# CASH MIRROR

VOLUME ONE, ISSUE ONE — OCTOBER 1989


## REFLECTIONS

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the first edition of "CashMirror", a newsletter for the sole purpose of discussing Cashmere and the Cashmere industry.

It was decided to produce this newsletter after the inquiry file brimmed over the top of the cabinet with over 1,500 letters. What started out as a genuine attempt to answer each letter as carefully and as detailed as possible, turned out to be a huge exercise in data collection, letter writing, and postage. Not to say that wasn't fun - because it has been; It has just become more and more difficult to get my 10 years of research and knowledge, scrunched down to fit a twenty five cent mailing. Also, I was struck by the numbers of inquiries asking similar questions about Cashmere production and goat raising. The problem was simply how to answer the multitude of questions coming in. The solution? Hire staff that will be committed to produce a newsletter that promises to cover topics such as:

1) The developing Cashmere industry in the United States;
2) The Cashmere producing goat - it's care and handling;
3) Cashmere breeders throughout the United States and Australia;
4) Cashmere processors - Information, Marketing and Trends;
6) Advertising from breeders and processors;
7) Updates from other publications and equipment specialists;
8) Updates from Cascade Cashmere's fifteen USDA/SBIR test farms.
9) Cashmere Producers of America news updates.
10) Latest research from around the world.

And so a new staff member is hired and the first issue is complete; An Introduction to Cashmere - some answers to some basic questions. I hope you enjoy what you read, then take time to fill out the comment card and subscription form on the back page so that we can continue to bring you "CashMirror".

With Warmest Regards,

Judith Richardson

## THE CASHMERE QUESTION

The question arises time and again, "what is a cashmere goat or is there such an animal?"

When we look at an Angora goat or a Romney sheep there is a set of characteristics that tell us that the animal is of a particular breed. These characteristics are called "specific breed characteristics". And behind these breeds is a "Breed Standard" which is a basic outline describing all of the specific breed characteristics. Only with a breed standard can one have a registry. Unfortunately the cashmere goat does not qualify under these guidelines.

The definition of a cashmere goat is simply a goat that produces a commercially viable cashmere fleece. Commercially viable meaning that it produces both quality and quantity.

CASHMERE QUESTION *CONTINUED....*

The word cashmere is the English derivation of the name of the Himalayan state of Kashmir. The term has been used to describe the fine soft handling down undercoat which is produced from goats of that area. This fiber can be found on allied goats in the highlands of Central Asia, including Mongolia, Tibet, China, Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan.

The cashmere bearing goat thrives in the mountainous regions and grows a coat consisting of fairly long outer coat fibers, called guard hair, with an under coat of soft fine fiber which forms the finest cashmere for commerce.

The term cashmere can be regarded as a textile processing term with little relevance to the animal which produces it. All goats mentioned earlier are visibly different in appearance but have the common factor of growing a goat down fiber. That goat down fiber can be described as "the fine undercoat fibers produced by secondary follicles of the species Capra Hircus" If these fibers meet the standards and specifications accepted by the textile manufactures and processors of cashmere, we call them cashmere.

The finest grades of cashmere are produced in China, and have a grayish-white color. The highest grade of Chinese cashmere was obtained originally from a small district of Bejing. The next finest in Mongolia. The coarsest grades of cashmere are produced in Iran, Iraq, the Persian Gulf and India.

