

# AUSTRALIAN ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR GOATS



This document forms part of the *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for the Welfare of Animals*.

This document will be reviewed yearly by the Goat Industry Council of Australia.

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## Version History

The following table details the published date and amendment details for this document.

Version	Date	Amendment details
V.01	July 2016	First published
V.02	May 2019	<p>Additional principle for goat welfare 'Innovative husbandry and housing systems which enhance goat welfare should be encouraged and applied to commercial farming as practical'.</p> <p>Amended G1.1 to include biosecurity practices.</p> <p>Amended G1.3 to include training.</p> <p>New guideline G3.1.1.</p> <p>Amended S10.1 from 'rapid loss of consciousness followed by death' to 'rapid death or rapid loss of consciousness followed by death'.</p> <p>Amended S10.3 to include 'which have no prospect of recovery must ensure that the goat is killed at the first opportunity'.</p> <p>Addition of 'surgical procedure' definition.</p>
V.03	July 2020	<p>Updated preface and introduction.</p> <p>Amended S5.1 from 'A person must handle goats in a reasonable manner' to 'A person must manage and handle goats in a manner that minimises pain, stress or injury to goats'.</p>
V.04	May 2026	<p>Updated preface and introduction with new section 'Background' added.</p> <p>New guideline G5.13 regarding the use of electric prodders.</p> <p>Mentions of 'dehorning' in Chapter 6 were removed and replaced with 'horn tipping' as the preferable procedure.</p> <p>Amendments made in Chapter 6 regarding the use of pain relief.</p> <p>Table 9.1 'Minimum space allowances' was updated.</p> <p>New Chapter 10 'Fibre' was added, with seven new guidelines for fibre enterprises.</p> <p>Amendments to G2.3, G2.11, S3.2, G3.2, G3.3, G3.5, G3.8, G3.12, G3.15, G3.17, G3.19, G3.20, S4.1, G4.1, G4.3, G4.4, G4.5, G4.11, G5.17, G6.19, G8.7, G9.8, G9.13, G9.14, G9.21, G9.26, G11.1 and G11.5.</p> <p>New guidelines G4.2, G5.13, G5.30, G6.2, G7.3, G8.8, G9.19 and G9.24.</p> <p>New standards S6.3, S6.5 and S6.7.</p> <p>Addition of glossary definitions for 'competent', 'person in charge' and 'risk to the welfare of goats'.</p> <p>Amendments to 'castration (castrate)' and 'dehorning' definitions.</p>



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# Preface

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The Goat Industry Council of Australia (GICA) is committed to leading the way in animal welfare, proactively setting and raising standards for the benefit of goats and producers. Guided by the strategic priorities of GICA's Strategic Plan 2023-2027, Animal Health Australia's (AHA) Strategic Plan 2025-2030, Meat and Livestock Australia's Strategic Plan 2025-30, and Red Meat Advisory Council's Red Meat 2030, GICA ensures that animal welfare remains a core value and a driver for sustainable, ethical production.

Recognising the importance of good welfare practices, GICA has consistently initiated and supported improvements that go beyond compliance. By prioritising goat health and welfare, the industry fosters responsible livestock management and long-term success for producers.



## Goat Industry Animal Welfare Policy/Statement

### Introduction

Goat Industry Council of Australia (GICA) develops collective goat industry policy by working with government, industry bodies, producers and other peak industry bodies. GICA is committed to the general health and welfare of Australia's entire goat herd. The welfare of a producer's goats affects the productivity, profitability and sustainability of the entire Australian goat and broader livestock industries.

GICA is committed to working with its members and all other stakeholders to continuously improve animal health and welfare outcomes. GICA wants Australian producers to have a united approach to goat welfare.

### Animal welfare

GICA accepts the agreed international definition of animal welfare from the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH):<sup>1</sup> *'the physical and mental state of an animal in relation to the conditions in which it lives and dies'*.

1. GICA's policy is informed by the Five Domains Model of animal welfare, which provides a means of assessing and managing the welfare of production animals to ensure a positive welfare state for each animal.

A brief description of the Five Domains is as follows:

- a) **nutrition** - appropriate consumption of water and nutritious foods to maintain health and minimise thirst and hunger;
- b) **environment** - where applicable, provide shade or shelter, good housing, good air quality and comfortable rest;
- c) **health** - prevent or rapidly diagnose and treat disease and injury so animals enjoy good health;
- d) **behaviour** - provide enough space, proper facilities, and appropriate company of the animal's own kind; and

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<sup>1</sup> World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), 2025. Terrestrial Animal Health Code, Chapter 7.1 Introduction to the recommendations for animal welfare, P1.

- e) **mental state** - promote safe conditions so animals feel safe and secure and avoid mental suffering.

## **Our commitment**

How does GICA demonstrate its commitment to animal welfare?

- GICA participates (where relevant) in the development of livestock welfare standards and guidelines which are being progressively enshrined in legislative instruments in each State and Territory.
- GICA endorses the standards and guidelines as the principal reference document for both minimum legal compliance and best practice for livestock road transport.
- GICA, together with Animal Health Australia developed the *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Goats*. The goat standards and guidelines apply to all goat farming enterprises in Australia and apply to all those responsible for the care and management of goats.
- GICA supports vet prescribed pain relief.
- GICA is actively working towards greater access and uptake of pain relief in the industry.
- All husbandry activities should be conducted to the highest possible welfare standards, and only be conducted when the lifelong benefit to the animal.
- GICA oversees the investment of industry levies in animal welfare research conducted by an RDC, with the aim of providing tools and knowledge to producers to help them improve the wellbeing of their goats and address issues of community concern.
- GICA supports the industry's Fit to Load Guide.
- GICA recognises the need for punitive action against any individual or organisation knowingly contravening a jurisdiction's animal-welfare legislation and/or the Australian Animal Welfare Standards.
- GICA encourages greater transparency with the community regarding goat welfare practices.
- GICA supports co-regulation of welfare standards to underpin the export market and enhance Australia's international reputation.

## **Implementation**

The GICA board endorse this Welfare Policy/Statement. Responsibility to meet the expectations of this statement lie with all who are involved in the Australian goat industry.

# Introduction

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## Background

For more than 40 years, Australian livestock welfare has been supported by Model Codes of Practice for the Welfare of Animals (Codes). The goat industry, led by GICA, has been at the forefront of these improvements. In 2015, GICA funded the development of the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Goats and continues to drive industry compliance with contemporary standards suited to Australian conditions and husbandry systems.

