



## Goat farming

Goats are one of the oldest domesticated animal species, and have been raised for their milk, meat and skin worldwide since ancient times.

Goat milk and goat milk products are now on sale in most supermarkets and liquid milk sales represent the bulk of the market. Goats produce about 2% of the world's total annual milk supply.

There are over 300 distinct breeds of goat. In Europe and North America, distinct breeds of goats are kept for dairy and for meat production.

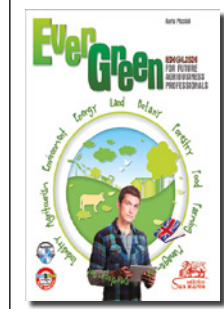
Goats are ruminants like dairy cows. They have a four-compartment stomach which is designed to digest large quantities of forages. Thanks to their small mouths and flexible lips, grazing goats can select the highly nutritious parts of plants. Each goat is able to consume up to 3 to 5% of its body weight in dry matter every day or even more if the forage is highly digestible. For this reason, however, goats must be pastured in an area with a large quantity of available vegetative forage. Nevertheless, goats may sometimes need supplemental feeding, especially if they are producing great amounts of milk or during the winter. They need a balanced diet consisting of roughage or grain, as well as protein, vitamins, minerals and clean water.

Dairy goats are generally pastured in summer

and may be stabled during the winter. Stabled goats may be kept in stalls, or in larger group pens.

Meat goats require minimum shelter compared to dairy goats. During warm weather, rain may cause no discomfort, but in colder temperatures, goats in general should not remain cold and wet for long periods.

A well-constructed shed, dry and open to the south side, can generally provide adequate protection.



### ACTIVITIES

1 Complete the table below with information from the text.

Why goats are raised	Breeds	Feeding	Housing