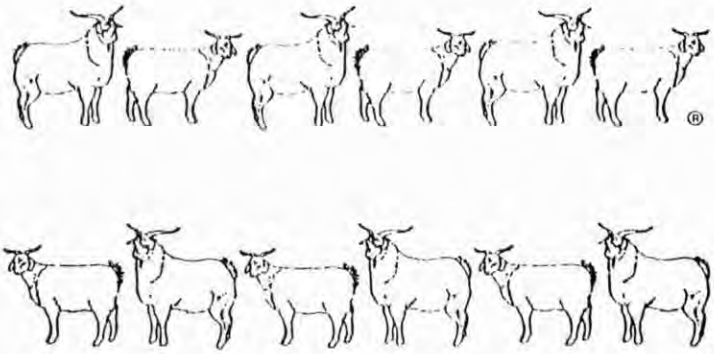
Chinese cashmere is the finest (in micron size) and has a mean diameter of 15 to 16 micron, with a fiber range from 8 to 24 micron. Iranian/Afghanastan fiber varies, but in general, the white Iranian cashmere has a mean micron of 19, whereas the colored fleece tend to run finer.

The subjective feature, handle, which sells cashmere, is determined by fiber diameter, stiffness, cortical cell differential, and the surface structure, the latter three being measured by various testing methods.

The use of these original sources of cashmere led to a natural sub-division in using diameter differences, where fine Chinese fiber was used for knitwear, the coarser Iranian/Afghanistan fiber was used for woven fabric, ie, up to 16.6 for knitwear and coarser up to 18.5 for the woven fabric. There is a 0.5 micron tolerance in these measurements. Micron alone, however, does not identify animal fibers--in this case Cashmere/cashgora/mohair. Objective diagnostic features, not subjective ones such as "eyeballing", need to be considered, when growers, and particularly the cashgora producers have been mislead into using micron only as the major feature for fiber identification.

When all or some of the various testing methods are applied, it becomes clear that the fine downy fibers from the cross-bred (cashgora or angora infusion) are not, in fact, cashmere, therefore they cannot be sold in the world under the latter label. Further as these Angora infused kids age, the fine downy product is no longer produced and the whole fleece coarsens towards the fine Mohair micron, about 24, but still contains kemp and guard hair. This gross coarsening does not occur with traditional cashmere flocks.

It should be mandatory, therefore, for anyone entering the fine animal fiber production to ensure that the animals bought and used do indeed, have the right genetic makeup.



DALTON'S NEW FLEXIBLE SUPERTAGS

REPRINTED FROM GOATKEEPERS MAGAZINE - AUSTRALIA

A brand new concept in tag design has been released in Australia. Already proving to be so successful in other parts of the world that it is predicted to outsell all other makes of eartags by 1990. The tag is called "The Supertag" and it is sure to attract a great deal of attention in the next twelve months and should be of enormous benefit to the farmer. But, can the new "Supertags" really be that good?

The company which designed these tags is Dalton Supplies which has for many years been renowned overseas for the development of tagging systems. From the early 1960's with the release of their patented Rotating tag system, Dalton Supplies have been constantly designing new tags with the hope of eventually producing the ultimate in tag design. "Now with the release of the new "Supertag" this has finally become a reality", stated the Australian General Manager, Mr. Daniel Brierley.

Dalton tags *continued*.....

Mr. Brierley said that in the past four years Dalton Supplies Australia has been struggling to compete with other eartag manufacturers already entrenched into the market. "However a large proportion of farmers are very unhappy and disappointed with performance of these other eartags and this should give Daltons' the opportunity to at least show some of the more informed farmers the benefits of using the new "Supertags" he said.

After having tried various U.S. manufactured tags, One prominent U.S. farmer has settled on the Dalton Tag. They have found, even with shipping costs, that they can buy tags with their logo on each tag cheaper than plain tags in the United States.

When asked exactly what makes these tags so special, Mr. Brierley said that "the new Dalton "Supertags" are made in Australia from a revolutionary polyurethene material which has been developed in Australia. This material, being ultra-violet stabilized, means that the new tags can retain their flexibility and bright colors for many years. The pin which is the attaching mechanism of the tag is made from a glass reinforced nylon material. It is solid and tough and has no hollow shaft which could cause the tag to deteriorate and drop off after a short time. This should indicate to farmers that we know what they are looking for in an eartag system and we now have the answer" he said.