GICA's leadership in animal welfare is evident through initiatives such as forming a drafting group with AHA in 2025 to undertake a significant review of the Standards and Guidelines. This transparent and inclusive process is informed by current scientific literature and practice, aiming for consistency in goat welfare and aligning community values with best practice.

## Purpose

This document sets out the minimum standards for activities and environmental conditions necessary to maintain the welfare and good health of goats across all enterprise types in Australia.

GICA and the Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Goats Review Group have considered the full spectrum of goat enterprises, from extensively harvested rangeland goats to small-scale farming. It is expected that all individuals with responsibilities for keeping or managing goats will adhere to these Standards and Guidelines.

## Scope

The Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Goats apply to all goat farming enterprises in Australia, including extensive grazing, housed systems and individually owned goats. 'Goat' refers to any member of the species *Capra hircus*.

These Standards and Guidelines should be used in conjunction with other livestock requirements and relevant Commonwealth, state and territory legislation, including:

- Model Codes of Practice for the Welfare of Animals: The Goat, PISC/SCARM Report Series 32, CSIRO Publishing, 1991
- Model Codes of Practice for the Welfare of Animals: Livestock at Slaughtering Establishments, PISC/SCARM Report Series 79, CSIRO Publishing, 2002
- Industry Animal Welfare Standards for Livestock Processing Establishments Preparing Meat for Human Consumption, 2022
- Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Livestock at Saleyards and Depots, Edition One, Version One, 2018

- Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines — Land Transport of Livestock, 2012
- Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (ASEL), Version 3.3, 2023
- Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes, 8th edition, 2013

Where legislation requires a higher welfare standard, that standard will apply. Human safety is the primary concern—animal welfare procedures and monitoring must only occur if it is safe to do so. Welfare must be the first consideration unless there is a work health and safety requirement.

Cruelty and unacceptable practices can be prosecuted under cruelty and aggravated cruelty offence clauses in animal welfare legislation. For welfare management and disease control advice, consult state and territory agriculture departments, veterinarians, or private consultants.

These Standards and Guidelines focus on delivering positive animal welfare outcomes, recognising regional variation and aiming for best practice for every sector.

## **Interpretation**

GICA is at the forefront of setting proactive welfare standards for the goat industry, meeting Australian and international expectations. The Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Goats are designed for industry-wide adoption.

Unlike some regulated standard development processes, formal public consultative steps (such as a Regulatory Impact Statement) were not utilised for this document. The established methodology used in other livestock standards was followed.

Standards are written as if they were legal requirements, using ‘must’. They may form the basis for consistent legislation and enforcement across Australia, including for industry Quality Assurance (QA) schemes.

The four main decision-making principles for developing the standards are:

- desirable for livestock welfare
- feasible for future industry and government implementation
- important for the livestock-welfare regulatory framework
- will achieve the intended outcome for livestock welfare

Good biosecurity practices are essential and underpin this document. The standards are intended to be clear, essential and verifiable statements. However, not all issues are able to be well defined by scientific research to be quantified. These are presented in a box and numbered with the prefix ‘S’.

Guidelines recommend practices to achieve desirable livestock welfare outcomes, using 'should' and complementing the standards. Non-compliance with guidelines is not an offence when standards are adopted into law.

Definitions:

- A person: Anyone interacting directly with goats. Refers to more than one person (plural) and not just a specific person.
- A person in charge: Used where responsibility is shared, possibly including all levels of management and ownership.
- The person in charge: Relates to a single, specific person.

Some standards describe required welfare outcomes without prescribing exact actions. The 'risk to welfare of a goat' is the potential for a practice or procedure to cause pain, injury or distress. This includes sunburn, hypothermia, heat stress, dehydration, exhaustion, abortion, emaciation, injury, disease, distress or death. Risks are managed through reasonable actions.

A 'reasonable action' is an action completed by a person with relevant knowledge, skills and experience, regarded as acceptable by industry and community. Not all reasonable actions are described in this document.

'At the first reasonable opportunity' means within the timeframe expected by a reasonable person with the relevant knowledge, skills and experience, given the urgency of the situation.

## **Principles for goat welfare**

Goats in Australia are managed in varied environments, from extensive rangelands to intensive systems. The diversity of production systems is addressed through the interpretation of reasonable actions.

People in charge of goats are responsible for their welfare. To achieve improved welfare outcomes, those responsible must have the necessary knowledge, experience and skills to meet the requirements of the standards and minimise welfare risks.

Good animal husbandry is essential. Goats prefer to be with other goats in a herd. Good husbandry principles meeting physiological and behavioural needs include:

- adequate nutrition to sustain health and welfare
- access to sufficient water of suitable quality
- social contact with other goats
- sufficient space to stand, lie, stretch limbs and perform normal behaviour
- handling facilities, equipment and procedures that minimise stress

- procedures to minimise the risk of pain, injury or disease
- provision of appropriate treatment, including humane killing if necessary
- minimising predation risk
- precautions against extremes of weather and natural disasters
- selection and breeding of goats appropriate for environment and planned management
- assessment of husbandry procedures causing significant short-term pain against alternative long-term welfare strategies
- husbandry procedures for planned management conducted in ways that reduce impact and minimise welfare risks
- innovative husbandry and systems enhancing goat welfare should be encouraged and applied to commercial farming as practical.



# 1 Responsibilities

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## Objective

A person knows their responsibilities for goat welfare and is able to perform the required tasks to minimise the risk to the welfare of goats.

## Standards

S1.1 A person must take reasonable actions to ensure the welfare of goats under their care.
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## Guidelines

G1.1 Persons responsible for goats should have an appropriate staff induction program, periodically review existing practices, and be aware of new developments and training.

G1.2 Persons responsible for managing goats should:

- understand the standards and guidelines for goat welfare
- obtain knowledge of relevant government regulations related to goat keeping
- obtain and demonstrate knowledge of relevant animal welfare laws
- understand goat behaviour and use of low stress stock handling techniques
- plan and undertake actions for the enterprise to meet the welfare standards and address contingencies that may arise
- assess the quantity, quality, palatability and continuity of feed and water supply
- handling techniques which minimise stress, including appropriate drafting and using handling aids, facilities and other equipment appropriately
- undertake hygienic husbandry procedures in a manner that minimises the risks to goat welfare
- understand and follow any instructions provided by an authorised person for the administration of chemicals and drugs to goats
- identify distressed, weak, injured or diseased goats, and take appropriate action
- have knowledge of disease and biosecurity practices to prevent disease

- maintain appropriate records to comply with industry QA systems and NLIS
- humanely kill goats by appropriate methods or seek the assistance of someone who is capable, competent and equipped to kill them humanely.

