



MarketMaker Chicago Ethnic Markets

Goat

Evelyn Thompson
Gina Backes
Dar Knipe

Food preferences vary between different nationalities, cultures, religious and ethnic groups. Current demographic patterns in the United States favor increased consumption of goat meat. For producers interested in taking advantage of the potential for increased goat meat demand it is important to realize that “one size does not fit all”.¹

Although there was no presence of goat in the Italian or Greek markets, the Greeks will visit the nearest Halal store for their goat. **Halal** is an Arabic word meaning lawful or permitted. Halal products must be handled according to Islamic law and under Islamic authority.

Mexican and Latin America

Most Hispanics live in the north, central and southeastern part of Chicago. The total Hispanic population of Chicago stands around 550,000 as of 1998. Mexicans are the largest goat consumers of Latin Americans

The Mexican markets will have steamed goat in the hot deli section on the weekend. In addition, these stores will carry ribs (the whole half section with back bone included), whole legs, and meat with bones cut into pieces for stews. If goat is a favorite of the other ethnicities that shop there, they will have more variety in cuts and prepackaged meat available.

SE Asia (China, Vietnam, Thailand, etc.)

Chicago has about 125,000 people of Asian descent. They are mostly located in the southern downtown or in the northeastern part of the city. The Illinois Ethnic Coalition estimates 40,000 Korean Americans live in Chicago and another 60,000 in the suburbs.

Table 1: Carcass Preference by Ethnic Groups	
Ethnic Groups	Carcass Preferences
Hispanic	15-25 lbs. High quality milk fed goats
West Indies	Older goats less quality sometimes intact males
Chinese and Koreans	60-70 lbs. Quality meat goats
Italians	20-25 lbs. Young kids
Greeks	30-40 lbs. Kids
Jewish	20-40 lbs. High Quality kids

Source: **Markets for Meat Goats**, Angela McKenzie-Jakes, Florida A&M University

East Europe (Bosnian, Russian, Balkan and Poland) and Mediterranean (Italy and Greece)

The East European market for goat is minimal. Some of the mega-produce stores, which service Bosnians and Russians, carry large goat legs. Kids (baby goats) sold were from 16-25 pounds and the large goats were up to 60 pounds.

These markets generally do not carry goat meat, but once in a while there is goat cut into pieces with bone and meat in the Vietnamese markets.³

Ethnic Group	Meat Preparations
Hispanic	Head on, feet off, skinless
Caribbean and Africa	Headless carcass, feet on, skin singed
Asians	Headless carcass, feet off, skin snowy white which is scalded and scraped
Source: Markets for Meat Goats, Angela McKenzie-Jakes, Florida A&M University	

South Asia (Indian and Pakistani) and Middle Eastern stores that are Muslim

An estimated 400,00 Muslims live in the Chicago area. Muslims, primarily from south Asia and the Middle East, represent a considerable market for goat meat. The demand for goat meat by Muslims is often linked to religious holiday observance.² Muslims will purchase only Halal products.

The Pakistani and Muslim stores carry whole, half, and quarter goats; goat shoulders, ribs, chops, and legs; bones with meat cuts; boneless stew meat; and ground meat. These goats are 25-60 pounds and kids are 16-25 pounds. In addition, these stores will have the head, tongue, liver, brain and kidney displayed.

West Africa and Caribbean

There are few stores dedicated to the Caribbean. These stores will carry goat legs, rib cages and bones with meat cuts in pieces about 1 ½ “ big. The Caribbean will shop at other ethnic markets to obtain goat

meat.

African stores carry whole goat legs, quarters and shoulders, and bones with meat. African stores also carry goat with the skin left on, which is then smoked by using a blow torch.

United States Goat Meat Demand

In the United States, the interest in goat meat has increased over the past twenty years. The main impetus behind these activities has been the changing demographics of the United States. Despite the growth, goat numbers in the United states remained low relative to other hoofed stock in the country. Because of this, The United States has increased its importation of goat meat from Australia and New Zealand. Domestic goats, however,

will continue to enjoy a marketing advantage for those ethnic markets which prefer fresh goat meat or those that require live goats to be slaughtered according to specific cultural or religious custom.

Meat Type (85 g, roasted)	Energy Calories	Total Fat (g)	Saturated Fat (g)	Protein (g)	Iron (g)
Goat	122	2.58	.79	23	3.2
Beef	245	16.00	6.80	23	2.9
Pork	310	24.00	8.70	21	2.7
Lamb	235	16.00	7.30	22	1.4
Chicken	120	3.50	1.10	21	1.5
Source: Current Trends in Goat Production in the United States, David M. Sherman, DVM, MS, Diplomat, ACVIM Chief, Bureau of Animal Health Department of Food and Agriculture Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Boston, MA					

Ethnic and Health

According to the Agriculture Utilization Research Institute report, 26% of the consumers sampled are concerned about the price they pay for goat meat. Ethnic consumers (19%) are willing to pay more for fresh meat produced by domestic producers than frozen meat that is imported. Also, goat meat is very important for religious rituals. Additional demands for goat meat include Americans of European ancestry who are usually health conscious consumers. The meat is a healthier alternative to red meat. Goat is lower in fat and cholesterol compared to beef, pork, poultry and mutton ².

References

¹McKenzie-Jakes, A.. **Markets for Meat Goats:** Florida A&M University, <http://smallfarm.ifas.ufl.edu/Livestock/goats.htm>

²Sherman, D. M.. **Current Trends in Goat Production in the United States:** Bureau of Animal Health Department of Food and Agriculture Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Boston, MA.
http://www.neahi.org/nejah/articles/article_goatmeat.html

³Wuerch, D., Cameron, C. **Specialty Foods Market Profile:** Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada. <http://ats-sea.agr.ca/info/us/e2779.htm#Demographics%20of%20Chicago%20and%20Surrounding%20Counties>

Table 4: Major Ethnic Holidays With Goat Meat Specifications

Religion	Season	Meat Specification
Christian		
Christmas	Winter	Milk fed kids, difficult to find due to out of season breeding. Quality control not as important as Easter.
Easter	Spring	Milk fed kids with lighter colored meat, 3 months old or younger. Acceptable weights range from 20 to 50 lbs, 25 lbs considered optimum.
Palm Sunday	Spring	
Good Friday	Spring	
Hindu		
Navadurgara	Fall	Female goats are not acceptable
Jewish		
Passover	Spring	Milk fed kids
Hanukkah	Winter	
Rosh Hashanah	Fall	
Islamic		
Ramadan	Fall	Male and female goats with all of their milk teeth (not older than 12 months. Males can be whole or castrated. Overly fat kids are discriminated against. Optimum live weight is about 60 lbs.
Id Al Fitr	Fall	Yearling animals with one set of adult teeth
Id Al Adha	Winter	
Source: Markets for Meat Goats, Angela McKenzie-Jakes, Florida A&M University		