According to Mr. Brierley the main advantage, however, is that the new Dalton tags hang freely and rotate a full 360 degrees to stay out of trouble. Not only does this avoid snagging, but once applied, air can easily circulate to quickly heal the wound and avoid necrosis. Certainly this must be of benefit to farmer as the applicator does not come into contact with the ear, and disease cannot be transmitted from one animal to to to another during tagging.

## FREE GOAT DISEASE BOOK

Fiber News is the world's only monthly magazine devoted to goat fibre, encompassing all fibre types including mohair, cashmere and cashgora. It is also the only magazine which takes an international overview of the fibre world.

Although mainly aimed at fibre production/husbandry the magazine also covers news from Australia, USA and UK and has correspondents in both the UK and USA. It carries regular columns which bring you the latest trends in fibre processing and fashion.

This month only we are offering a FREE A-Z OF GOAT DISEASES. This is the first book published which concentrates on goat diseases. The author, Dr. Max Merrall, is a world authority on goat health. Not only does the book help you identify symptoms of the diseases but it offers treatments and advice on prevention. It also carries a section on plants poisonous to goats with colour illustrations.

If you would like to keep in touch with fibre news from around the world and would like a FREE copy of the A-Z of Goat Diseases, fill in the form below and return with payment to : FIBRE NEWS, BOX 641, WHANGAREI, NEW ZEALAND.

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## REGISTRY VS. PRODUCTION RECORDS

There has been a lot of paid for advertising regarding REGISTERED cashmere goats and I feel this warrants discussion.

The primary purpose of an animal registry is to protect and guarantee a KNOWN GENE POOL. It not only protects that gene pool from "infiltration" of other blood (breeds) but it provides some semblance of a guarantee to the buyer of the animal that he is indeed buying the genetics that are being represented.

The very basics of a registry call for a breed standard. This would lead the uninformed to assume that cashmere is a BREED of goat. Unfortunately, cashmere goats, by an internationally recognized definition, do not meet this most basic of criteria. The definition of a cashmere goat is "A GOAT THAT PRODUCES A COMMERCIALLY VIABLE CASHMERE FLEECE". There are in the world, over 70 known breeds of Capra hircus and several of Capra genus that produce cashmere. The ones that produce a commercial fleece have been selected and culled based upon fleece parameters and production records.

With regards to cashmere in the US, we need be concerned with but two groups of goats. The remainder of the goats in the world are precluded from entry into the US by the USDA. These two groups are:

1. The domestic cashmere goat which basically falls into two categories

a. The so called Spanish meat goat which is a mix of various domestic goats of the US. It is said that about 5% of this population are cashmere producing.

b. We have in the US goats that can be equated to the Spanish meat goat in that they too are a mix of domesticated goats. The difference being that they were deliberately mixed and their genetics are known.Both of these groups have been crossed with the Australasian goat and are now referred to as "bred on" goats.

2. The Australasian goat (New Zealand and Australia) which have been imported or are the progeny of imports, stem from the feral herds of NZ and Australia. Because some of these goats are superior in fleece production, they have been imported. But the reality of the situation is that these animals do not come from a KNOWN gene pool. Therefore, they do not fit the basic criteria of a registry.

Registering cashmere goats in Australia is discouraged by serious breeders and the Australian Cashmere Growers Association for the same reasons a registry should be discouraged in this country. Cashmere goats, unlike pygmy or fainting goats, are not exotic pets. They have an intrinsic value with commercial application. Because of its restrictive nature, a registry will limit a gene pool and thus genetic improvements on the animal and its production. If people believe the current hype that they must buy registered goats in order to protect their investment then the result is that they will purchase inferior registered stock rather than animals based on superior production records. This will greatly inhibit the ability of a breeder from making genetic improvement within his flock. Part of the fun and challenge of cashmere is that anyone, given time and brains, can produce cashmere. Some of the highest producing goats in the US have never met an Australian and are half dairy goat. In this case a registry does not protect the buyer. It simply allows unscrupulous sellers to operate in the shadows of credibility.