G1.3 Agistment responsibilities should be communicated, documented and clearly understood by all parties involved.



## 2 Feed and water

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### Objective

Goats have access to feed and water to minimise the risk to their welfare.

### Standards

S2.1 A person in charge must ensure goats have reasonable access to adequate and appropriate feed and water.
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### Guidelines

- G2.1 Goats should have access to feed and water daily, except where reasonable management practices, such as shearing, preparation for sale, transport, slaughter and drenching, result in a longer period of water deprivation, to a maximum of 48 hours. Feed and water deprivation exceeding 48 hours should be avoided.
- G2.2 If sufficient feed and water cannot be provided to goats, options that should be considered are to relocate, agist, sell or humanely kill the goats before welfare is adversely affected.
- G2.3 Assessment of the quality and quantity of available feed, especially energy and protein content, and water should be undertaken to ensure growth rate, fibre, meat and milk production and stage of pregnancy requirements are met.
- G2.4 Goats grazing dry pastures or crop stubbles should be provided with appropriate energy and protein supplements as required.
- G2.5 Self feeders and watering points should be checked regularly and maintained.
- G2.6 Access by goats to contaminated and spoilt feed, toxic plants and harmful substances should be managed.
- G2.7 Goats should be gradually introduced to any change of diet to enable them to adapt and to prevent digestive problems, and should be closely monitored.
- G2.8 Goats should be closely monitored during transition to varying water quality (e.g. mineral content, salinity, etc.) and watering systems to ensure that they are drinking. Alternate water supplies should be provided if goats are observed not to be drinking.
- G2.9 A body condition or weighing system should be used as a guide for the monitoring and planned feeding of goats.

G2.10 Kids should be supplementary fed together with does (imprint feeding) before weaning, where appropriate for the production system, so that the kids learn to accept supplementary feed.

G2.11 Weaned kids should be provided with appropriate energy, protein and supplements to ensure good health outcomes.

G2.12 Goats held in traps should have access to feed and water daily.



### 3 Risk management of extreme weather, natural disasters, disease, injury and predation

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#### Objective

Goats are managed to minimise the impact of threats to their welfare, including extremes of weather, natural disasters, disease, injury and predation.

#### Standards

- S3.1 A person in charge must take reasonable actions to ensure the welfare of goats from threats, including extremes of weather, drought, fires, floods, disease, injury and predation.
- S3.2 A person in charge must ensure the inspection of goats at a level appropriate to the production system and the risks to the welfare of goats.
- S3.3 A person in charge must ensure appropriate treatment for sick, injured or diseased goats at the first reasonable opportunity.

#### Guidelines

##### Contingency planning, inspection and drought management

- G3.1 Contingency plans<sup>2</sup> should address events which could result in a potentially significant welfare impact on goats.
- G3.2 Contingency plans to minimise risks to goat welfare should include:
- emergency contact details
  - emergency contact details for the person responsible for resolving breakdown or mechanical failure affecting feed, water or ventilation
  - procedures for protection from adverse weather—specifically conditions that predispose goats to heat or cold stress (temperature extremes, wind, storm)
  - emergency management plans for extreme climate events - flood, fire and drought
  - biosecurity plan to minimise the risk of a disease outbreak
  - safe handling procedures to minimise animal injury

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<sup>2</sup> This can be part of the Farm Business Resilience Plan

- other issues specific to the enterprise or goats being managed.

G3.3 Inspection of goats should take into consideration:

- feed on offer
- water supply and quality
- age
- pregnancy status
- adverse weather conditions and natural disasters
- disease risk
- predation risk
- recent management procedures
- suitability of facilities including fencing and shelter.

G3.4 Goats that appear to be isolated from the herd, caught in structures or bogged should be inspected and appropriate action taken without delay.

G3.5 Contingency plans should be prepared in advance and then progressively implemented as required. Plans should be implemented before feed on offer is depleted and may include:

- relocation or agistment
- supplementary feeding and use of stock containment areas
- sale
- segregation according to risk
- early weaning
- humane killing.

G3.6 Goats being fed in a drought situation should be carefully observed. Weak goats and shy feeders may require segregation to ensure appropriate treatment and nutrition.

G3.7 Goats held in traps should be inspected daily.

### **Weather**

G3.8 Goats and kids should be provided with adequate shelter. In the absence of natural protection, consideration should be given to the provision of other forms of shelter.

G3.9 Goat handling should be minimised during extreme weather and particularly during extremely hot and cold weather.

G3.10 Shorn goats should be given protection during cold and windy conditions and sudden weather changes.

### **Predators**

G3.11 Predator control programs should be implemented where predation is a risk to the welfare of goats.

### **Disease and injury prevention**

G3.12 A biosecurity and welfare plan should be in place for all goats.

G3.13 Diseased and injured goats should be sufficiently separated from non-affected goats until the condition resolves, is treated or the goat humanely killed.

G3.14 Advice on goat disease prevention or treatment should be sought from qualified advisors. A health management plan should include biosecurity practices and be devised and implemented to protect goats from disease.

G3.15 Any medication or chemical treatment which does not bear specific instructions for treatment of goats should only be used on written veterinary advice which should include dose rate and treatment instructions and a withholding period.

G3.16 Treatments and vaccines should be administered in accordance with directions. Records of treatments should be kept.

G3.17 A herd health plan should be developed with a veterinarian, where possible. Managed goats should be vaccinated against relevant diseases.

G3.18 Internal and external parasites should be monitored and controlled.

G3.19 When emergency killing is necessary, it should be performed promptly and humanely.

G3.20 Dead goats should be appropriately disposed of as soon as possible in accordance with any requirements.

G3.21 Unexplained disease and deaths should be investigated to inform appropriate remedial and preventive actions.

## 4 Facilities and equipment

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### Objective

Facilities and equipment are appropriate to minimise the risk to the welfare of goats.

### Standards

S4.1 A person in charge must ensure the construction of facilities is fit for purpose and that equipment and facilities are maintained in good working order.

### Guidelines

G4.1 Facility construction or modification should account for:

- goat behaviour
- topography (location and drainage)
- flood and fire risk
- climate
- purpose/length of confinement
- space
- feed and water space requirements
- shade/shelter
- surface materials
- cleaning and waste disposal
- fence design suitable for goats and the type of goats being contained
- predators.

