

# GOATS IN ENGA PROVINCE

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## INTRODUCTION

Enga Province has a population of about 1000 goats. These are owned in groups of twos and threes by local villagers.

Up until May 1981 there was no regular supply of new goats into Enga to provide new blood for the local herds. Hence it was decided to set up a breeding herd at Wabag High School to try and meet the demand for goats in the Province.

In May 1981 seven goats were brought back from the Chimbu Province to form the basis of the herd. Fortunately some money was obtained from an aid organisation to allow more goats to be brought up from Lae and the Southern Highlands. The herd now consists of 20 breeding nannies and two billy goats.

## DAILY ROUTINE

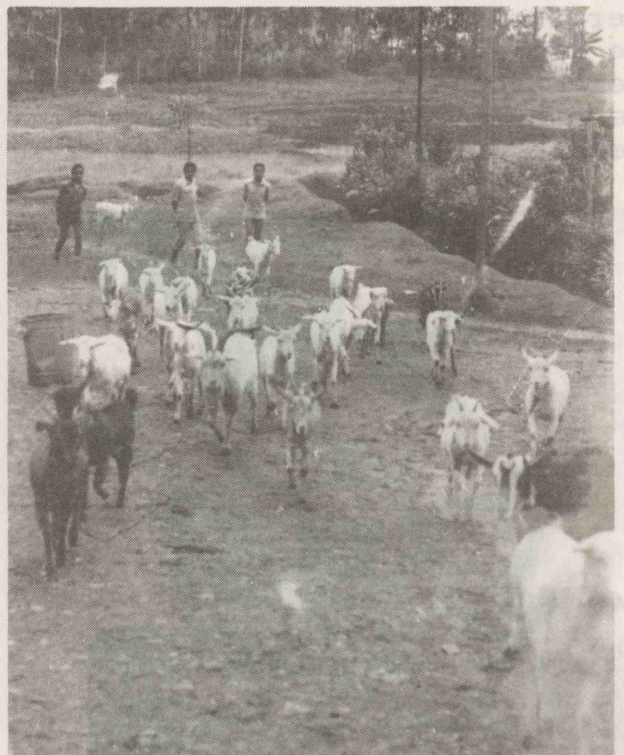
There are four boys in charge of the goats. These boys tether them out in the morning before school starts and bring them in again after school.

Over the Christmas vacation a goat paddock was put up by some of the boys. So now goats are only tethered out when the pasture in the paddock has been eaten down. This gives the pasture time to recover.

Groups of students from different agriculture classes take it in turns to clean out the house where the goats are kept at night. The manure is used on the school gardens. Grass is also cut and dried on top of the goat-house roof to be used as bedding.

## HOUSING

The goats are kept in the school piggery at night as there are plenty of spare pens not occupied by pigs. Each pen



Goats being brought out in the morning



has a mineral block to provide the goats with the necessary minerals and salt. This helps to prevent weak new-born kids and breeding problems.

A kidding pen has just been built. New-born kids with their mothers are put here at night. There is a kerosene fire at the side to heat the pen and dried grass is used as bedding. This helps to keep the new-born kids warm and dry and therefore reduces deaths.

#### HUSBANDRY

Once a month all the goats are drenched for worms by the boys and every two months dung samples are sent to the laboratory in Port Moresby for worm counts to be done. Some goats come into the herd with a nil worm count and are easily infected from other goats with worms. With this regular drenching the worm count of the herd as a whole is decreasing.

Every now and again the hooves are looked at, and trimmed where necessary. Softening of the hooves can be a problem when on wet ground. This is



*Drenching a nanny goat for worms*

overcome by walking the goats through a foot-bath containing a 5% Formol solution.

#### BREEDING

The young kids kept as herd replacements are mated when they have stopped growing at 11 months old. They will kid when they are 16 months old. Three months after kidding they will be mated again.

The boys help to keep breeding records of kidding dates, sex of the kids, the number of kids born and when nannie is mated again. This is made easier by the fact that all the goats have numbered ear tags.

To prevent inter-breeding the billy goat will be changed every year. One billy is hired out to local people so that they can introduce new blood into their herds.

So far most of the goats that have kidded have had twins; one even had triplets.

Problems have occurred in some cases with the mothers not having enough colostrum and milk.



*Hoof trimming*



This has mainly been with new goats brought in from areas with poor pasture. Bottle feeding has been tried in these cases but with very little success.

The weaners which are not kept as herd replacements are sold to local people at 5 months of age for K30.00.

## CONCLUSIONS

Since the herd started last year, 14 weaners, 17 nannies and one billy goat have been sold to the local people. One local group now has a herd of 9 goats, all provided from the

goat herd at the High School at Wabag.

Goats have proved to be easy animals for people to look after, and plenty of forage is available throughout Enga for them.

The pupils at the High School have shown great interest in the goats and several of them have purchased weaners from the school for their families. The boys in charge of the goats are gaining valuable experience in the management of a breeding herd. At the same time they are helping to provide their people with goats.