I can think of nothing short of foot and mouth disease that could more quickly destroy the embryonic industry of cashmere production in the US than a registry. A cashmere goat produces cashmere or it is not a cashmere goat! What will happen when two registered cashmere goats produce an offspring that, instead of producing cashmere, produces cashgora? How will the buyer feel when he goes to sell the fleece and the processor refuses to buy it because it is not cashmere? Are the sellers and registry insured against ensuing lawsuits? There is only one set of criteria in the world for cashmere goats. If it LOOKS like cashmere and it FEELS (handle) like cashmere and it TESTS cashmere, then it IS CASHMERE! If it doesn't look, feel and test cashmere then it is NOT CASHMERE AND ALL THE REGISTRATION PAPERS IN THE WORLD AREN'T GOING TO MAKE IT INTO CASHMERE! Any less of a selection criteria does the animal, breeder and the industry a disservice.

There are many reputable people that are becoming cashmere producers in the US. They are visionary people who are working hard and honestly to produce quality cashmere and a reliable alternative agricultural industry for the farmers in America. These people will continue to do so knowing that any kind of livestock breeding takes long term commitment. This embryonic industry should be applauded and encouraged, not handicapped by a few who are intent on making quick money from a uninformed public while possessing no accountability to the industry.

Whatever kind of animal you buy, that animal is only as good as the integrity of the

breeder/seller. Unless you have done your homework, both on cashmere and the breeder/seller from whom you purchase your goats, you are going to quickly become part of the saying, "a fool and his money.....".

Judith Richardson is the recipient of a 1989, two year $540,000 USDA SBIR/private sector research grant entitled CASHMERE PRODUCTION: a revenue generating opportunity for rural America..

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Cozad, Ne 69130

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Bob Buchholz
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512-858-4371

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200 Larson Road
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Fax: 206-983-3676

Cashco Goats America
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303-776-9410

Cashking Cashmere Company
John and Margaret Banks
P.O. Box 333
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Australia

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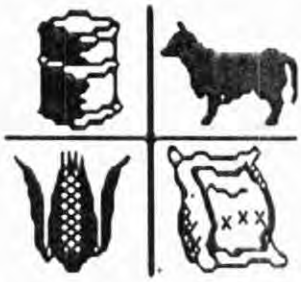


## CASHMERE TERMINOLOGY

BRED - ON: (a) a term used by breeders in Australia and the United States to denote the progeny of animals of feral origin which have been selected for down production

(b) a goat which has known ancestry on both sides for at least one generation and whose ancestors (as well as its own) characteristics are recorded.

BREEDER: A person who raises goats with the purpose of improving the stock, as opposed to a herder.

CROSSBREEDING: A term applied to the systematic mating of animals from different lines strains or breeds. The term Implies that the two parent populations have distinguishing features in performance or appearance or both.

DOWN: (a) mammalian hair fibers - the fibre produced by a secondary follicle and which has an external scale structure.

(b) a term used to describe the secondary coat grown by some goats, grown from the secondary follicles; thus, down - bearing goat.

FERAL: Goats which are running wild or unattended and showing no signs of ownership such as a tag or ear mark.

HANDLE: A term used by the textile trade to denote softness and feel of fiber or garment. A "good handle" refers to softness whereas a "poor handle" refers to harshness. The characteristics associated with this term are difficult to measure and it is often used as a subjective assessment.

LUSTER: (a) that property of a textile material by virtue of which the latter exhibits differences in intensity of light reflected from within a given area of material when the angles of illumination or viewing are changed.

(b) The brilliant, glossy appearance of mohair that is associated with its circular cell structure.

MICRON: (a) a millionth part of a meter; one thousandth part of a millimeter, i.e. 0.001 millimeter.

(b) the scale used to measure fibers.

SELECTIVE BREEDING: The systematic selection of animals with desired characteristics for mating, with the aim of improving or maintaining such characteristics in the herd. Selective breeders may use a range of techniques to aid selection including progeny testing and performance testing.