G4.2 Fire alarms and adequate firefighting equipment should be fitted and maintained in all indoor housing systems.

G4.3 Shelter should be provided to prevent stress.

G4.4 Floor surfaces should be nonslip, nonabrasive, free from protrusions and obstacles and free-draining. Concrete is only recommended for high-traffic areas.

- G4.5 Pen surfaces should be constructed and maintained to reduce the build-up of manure and urine and allow for effective cleaning, unless a deep litter system is used. In that case, fresh bedding should be added often enough to prevent animals from becoming soiled with manure and urine.
- G4.6 Pen surfaces should be maintained to minimise slipping and injury.
- G4.7 Facilities should be free from protrusions and obstacles that may cause injury.
- G4.8 All electrical fittings and attachments to mains voltage should be out of reach of goats, or protected from interference or damage by goats.
- G4.9 Dust should be minimised within yards and smaller holding paddocks.
- G4.10 Fencing and yard construction should prevent injury, entrapment and overcrowding.
- G4.11 Facilities and equipment for restraining goats should only be used:
- for the minimum time necessary
  - with the minimum restraint necessary and in a manner that optimises animal welfare and minimises risk to human safety.



# 5 Handling and husbandry

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## Objective

Handling and husbandry practices are appropriate and minimise the risk to the welfare of goats.

## Standards

S5.1	A person must manage and handle goats in a manner that minimises pain, stress or injury to goats.
S5.2	A person handling goats must not: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) lift goats off the ground by only one leg, or by the head, ears, horns, neck, tail or fibre unless in an emergency; or</li><li>2) throw or drop goats, except to land on their feet from a height of less than 1.5 metres; or</li><li>3) strike, punch or kick goats; or</li><li>4) drag goats that are not standing by only one leg, except in an emergency to allow safe handling, lifting, treatment or humane killing; or</li><li>5) drag goats by only the ears, horns, or tail; or</li><li>6) drag goats by mechanical means, except in an emergency, for the minimum distance to allow safe handling, lifting, treatment or humane killing.</li></ol>
S5.3	A person in charge must take reasonable action, where goats have not adapted to confinement within a reasonable period of time.
S5.4	A person in charge of a dog that habitually bites goats must ensure the dog is muzzled while working with goats.
S5.5	A person must consider the welfare of goats when using an electric prod, and must not use it: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) on genital, anal, or udder areas of goats; or</li><li>2) on facial areas, unless goat welfare is at risk; or</li><li>3) on goats less than three months old unless goat welfare is at risk; or</li><li>4) on goats that are unable to move away; or</li></ol>

- 5) on visibly pregnant goats; or
- 6) on visibly weak, injured or sick goats; or
- 7) in an unreasonable manner on goats.

S5.6 A person in charge must ensure that any tethered goats are able to exercise daily.

## **Guidelines**

### **Handling**

- G5.1 People handling goats should take advantage of the goats' natural herding behaviour during mustering, yarding, and other handling activities. They should also understand the flight zone and apply low-stress handling techniques.
- G5.2 Drafting goats into appropriate classes should be carried out at the earliest opportunity.
- G5.3 Goats should be grouped with others of the same class and, where possible, with others that they are already familiar with to minimise bullying and riding behaviour.
- G5.4 Goats subjected to persistent bullying should be removed from the herd.
- G5.5 Unnecessary goat handling should be avoided during extreme weather.
- G5.6 Goats should be caught and restrained with care. Horned goats may be restrained by holding the horn at its base, not at its tip, as this may cause the horn to break.
- G5.7 Tails should not be twisted when moving goats.
- G5.8 Goats should be returned to feed and water as soon as possible after handling.
- G5.9 Extra care should be taken when handling goats with special needs—for example, young kids, heavily pregnant does and lame goats.
- G5.10 Care should be taken when handling, catching, or restraining a segregated goat to minimise the risk of serious injury. Handling practices and facilities should be suitable to manage these risks effectively.
- G5.11 Goats should be restrained and isolated for the minimum time necessary. Goats isolated in a pen should be provided with a pen mate, unless isolated due to illness or quarantine, then they should be housed within sight and sound of other goats.

- G5.12 The use of dogs and handling aids should be limited to the minimum needed to complete the task.
- G5.13 A person in charge should only use an electric prodder (battery powered) when needed, and its use should be kept to a minimum. Ideally, the operator should understand goat behaviour and apply low-stress handling techniques to minimise the need for prodder use.
- G5.14 After mustering or droving, goats should be provided with suitable conditions and given time to settle down, mother up or find shelter before further handling takes place or before the onset of darkness.
- G5.15 During mustering, goats should be rested or allowed to walk slowly if they show signs of laboured breathing.
- G5.16 Overcrowding of goats in races, pens or yards should be avoided. Precautions should be taken to prevent smothering, especially for kids and weaners.

### **Tethering**

- G5.17 A person tethering goats should:
- ensure the tether is long enough to allow adequate exercise and grazing
  - ensure they have access to water
  - ensure the tether does not become entangled
  - ensure goats have adequate shelter
  - inspect the goats a minimum of once per day
  - not tether goats by the leg or hoof.
- G5.18 Tethered and confined goats should have enough space to be able to lie down, stretch, stand up and to exercise. They should have access to shelter, food and water and protection from predation.
- G5.19 Goats should not be permanently tethered by lengths less than 4 body lengths, unless selective veterinary therapy under shorter tether is prescribed.
- G5.20 Sheds or arks (mobile sheds) provided for tethered goats should be of sufficient size to allow the goat to stand up, turn around and lie down.
- G5.21 Collars, ropes, chains, swivels and similar materials used for tethering of goats should be constructed to avoid injury and pain.

### **Husbandry**

- G5.22 Temporary yards should be used where appropriate for husbandry procedures.

