, kid goat prices in Lancaster were up to \$20/head higher in some sales due to stronger demand. At 3,440 head, the numbers of goats sold in San Angelo dropped 24% from the previous week while numbers in Lancaster increased 20 head to 1,871 head. On average, demand will exceed supply and San Angelo kid prices are likely to continue to climb into December.

Recall that selling slaughter goats at auction is only one marketing option. What is important is that auction prices provide producers with a reference price and therefore hopefully a stronger bargaining position in completing sales. Some producers may find they can lock in higher prices through direct sales and collective sales by differentiating themselves through higher quality, consistency in supply, and increased numbers.

With imports accounting for about half the domestic market, U.S. producers have to differentiate themselves against international competitors as well. While imported meat can be higher-priced, my hunch is that there are other, non-price factors that make it attractive to importers. Goat meat imports (fresh, chilled and frozen) averaged 92 cents/lb. wholesale in 2002 and have risen steadily to an average \$1.67/lb. in 2006. By comparison, Selection 1 kid prices in San Angelo averaged \$1.11/lb. in 2006. This year, imported prices ranged from \$1.77/lb. in January, dipped down to \$1.53/lb. in June, and then rebounded to \$1.69/lb. in August. Unfortunately, publication of imported goat prices is two months behind.

Market Trends for Week Ending November 2, 2007

		Last Week	Percentage Change from Previous Week (%)	Percentage Change From the Same Week a Year Ago (%)
Number of Head Slaughtered, 10/20/07		11,852	-19	-9
San Angelo, TX Prices¹ (\$/cwt.), Selection 1				
Kids	20-40 Lbs.	103.00	-3	5
	40-60 Lbs.	103.50	1	-0.5
	60-80 Lbs.	104.50	2	1
	80-100 Lbs.	105.00	-3	11
Bucks	70-100 Lbs.	89.50	2	na
	100-150 Lbs.	79.50	11	1
	150-250 Lbs.	74.00	10	10
Does	50-80 Lbs.	39.50	7	-28
	80-130 Lbs.	41.50	1	-21
	130-180 Lbs.	27.50	0	-28
Lancaster, PA Prices (\$/head), Selection 1				
Kids	20-40 Lbs.	51.00	16	38
	40-60 Lbs.	77.00	33	48
	60-80 Lbs.	83.00	7	14
	80-100 Lbs.	98.00	10	na
Bucks	70-100 Lbs.	85.00	na	29
	100-150 Lbs.	111.00	26	3
	150-250 Lbs.	145.00	28	7
Does	50-80 Lbs.	na	na	na
	80-130 Lbs.	67.00	5	0
	130-180 Lbs.	72.00	11	na

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service (USDA/AMS); Julie Shiflett.

¹San Angelo, TX and Lancaster, PA are the two auction markets with goat sales exceeding 50,000 head in a year.

²na = Price not available.

Meat Goat Market Report Source

The goat prices published in this report are gathered from prices published by the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Agricultural Marketing Service Market New Reporters across the country visit select sheep and goat auctions weekly and monthly to record goat prices and goat volumes. Current and historical prices are available on AMS' website: www.ams.usda.gov.

Current market news reports for San Angelo, TX and Lancaster, PA, the two largest auctions, are available at the following links:

http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/SA_LS320.txt;

http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/LN_LS320.txt;

http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/LN_LS321.txt; and

http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/LN_LS322.txt.

Historical prices are available through AMS' Livestock & Grain Market News Portal at <http://marketnews.usda.gov/portal/lg>.

The number of goats slaughtered each week can be found at http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/SJ_LS711.txt, also a USDA/AMS report.