This type of breeding is sometimes referred to as corrective mating, when for example one characteristic such as mean fiber diameter(m.f.d.) is becoming too coarse. Those animals are mated to a male with fine down in an endeavor to produce progeny exhibiting a m.f.d between the parents.

SOFTNESS: Pleasantness or smoothness to touch, generally meaning a low micron count, The softer the touch the lower the count.

Wether: a castrated goat.

## OUR OWN TASSIE DEVIL

GREENMOUNT CASHMERES - AUSTRALIA

*Jenny Eddington, our Australian correspondent, and her husband Tim farm roughly one thousand acres in North Central Tasmania, the Island State of Australia.*

Tasmania has just blossomed into Spring, my favorite season. The first colour of Spring is always our National Emblem - the Wattle, or Mimosa; A favorite nibble with goats. This is followed by "Hosts of Golden Daffodils".

Spring also brings the busy season as we are lambing nearly 1000 Polworth ewes and 300 cashmere does. Our calves have already arrived. This year the weather has been kind with crisp frosts followed by gorgeous days. The does almost always kid mid morning and as we kid outside in the paddock, sunny mornings are a great help. Very few does require any assistance at the birth and so its a matter of recording the kids colour and sex and tagging the kids. Some kids especially from first kidders need supervision for the first drink. These young mothers sometimes have insufficient milk at kidding so I give a supplementary feed for three days. The does milk then comes in and things are fine.

I have two dairy does who will let any kid suckle and are worth their weight in gold for supplementary feeding. Every year I seem to end up with some bottle babies, so far this year I have two does, Blossom and Daffy - both twins that were rejected. I enjoy them so much as I do the pet lambs. I have two English Leicesters from the stud flock who are orphans.

The book work always seems to be there, recording new arrivals, and the joys and disappointments of the fleece tests from the Australian Wool Testing Authority which arrive back after testing. These tests are the final tool in the long process of selection for the type of animal we are breeding. They give us the micron and yield figures. Of course much selection has been done before these tests as only the animals we are really happy with are tested. Our 1988 born kids have performed exceptionally well making it all worth while. As usual there were a few animals who didn't perform as well as we had hoped and some surprises who came up with unexpectedly good figures.

Shearing is now finished in Tasmania, but I class fibre for some other producers so I am just finishing up the last few clips ready for sale to the marketing pool in Sydney. I also get lots of queries for assistance usually about goat health problems which gives me a good insight into the industry as I am always in touch with others.

Another breeder and I are busy with the marketing of goat meat and the season for that is just getting under way. In the next few weeks we will be doing the major promotions for the year.

As the leaves are turning golden for Fall with you, our fruit trees are blooming and spare minutes are spent planting the vegetable garden and trying to keep up with the weeds.

## RICHARDSON RECEIVES GRANT

Judith Richardson, the owner of Cascade Cashmere Company, has been researching cashmere for over ten years. In that time she has been cross breeding domestic goats and selecting for cashmere properties.

"What makes a goat a cashmere goat," says Richardson, "Is any goat that produces a commercially viable cashmere." And, not surprisingly, she has proved her theory in a recent phase I study for the USDA/SBIR grant program.

A year ago, the United States Department of Agriculture granted Richardson $50,000 to determine the economic feasibility of producing cashmere and to track the genetics of cashmere production with a small research herd. Since then, Judith has received an additional $540,000.00 from government and private sources to prove her phase I, hypothesis. "This is a great opportunity for many farmers", says Richardson, "The basic research methodology for Phase II, is the setting up of 15 test farms in the western United States and populating them with cashmere goats through carefully planned, and monitored embryo implants."

Her Silver Creek office will be the hub of the project where overall numbers and reports will be compiled. Doing that work, and much of the running of the project will be Toledo, Washington, resident Wendy Paulin, recently hired as project coordinator. Paulin announced her resignation as the Lewis County Economic Development Council's interim director and Business Development Specialist last month, in order to take the new job.