- G5.23 Spray dips for treatment of external parasites should be used in preference to plunge dipping.
- G5.24 Operators should adopt practices to manage risk from dipping and other forms of ectoparasite treatments, which include treatment failure, post-dipping infections and injury. If dipping goats, take into consideration:
- that adverse weather is not prevailing or predicted
  - that goats should not be overloaded in the dip
  - the use of disinfectant if dipped immediately after shearing.
- G5.25 Feet should be inspected as appropriate and any necessary action taken.
- G5.26 Hoof trimming should be performed if necessary to remove over-growth of the hoof.
- G5.27 Operators should follow best practices to manage the risks associated with drenching and other oral treatments, including treatment failure, toxicity, inhalation of medication, and injury. This applies to all treatment forms, such as suspensions, pastes, capsules, boluses, and bullets.
- G5.28 Manufacturer's and/or your veterinarian's instructions should be followed for husbandry procedures for goats, including earmarking, tattooing, tagging, drenching and vaccination and should be done in a way that minimises the risk of infection.
- G5.29 Goats fitted with collars, coats or rugs should be inspected regularly to ensure that they do not become tangled, cast or adversely affected by grass seeds.
- G5.30 If it is deemed necessary to remove extra teats, the procedure should be done expertly and hygienically as soon as they can be identified.

## 6 Castration, disbudding and horn tipping

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### Objective

Castration, disbudding and horn tipping are done only when necessary, and in a manner that minimises the risk to the welfare of goats, particularly pain and distress.

### Standards

- S6.1 A person performing castration, disbudding or horn tipping must have the relevant knowledge, experience and skills, or be under the direct supervision of a person who has the relevant knowledge, experience and skills.
- S6.2 A person must not castrate goats that are more than six months old, unless performed by a vet.
- S6.3 A person in charge must ensure the use of appropriate vet-prescribed pain relief and haemorrhage control when castrating goats.
- S6.4 A person in charge must ensure the use of appropriate tools and methods, including vet-prescribed pain relief, when disbudding kids.
- S6.5 A person in charge must ensure the use of appropriate tools and methods when horn tipping goats.
- S6.6 Disbudding by means of chemicals must not be performed on goats.
- S6.7 Dehorning goats must only be performed, when necessary, by a vet.

### Guidelines

- G6.1 Castration, disbudding and horn tipping should only be done where there are no alternatives and the procedure results in:
- benefits to life-time goat welfare
  - better herd management
  - reduced work (occupational) health and safety risk.
- G6.2 Castration and disbudding should be undertaken only on healthy kids.
- G6.3 Castration and disbudding and other marking procedures should be planned with consideration of the age of kids, weather, staff availability and facilities, including the use of temporary or permanent yards.
- G6.4 Castration and disbudding should not be undertaken during extreme weather.

- G6.5 Castration and disbudding should be done when fly activity is minimal, or in conjunction with appropriate preventive flystrike treatments.
- G6.6 Good hygiene practices should be practised in relation to facilities, hands, handling and instruments. Disinfectant should be used and changed frequently.
- G6.7 To minimise the risk of infection, procedures should be avoided in muddy or dusty yards, and during wet or humid weather.
- G6.8 Operators should adopt appropriate strategies to minimise the risk and impact of common infections, including vaccination of kids and/or their mothers.
- G6.9 Kids should be appropriately restrained and, when released, should land on their feet to avoid contact of the wound(s) with the ground.
- G6.10 Where kids are separated from their mothers for the procedure, this should be for the shortest possible time.
- G6.11 Haemorrhage should be minimised by selecting an appropriate method, preventing overheating of kids and allowing them to settle after mustering.
- G6.12 Goats should be inspected regularly and with minimal disturbance for signs of post-operative complications during the healing process, and appropriate action taken.
- G6.13 After placement in paddocks, kids should not be forcibly mustered and yarded until wounds are healed.

### **Castration**

- G6.14 Kids should be castrated ideally before they are 12 weeks old.
- G6.15 The person in charge should use the most appropriate tools and least painful method to castrate goats that is applicable to the production system.

### **Disbudding and horn tipping**

- G6.16 Preference should be given for breeding of naturally polled goats, taking into consideration the intersex/pseudohermaphrodite risks.
- G6.17 Kids should be disbudded before two weeks of age.
- G6.18 Hot-iron cautery should be used in preference to excision methods for disbudding kids.
- G6.19 Horn tipping should be done in preference to dehorning.
- G6.20 Horn tipping should only remove a solid, nonvascular portion of the horn, and result in a blunt horn end.

G6.21 Horn tipping or the removal of sharp horn points should be performed to minimise injury to other goats.



# 7 Breeding management

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## Objective

Breeding and management practices are appropriate and minimise the risk to the welfare of goats.

## Standards

- S7.1 A person performing artificial breeding procedures on goats must have the relevant knowledge, experience and skills, or be under the direct supervision of a person who has the relevant knowledge, experience and skills.
- S7.2 A person performing artificial breeding procedures on goats must not cause unreasonable pain, distress or injury to goats.
- S7.3 A person must be a veterinarian, or operating under veterinary supervision, to perform surgical embryo transfer and laparoscopic insemination of goats and the procedure must be done using appropriate sedation, analgesia and aseptic technique.
- S7.4 A person in charge must ensure kidding induction is only performed under veterinary advice.

## Guidelines

- G7.1 Persons responsible for breeding management should have an understanding of reproduction and behaviour of both the doe and the buck.
- G7.2 The timing and duration of joining should be managed to ensure kidding occurs when does are on a rising plane of nutrition, supporting strong doe and kid performance and providing the best opportunity to protect kids from adverse weather.

## Does and kidding

- G7.3 Ultrasound examination should be used to determine if does are pregnant or carrying multiples.
- G7.4 In the last 4–6 weeks of pregnancy, management practices should minimise stress on does to reduce stress-induced abortion/premature birth, pregnancy toxemia and other metabolic diseases.
- G7.5 Does kidding in yards should be segregated from the main herd as soon as possible.
- G7.6 Does that receive severe injuries during kidding or that are affected by a severe adverse outcome (prolapsed uterus, unable to deliver kid) should receive urgent treatment or be humanely killed without delay.

- G7.7 Kidding does should be placed in a sheltered paddock with quality feed, especially if there is a risk of extreme weather.
- G7.8 Kidding does should be monitored, with as little disturbance as possible.
- G7.9 Excessive force should not be used when assisting does to kid.
- G7.10 Predators should be specially targeted before, during and after kidding.

#### **Newborn kids**

- G7.11 Weak or orphaned kids including premature kids with very little chance of survival should be humanely killed without delay.
- G7.12 Hand-reared kids should be given suitable liquid feeds (milk or milk replacer) until the rumen has developed sufficiently to allow them to use solids as the sole feed source.
- G7.13 Every kid should receive colostrum as soon as possible after birth, preferably within the first six hours. If it is suspected that a kid has not received colostrum, then colostrum or a suitable substitute should be given to the kid within 24 hours of birth.
- G7.14 Kids should not be weaned until they have sufficient body reserves and adequate rumen development.

