Study Guide for Judging Meat Goats
Keys Points for Judging Meat Goats

1. Evaluate meat goats first from the ground up and then from the rump (rear) forward.

2. Rank the traits for their importance.

3. Evaluate the most important traits first.

4. Eliminate any easy placings.

5. Place the class based on the volume of the important traits.
Ranking of Traits for Judging Meat Goats

1. Degree of muscling.
2. Soundness and structural correctness.
3. Degree of finish (fat cover).
5. Balance.
6. Style.
7. Freshness.
Evaluating Muscling
Evaluating Degree of Muscling

Degree of muscling in meat goats is best evaluated by considering:

1. Thickness through the center of the leg.

2. Width between rear feet when the goat stands and walks.

3. Width, depth, and length of the loin.
   ✓ Wide topped goats with a long hind saddle in relation to front saddle is desired.
Evaluating Degree of Muscling
– Center Leg Width –

Wide and Thick Muscled

Narrow and Thin Muscled
Evaluating Degree of Muscling
– Center Leg Width –

Thin

Average

Average

Thick
Evaluating Degree of Muscling

- Width of Loin -

Wide and Flat Over Top

Narrow and Steep Over Top
Evaluating Degree of Muscling
– Length of Loin –

★ Hind saddle should be at least as long as front saddle.
Evaluating Soundness/Structure

Soundness and structural correctness in meat goats is best evaluated by considering:

1. Feet and toes
2. Knees
3. Hocks
4. Pasterns
5. Levelness of top
Evaluating Soundness/Structure
– Feet and Toes –

Big Feet with Even Toes

Feet Turned Out (Uneven Toes)
Evaluating Soundness/Structure
– Pasterns –

Nice, Strong Pasterns

Weak Pasterns
Evaluating Soundness/Structure
– Knees –

Nice, Straight Knee

Buck-Kneed
Evaluating Soundness/Structure
– Hocks –

Nice Set to Hocks

Too Much Set to Hocks
Evaluating Soundness/Structure
– Levelness of Top –

Level Topped

Weak Topped
Evaluating Finish

■ Unique characteristics of meat goats:
  ✓ Goats deposit fat from the inside to the outside.
  ✓ Goats do not marble (do not deposit intramuscular fat).

■ Meat goats should be lean and trim.
  ✓ They should also have bloom.
  ✓ Lean meat goats that are unthrifty are discounted.
Evaluating Finish

Lean but Unthrifty
Evaluating Finish

Lean with Bloom
Evaluating Capacity or Volume

Capacity in meat goats refers to the combined volume of:

1. Body width.
   - Open rib shape and good base width desired.
2. Body depth.
   - Good depth desired.
   - Good length desired.
Evaluating Capacity or Volume
– Body Width –

Narrow Width (Flat-Ribbed)

Wide Based (Open-Ribbed)
Evaluating Capacity or Volume

– Body Depth –

Deep Bodied

Shallow Bodied
Evaluating Capacity or Volume
– Body Length –

Short Bodied

Long Bodied
Evaluating Balance
Evaluating Balance

Balance in meat goats refers to having the correct proportions of:

1. Body width.

2. Body depth.

3. Body length
Evaluating Capacity or Volume

Narrow Based

Short and Shallow-Bodied

Unbalanced Alert!!
Evaluating Capacity or Volume

- Nicely Balanced
- Excellent Depth and Length of Body
- Wide Based
Evaluating Style
Evaluating Style

Meat goats with style will exhibit the following:

1. A long, level top line.
2. A long neck that sits high on the shoulder.
3. A clean breast.
4. A smooth, neat shoulder that blends smoothly from neck to forerib.
Evaluating Style

Poor Style!!
(Weak-Topped)

Nice Style
(Level-Topped)
Evaluating Style

Poor Style!!
(Short, Thick Neck)

Nice Style
(Long, Clean Neck)
Evaluating Style

Poor Style!!
(Coarse Shoulder)

Nice Style
(Smooth Shoulder)
Evaluating Style

Excellent Style

- Smooth Shoulder Blending Nicely from Neck to Forerib
- Long, Level Top Line
- Long, Clean Neck Sitting High on the Shoulders
- Clean Breast
Evaluating Freshness
Evaluating Freshness

Freshness in meat goats refers to having:

1. An appearance of being healthy (not unthrifty).
2. A smooth, slick hair coat.
Evaluating Freshness

I’m Not Very Fresh
Evaluating Freshness

Fresh is My Middle Name
Final Tips for Judging Meat Goats

- Remember the important traits.
- Know what “correct” looks like.
- Look at lots of meat goats.
- Practice your judging skills.
You Are Ready To Judge Meat Goats