In all, 750 embryos flushed from Tasmanian cashmere does will be implanted in October and November, 1989, into a total of 350 goats at Cascade Cashmere Company's Silver Creek farm. After pregnancy testing, using real time ultrasound, the goats will then be delivered to the test farms. The resulting offspring will start the farmers's first herds of cashmere producing goats. From there, it will be the farmers responsibility to maintain the flock and work with the researchers to track their costs and revenues along with genetic data from their enterprise.

CASHMERE INTRODUCED TO AMERICA

Three years ago two women began a United States cashmere industry by being the first to import cashmere producing goats from Cashco Goats Australia.

Jill Darrah and Bronwyn Scheutze of Longmont Colorado first got the idea when Robin Kissel stayed with Bronwyns' family as a foreign exchange student in 1963. Since then, Robin Kissel and Leal Squire-Wilson went on to establish the Cashco herd in Australia and Bronwyn and Jill have recently established Cashco Goats America.

Importing goats is not for everyone says Jill Darrah, "It is a long, tedious and expensive process" "And, the goats condition suffers from it." added Bronwyn. After the goats recover from the stress of importation, they are used in two intensive breeding programs; one using Spanish goats, the other using top quality stud animals. "Selecting Spanish goats needs expertise due to the veriability in fleece type as well as conformatio. We have carefully selected 600 Spanish does for their cashmere production, "says Bronwyn, "but they have to meet the criteria for size, meat and hardiness too."

You've got to be willing to cull your flock carefully to get the best breeding stock. "We take a lot of time and care in our selection and the results have really paid off." said Jill. "Returns on the fleece have ranged up to $22.00 per head. And with Careful selcetive breeding we expect return averages to increase significantly."

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No responsibility will be taken for material while in transit or in this office, although it will receive maximum care.

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RECOMMENDED PUBLICATIONS

1) ANGORA GOATS THE NORTHERN WAY
Second Edition - Stony Lonesome Farm
Don and Sue Drummond
1451 Sisson Road
Freeport, Michigan 49325
Phone (616) 765-3056

2) FIBRE NEWS

The Official Journal of the Mohair and Cashmere Producers Association of New Zealand.

Business Office: 130 Maunu Road Postal
Address: Whangarei, New Zealand
P.O. Box 641
Phone/FAX (089) 480.335
Whangarei, New Zealand

Fiber News is published monthly by Capricorn Communications LTD. Advertising: Deadlines 20th of the month prior. Overseas Subscriptions: U.S. $59.00

3) GOATKEEPERS MAGAZINE

The Goatkeepers magazine is published by John and Margaret Banks,

Business Office: GOATKEEPERS MAGAZINE
P.O. Box 333
Forth, Tasmania 282861

Cashmere
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## Meeting & Conference

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**Forte Cashmere Co., Inc.**

**OR**

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There are presently no breed characteristics or standards reliably associated with the production of commercially saleable cashmere fiber that will permit such designation. CaPrA regards the use of either term as misleading, and reputable breeders who are members of CaPrA are pledged not to use either term.

Cashmere Producers of America, Inc.,
P.O. Box 1347
Dillon, MT 59725

CASCADE CASHMERE COMPANY

**Cashmere Goats - Semen - Embryos**

**NORTH AMERICA**
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I like the articles and format the way they are:_____yes_____No.

If no why?_____.

I would like to articles on_____included.

I would be interested in a column on working with my own cashmere_____
(spinning, knitting, and weaving)

I would like to see a column regarding care and maintenence of goats_____.

I would like to see a column from the fiber processors_____.

I would like to see a column on the shearing shed_____.

I would like you to feature a cashmere buck from a different breeder each month_____.

Other comments:_____.

_____.

CASH MIRROR
200 Larson Road
Silver Creek, Washington 98585

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