#### **Bucks**

- G7.15 Bucks should be checked at regular intervals for injuries and disease.

#### **Laparoscopic artificial insemination and embryo transfer**

- G7.16 Semen collection using an artificial vagina should be used in preference to electro-ejaculation.
- G7.17 Does should be handled and restrained for the shortest duration and as gently as possible. Does should spend the minimum amount of time in the inverted position.

## 8 Dairy management

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### Objective

Dairy goats are managed to minimise the risk to their welfare.

### Standards

- S8.1 A person in charge must ensure the daily inspection of lactating does.
- S8.2 A person in charge must implement appropriate actions to minimise the stress from adverse weather on lactating does.
- S8.3 A person in charge must ensure dairy goats that are kept on feed pads for extended periods have access to a well-drained area for resting.

### Guidelines

- G8.1 Drinking water should be accessible and available.
- G8.2 Milking machinery and equipment should be well maintained.
- G8.3 The milking technique should minimise the risk of discomfort, injury and disease.
- G8.4 Regular routines for milking should be established, to minimise or avoid distress.
- G8.5 Dairy goats in full lactation should not be left for more than 24 hours without relief by milking.
- G8.6 A lameness prevention and management plan should be implemented and should include practices for prevention, early detection and effective treatment.
- G8.7 A disease prevention and management plan should be implemented and should include practices for prevention, early detection and effective treatment.

## 9 Intensive goat production systems

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### Objective

Goats in intensive production systems are managed to minimise the risk to the welfare of goats.

### Standards

- S9.1 A person in charge must ensure that feed and water is available and accessible daily to goats in intensive production systems.
- S9.2 A person in charge must ensure the daily inspection of all goats in the intensive production system.
- S9.3 A person in charge must take reasonable action where goats have not adapted to an intensive production system.
- S9.4 A person in charge must not allow faeces and urine to accumulate to the stage that compromises the welfare of goats in an intensive production system.
- S9.5 A person in charge must ensure an indoor housing system for goats has effective ventilation.
- S9.6 A person in charge must ensure sufficient space to allow all goats to lie on their sternums at the same time in an intensive production system.
- S9.7 A person must not permanently house a goat in a single pen.

### Guidelines

#### Feed and water

- G9.1 Drinking equipment should be inspected regularly and maintained to ensure its correct operation, and that pipes, taps and ball valves are not blocked.
- G9.2 Water troughs should be cleaned as required to remove any contamination.
- G9.3 Feed troughs should be cleaned as required to remove faecal contamination and build-up of stale or spoiled feed and dust.
- G9.4 Trough space should be adequate for the feeding system to allow the daily intake of feed and water, and to minimise bullying and shy feeders.
- G9.5 Goats should be gradually introduced to any change of diet to enable them to adapt and to prevent digestive problems, and should be closely monitored.
- G9.6 Sufficient fibre should be provided in the diet to stimulate rumination.

## **Management**

G9.7 Managers of intensive systems should be aware of current information in intensive goat management and health, and have contact with professionals with relevant expertise.

G9.8 Goats should be grouped with others of the same class and where possible with others that they are already familiar with to minimise stress.

G9.9 During inspections particular attention should be given to:

- identifying signs of sickness, digestive conditions or injury
- assessing feed and water intake
- checking feed and water facilities
- identifying shy feeders
- identifying stereotypic behaviours early, such as repetitive motion, fibre biting and mouthing of railings.

G9.10 Special attention should be given to shy feeders. Management options for shy feeders may include:

- reducing pen density
- drafting goat to pens based on size of goats
- altering trough design to enhance feed access
- removing them from the system.

G9.11 Lighting in indoor systems should be adequate to allow inspection of all goats.

G9.12 Goats should not be housed in single pens for any longer than is necessary.

## **Disease prevention**

G9.13 A biosecurity and welfare plan should be in place.

G9.14 Prior to entry into an intensive system, goats should be inspected for disease and treated in accordance with the induction plan.

G9.15 Intensive systems should have hospital pens for sick or injured goats.

G9.16 Dead goats should be removed and appropriately disposed of as soon as possible.

## Pen density

G9.17 When determining space allowance per goat, consideration should be given to:

- environment
- group size
- age
- sex
- live weight
- pregnancy status
- presence of horns
- provision of feed and water
- behaviour of stock.

G9.18 Table 9.1 should be used as a guide for the minimum space allowances per goat in a pen or feedlot.

**Table 9.1 Minimum space allowances**

Single pens	Minimum space allowances per animal (m <sup>2</sup> )
Wether or dry doe	2.0
Pregnant doe or heavy wether	2.0
Buck	2.5
Kid	0.6
Doe with kid	2.5
Group pens	
2-4 goats	1.5
More than 4 goats	1
Outdoor feedlots	
Kids up to 41 kg	1.5
Adult goat	2.5
Heavy wether	2.0
Doe and kid(s)	3.0

Note: Miniature and pygmy goats may need less space depending on size.

## **Facilities and environment**

- G9.19 Where suitable, environmental enrichment objects, structures, other items, or access to outdoor areas where practical, should be added to allow the goats to interact and express natural behaviours.
- G9.20 Dust should be minimised within the intensive system.
- G9.21 Pen surfaces should be constructed and maintained to reduce the build-up of manure and urine and allow for effective cleaning, unless a deep litter system is used. In that case, fresh bedding should be added often enough to prevent animals from becoming soiled with manure and urine.
- G9.22 Pen surfaces should be maintained to minimise slipping and injury.
- G9.23 Shade and shelter should be provided to prevent heat and cold stress.
- G9.24 Indoor housing system buildings should ensure effective ventilation; if natural ventilation is not feasible, ventilation equipment should be provided.
- G9.25 All ventilation equipment should be checked to ensure it is fully operational.
- G9.26 Indoor housing systems with controlled or forced ventilation that rely on automatic equipment should be inspected daily, or have a system to warn of mechanical failure.
- G9.27 Natural or artificial light levels should be adequate for all goats housed in indoor systems and to allow inspection.

## **Contingency arrangements**

- G9.28 A contingency plan should be in place for the following:
- water supply interruption
  - feed supply interruption
  - disease outbreak
  - extreme weather conditions (heat and cold stress)
  - personal accident or injury
  - fire or flood
  - power failure

# 10 Fibre

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## Objective

Goats are managed to ensure fibre production practices minimise the risk to their welfare.

