

# Potential for goat price boost

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DEVELOPING value-added goat meat products for the US market could help boost Australia's over-the-hooks goat price by up to \$2 a kilogram and break the commodity's boom or bust cycle.

Moving beyond the traditional six-way cut, with new goat meat products such as goat mince and pre-cooked meal options, could help to both increase and stabilise the farmgate price.

That's according to work done by Greenleaf Enterprises in conjunction with Thomas Foods USA, with funding from the Meat & Livestock Australia Donor Company.

The project looked at growing value and market share in North America for Australian goat meat producers and the resulting report found that selling a million goats, averaging 18kg dressed, at an additional \$2/kg OTH, would equate to an additional \$36 million per year for the producer.

Thomas Foods USA marketing and innovation vice-president Danielle Marta said the company was already offering frozen bone-in goat cubes in the market already in both two pound and 15lb boxes and recently



Goat meat is popular in a number of different cuisines. Picture supplied by Meat & Livestock Australia

fresh and frozen ground goat.

"For precooked goat, we are in the early stages of development...looking at a pulled/shredded leg offered as a Barbacoa/Birria-style sous vide meat," she said.

"We launched the goat cubes about two years ago and sales have continued to increase. We mainly sell to Costco - it's a 15lb designed

box and continues to perform exceptionally well.

"There seems to be significant market potential through additional retailers and channels.

"We are using census data to provide our customers with intel on key markets - with high access to Northern African, Asian, Caribbean and Muslim consumers."

Ms Marta said it was vital to develop new products and gain traction with new customers, with Thomas Foods looking at where consumers also have a pull for bison and other exotics meats.

"We would like to replicate the success of lamb, educate consumers that goat is a great source of protein and easily approachable, to build

awareness and incentivise trial," she said.

"It should be interesting to see how the ground goat performs as a value-added product, because it's similar to other grinds which are about 80 per cent of the meat category - consumers (and operators) can easily swap out for top trending recipes like meatballs, ta-

cos, burgers."

Thomas Foods USA is also exploring skin-on and burnt skin-on goat products.

The report identifies that the development of a ground goat product for sale in North America would require further research and supply chain innovation to implement hot boning during goat processing in Australia.

MLA food innovation program manger John Marten said the slaughter rate for goats in 2024 was 32pc up on last year.

"It's great that TFI came on board because they can start driving a very different marketing message around goat," he said.

"The beauty of goat is it's incredibly high in protein, incredibly low in cholesterol, it's low in fat and it's a free-range natural product that's free from GMOs, human growth promotants and antibiotics."

Mr Marten said while the project focused on consumers in North America, there were also big opportunities for goatmeat in the Middle East, Africa, Europe and Asia.

"This just gives us a bit more momentum to look at those further value-adding opportunities in those other markets as well," he said.