## Standards

S10.1 A person in charge must ensure goats that grow and retain long fleece are shorn at least annually.
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## Guidelines

### Fibre harvesting/shearing

- G10.1 Cuts should be minimised during shearing and crutching, and any severe cuts should be promptly treated.
- G10.2 When harvesting fibre, you should cease operations if severe weather conditions are present or forecasted, and suitable shelter is unavailable.
- G10.3 Shearing should be postponed if the weather is going to be of a high rain and wind chill factor. For angoras to be able to sustain this type of weather, they should be in a forward condition. Wind chill is a significant concern when temperatures drop sharply.
- G10.4 Newly shorn goats should be released into appropriate shelter or kept in the shed until adverse weather conditions have subsided.
- G10.5 Shelter should be provided by having very good shelter reserves, with a varied growth of overgrown grasses, low, medium and tall shrubs and trees to assist in the reduction of the wind speed; these also provide shelter from rain.
- G10.6 Wind breaks that can provide wind speed reduction from any angle in a paddock should be provided.
- G10.7 Shelter reserves should be prioritised over shedding for recently shorn goats, as they help maintain health, lower disease and foot problem risks, and improve livestock management.
- G10.8 Coats could be used and can be used on large numbers of goats. Goats should be checked daily to ensure the coats remain in place.
- G10.9 Extra feed and water should be provided for freshly shorn goats.

G10.10 Additional feed and watering points should be provided; feeding of grain during this time can assist in providing additional warmth, but goats should be adjusted to grain in advance of shearing. If goats are in a very good natural shelter reserve, they should be able to browse to maintain feed in their stomach to assist keeping warm.

G10.11 For the first six weeks after shearing, body condition, pregnancy, and seasonal weather conditions should be considered.

G10.12 Bucks that are sedated for shearing or crutching should be managed to prevent exposure, sunburn and smothering.

G10.13 Stud combs should not be relied on for necessary protection.

# 11 Humane killing

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## Objective

Where it is necessary to kill goats, it is done promptly, safely and humanely.

## Standards

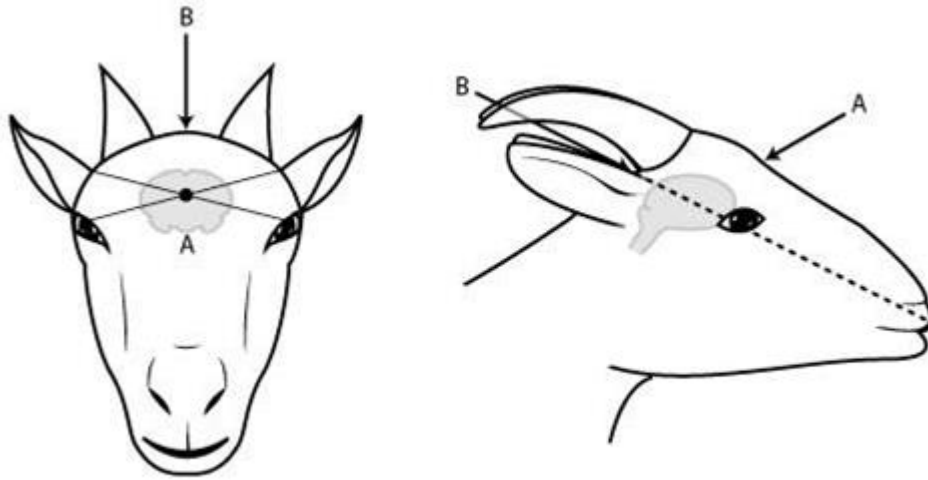
- S11.1 A person in charge must ensure killing methods for goats result in rapid death or rapid loss of consciousness followed by death while unconscious.
- S11.2 A person killing a goat must have the relevant knowledge, experience and skills to kill the goat humanely, or be under the direct supervision of a person who has the relevant knowledge, experience and skills, unless:
- 1) the goat is suffering and needs to be killed to prevent undue suffering; and
  - 2) there is an unreasonable delay until direct supervision by a person who has the relevant knowledge, experience and skills becomes available.
- S11.3 A person in charge of a goat suffering from severe distress, disease or injury that cannot be reasonably treated or which has no prospect of recovery must ensure that the goat is killed at the first opportunity.
- S11.4 A person killing goats must take reasonable actions to confirm the goat is dead.
- S11.5 A person killing a kid by a blow to the forehead must ensure that the kid is less than 24 hours old and only when there is no firearm, captive bolt or lethal injection reasonably available.
- S11.6 A person must only use bleeding-out by neck cut to kill a conscious goat when there is no firearm, captive bolt or lethal injection available.

## Guidelines

### Humane killing

- G11.1 The best methods of humane killing of goats (over six months old) and kids should be firearm (minimum 0.22 calibre rifle), captive bolt or lethal injection.
- G11.2 The poll method is the preferred method for killing goats (see Figure 11.1). The brainstem should be targeted, and it lies midway along an imaginary line drawn, between the base of the ears.

**Figure 11.1 Humane killing of goats using the poll position**



Note: (A) indicates the frontal method and (B) indicates the poll method. The dots indicate the point of aim and the arrows indicate the direction of aim for the positions.

The diagrams are representational and individual anatomical differences should be taken into account.

### **Confirming death in goat after humane killing**

G11.3 Three or more signs should be observed to determine whether the method used for humane killing has caused death.

Note:

Signs of death include:

- loss of consciousness and deliberate movement including eye movement
- absence of a corneal 'blink' reflex when the eyeball is touched
- maximum dilation of the pupil
- absence of rhythmic respiratory movements for at least five minutes.

### **Firearms**

Note:

Firearms energy specifications are as follows:

- The standard 0.22-long rifle cartridge means the use of any 0.22 rim-fire cartridge that produces in excess of 100 foot pounds of energy at the muzzle.

## **Captive bolt devices**

Note:

Captive bolt use on goat is recommended to be in the crown or poll positions, accompanied by appropriate restraint and followed by an effective procedure, if necessary, to ensure death.

The captive bolt stunner should be pressed firmly on the head before being discharged, and should be positioned as described in the approved positions for goat, which are the crown and poll positions. The temporal position is not an option.

For penetrating captive bolt stunners, the cartridge power should be appropriate to the class of goat. Non-penetrating captive bolt stunners are not recommended.

Operators should make sure that charges intended for use are appropriate for the class of goat.

Captive bolts should be regularly cleaned and maintained in optimal working condition, according to the manufacturer's instructions.

## **Stunning by blunt trauma to the head**

G11.4 A single blow should be delivered to the centre of the forehead and should only be used on kids that are less than 24 hours old.

## **Bleeding out (exsanguination)**

G11.5 Bleeding out of goats without pre-stunning using the neck cut should only be done as a last resort using a suitable knife to transect both carotid arteries and both jugular veins in a single, swift, and precise motion. The goat should be appropriately restrained to minimise stress and ensure the effectiveness of the procedure.

Note:

Bleeding out is done by cutting the main blood vessels in the neck (neck cut). The neck cut is the only method to be used where permitted in conscious goat. Where a goat is bled out, the spinal cord should not be severed, as this can lead to intense pain until loss of consciousness ensues.

# Glossary

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access to water	A reasonable opportunity for goat to be able to drink water of a suitable quality and quantity to maintain their hydration.
animal welfare	The physical and mental state of an animal in relation to the conditions in which it lives and dies.
artificial breeding procedures	Includes artificial insemination, oocyte collection, embryo transfer, semen collection including by artificial vagina or electro-ejaculation, and pregnancy diagnosis on goats.
bleeding out	Loss of blood caused by cutting the major blood vessels, in the underside of the neck.
castration (castrate)	The removal or disruption of the function of the testes by excision, or by constriction and/or crushing of testicular blood supply (using a rubber ring or burdizzo clamp).  Notes: 1. Immuno-castration is not included in this definition but is not a welfare concern. 2. For the purpose of this document, treatment of cryptorchidism is effectively considered to be surgical castration (and is performed by a vet).
class	A group of a livestock species defined by age, size, pregnancy/lactation status or sex. Lactating livestock with young at foot are considered as a single class.
competent	Means the ability to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, attitude and behaviour to undertake the requirements of these standards.  Supporting evidence of competency includes any of the following:  i) induction training  ii) records of on-the job training  iii) relevant experience  iv) recognised training and staff training registers  v) supervisor sign-off for specific tasks.

construction	Nature of facilities or equipment includes the design, layout, installation, assembly of the facilities and vehicles, and the materials of which they are made.
dehorning	The surgical removal of attached horns performed by a vet.
direct supervision	<p>A person (the supervised person) is acting under the direct <i>supervision</i> of another person (the supervisor) if the supervisor:</p> <p>(a) provides instructions and guidance to the supervised person in relation to the subject activity; and</p> <p>(b) oversees and evaluates the performance of the activity by the supervised person; and</p> <p>(c) is contactable by the supervised person; and</p> <p>(d) is supervising the person in accordance with paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) above; and</p> <p>(e) is on the same premises as the supervised person while the subject activity is being undertaken; and</p> <p>(f) is able to immediately render assistance to the supervised person, if required, at any time during which the subject activity is being undertaken.</p>
disbudding	Removal of an area of skin including the horn bud in a young kid prior to solid attachment of the horn bud to the skull.
drought	A severe feed and/or water shortage following prolonged periods of abnormally low rainfall not expected in the seasonal cycles.
emergency	Where animal welfare or human safety may otherwise be compromised.
extremes of weather	Temperature and climatic conditions (e.g. rain, hail, snow, wind, humidity and heat) that—individually or in combination—are likely to predispose goats to heat or cold stress.
facilities	Fences, yards, sheds, raceways, feed and water troughs, portable yards, ramps and equipment, including kid-marking cradles, dips, sprays and jetting races.

feed on offer	Is the amount of pasture in front of an animal at any one time, (measured in kilograms of dry matter per hectare (kg DM/ha)). It is a balance between pasture growth and the removal of pasture by grazing animals.
feed pad	Part of a farm that is used for regular supplementary feeding on an area of land that is either formed, surfaced or stocked at a rate that precludes vegetation. It is generally a confined area in which feed and/or water are provided.
goat	<i>Capra aegagrus hircus</i> .
habitually	Done or experienced regularly and repeatedly or by habit.
heat stress	When the response by animals to hot conditions above their thermo-neutral limit exceeds the ability of their behavioural, physiological or psychological coping mechanisms.
horn tipping	The removal of the sharp tip of a mature goat's horn, avoiding the live horn tissue that has blood and nerve supply.
inspection	The visual check of the health and welfare of goat on an individual or herd basis.
intensive production systems	An operation where goats are confined for a period longer than four weeks for the purposes of fibre, meat or milk production, and are dependent on the daily supply of feed and or water provided by human or mechanical means.  Does not include bucks housed for breeding, stud goats in preparation for showing, goats in quarantine or goats held in a containment area.
kid	Unweaned goat under six months old.
lie	Goats are able to rest on their sternums without restriction (or contact with another goat or structures).
lift (lifted, lifting)	Lifting off the ground. Handling of the head, neck, horns, ears, tail or fibre to control or steady an animal in a supported lift or other manoeuvre, is permitted where the major effort is whole body

support, and does not use one or a combination of the above body parts for the major effort.

managed goat	A goat that has been held for 10 days and/or has been subject to husbandry practices.
pain relief	The administration of drugs that reduce the intensity and duration of a pain response.
person in charge	<p>The person directly responsible for the animal's welfare, e.g. the owner, manager, employee, or transporter.</p> <p>Responsibility for duty of care for livestock welfare may extend to the person's employer.</p> <p>Note: At any one time there may be more than one person in charge.</p>
risk to the welfare of goats	The potential to cause pain, injury or distress to goats.
shy feeder	Goat in a feedlot that do not eat and drink sufficiently.
stud comb	Combs (e.g. stud, snow, cover, winter) which leave more wool/fibre on the animal, giving greater protection.
stun	To make an animal unconscious.
supervision	<p>A person (the supervised person) is acting under the <i>supervision</i> of another person (the supervisor) if the supervisor:</p> <p>(a) provides instructions and guidance to the supervised person in relation to the subject activity; and</p> <p>(b) oversees and evaluates the performance of the activity by the supervised person; and</p> <p>(c) is contactable by the supervised person.</p> <p>See 'direct supervision'.</p>
trap/trapping yard	An enclosure into which goats, sheep, cattle, or wild animals are driven.

tether or tethering	The securing of an animal to an anchor point to confine it to a desired area. It is not short term tying up or hobbling.
ventilation	Natural or mechanically induced air movement sufficient to provide oxygen and remove excessive heat load and noxious gases.
weaning	Liquid feed or mother's milk is no longer provided to the kid.
wether	A castrated male goat.



