



## Types of Farm Records Used in Goat Farming and Their Importance

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Farm record-keeping is an essential component of scientific goat farming, contributing to efficient management, improved productivity, and economic sustainability. Systematic recording of farm activities provides reliable information for evaluating individual animal performance and making informed management decisions. The major types of farm records include animal identification, breeding, production, feeding, health, and financial records. Identification records facilitate tracking individual animals and maintaining pedigree information, while breeding records document mating, kidding, fertility, and reproductive performance. Production records help monitor body weight, growth rate, milk yield, and other economically important traits. Feeding records assist in monitoring feed consumption and expenditure, whereas health records document vaccination, deworming, treatment, and mortality. Financial records provide information on farm income, expenditure, assets, liabilities, and profitability. Regular maintenance and analysis of these records enable farmers to identify superior breeding animals, cull unproductive goats, optimize resource utilization, and reduce production costs. Therefore, a simple, accurate, and regularly updated record-keeping system is fundamental to profitable and sustainable goat farming.

**Keywords:** Goat farming; Farm records; Record-keeping; Production performance; Breeding management; Farm profitability.

### Introduction

Goats have been associated with human civilization for more than 10,000 years and are among the earliest domesticated animals. They are considered highly valuable livestock because of their good productivity, ease of management, and adaptability to diverse environmental conditions. Goats generally do not compete with humans for food and are widely reared throughout the world because of their adaptability to different climates and feed resources. Like other livestock species, goat farming provides substantial socioeconomic benefits to farmers. Low initial investment, high reproductive efficiency, easy marketing, and social acceptance of goat products are among the major advantages of this enterprise. According to the 2019 Livestock Census, the goat population has increased at a relatively high rate among livestock species. The 20th Livestock Census reported a goat population of approximately 148.88 million, representing an increase of about 10–14% compared with the previous census. Goat milk contains higher levels of calcium (Ca), magnesium (Mg), and phosphorus (P) than cow's milk in some comparisons. It may be beneficial for certain individuals with digestive discomfort or ulcers because of its relatively soft curd, although individual tolerance varies. Compared with chicken, pork, beef, and lamb, goat meat is generally lean and contains relatively low amounts of fat and cholesterol. Goat meat is also a valuable source of iron, potassium, vitamin B12, and other essential micronutrients.

## Farm Records and Their Importance

Farmers and livestock keepers have traditionally maintained information about farm expenditure and income in different forms. Effective farm management requires proper records of all important activities so that the manager can make timely and appropriate decisions about factors affecting farm profitability. A farm record is a systematic and chronological account of farm resources, production activities, products, and financial transactions. It includes information about the day-to-day maintenance of farm animals and the financial activities of the enterprise. A livestock keeper cannot reliably remember every detail about all the animals on a farm. Written records help prevent the loss of useful information and reduce the likelihood of errors. Maintaining farm records is an essential component of successful livestock farming. It helps in:

- Efficient farm and business management.
- Improving productivity and production efficiency.
- Evaluating the performance of individual goats and the herd.
- Assessing farm profitability and identifying losses.
- Making breeding, feeding, health-care, and culling decisions.
- Selecting superior animals for future breeding.
- Monitoring production trends and improving herd performance.
- Supporting marketing and other management decisions.

A good record-keeping system should be simple, easy to maintain, economical, and capable of providing accurate and timely information. The records should be relevant to the needs of the farm and should not require excessive time or effort to maintain.

## Importance of Farm Records in Goat Farming

Farm records are an essential part of livestock farming. They are the key to profitable goat farming, effective business management, high production, and efficient utilization of resources. Records are necessary for evaluating and improving the performance of goats and for making appropriate decisions related to trade and farm management. A well-maintained record book can support a livestock keeper in managing the farm efficiently. The format should be simple, easy to understand, and convenient to use. Recording should not be time-consuming, and proper identification of animals makes record-keeping easier. Farm records help identify individual animals within a herd and evaluate their production performance. They are useful for maintaining breeding histories and monitoring activities such as mating, vaccination, deworming, and other health-management practices. They also help in recording body weight at birth, weaning weight, mortality rates, and other performance parameters. These records support year-to-year comparisons, help identify unproductive animals, and assist in evaluating farm profitability. Furthermore, records are useful for selecting animals for future breeding and identifying superior animals with better production potential. Record-keeping is therefore an important tool for developing a profitable and sustainable goat-farming enterprise.

## Requirements of a Good Record-Keeping System

The record-keeping system should be designed according to the intended use of the records. A good farm-record system should meet the following requirements:

- It should provide accurate and reliable information.
- It should be useful for management and business decisions.
- It should facilitate efficient use of time and resources.
- It should be simple and easy to maintain.
- It should not be unnecessarily complicated.
- It should contain only essential and relevant information.

## Types of Farm Records

Several types of records can be maintained on a goat farm. The records selected should depend on the nature of the enterprise, its size, and the information required by the livestock keeper. Farm records can broadly be divided into two main categories.

### Production Records

Production records are maintained to evaluate the productive and reproductive performance of goats. They include information about breeding ability, maternal performance, growth, milk production, and the health status of the herd. These records help estimate production directly or indirectly through the growth rate of kids at a particular age and the performance of animals in previous years.

### Financial Records

Financial records are mainly concerned with the economic evaluation of the farm. They provide information about income, expenditure, assets, liabilities, and profitability. Examples include:

- Sales of goats and other farm products.
- Operating expenses, including feed, veterinary treatment, and fodder or seed costs.
- Purchase of equipment.
- Outstanding payments and receivables.
- Depreciation records.
- Loan balances and other financial liabilities.
- Information about the value of farm assets.

## Major Records Maintained on a Goat Farm

### Animal Identification Records

A proper identification system is essential for maintaining accurate records. Each goat should be assigned a unique identification number as part of the registration process. Identification supports breeding management and the maintenance of complete herd records.

Every kid should be identified as early as possible after birth.

### Breeding Records

Breeding records contain information about the reproductive history of female goats. Important details include:

- Date of mating.
- Identification and breed of the male and female.
- Expected and actual kidding dates.
- Whether the mating resulted in the first, second, or third kidding.
- Number and sex of kids born.
- Number of kids born dead.
- Birth weight of kids.

These records help evaluate reproductive efficiency and identify animals with superior breeding performance.

### Production Records

Production records provide information about the performance of individual goats. These records help identify superior animals and evaluate changes in productivity over time, they may include:

- Lactation and milk-yield records.
- Growth and body-weight records.
- Monthly body weight.
- Body weight at different ages.
- Weaning weight.
- Age at maturity.
- Wool or fibre production, where applicable.
- Other relevant production parameters.

**Feeding Records:** Feeding records are maintained to monitor the type and quantity of feed offered to goats, the amount purchased, and the quantity used each day. They help maintain an inventory of feed stocks and evaluate feed utilization. Feeding records can also be used to formulate suitable rations for different categories of animals, including adult goats, growing kids, and pregnant does.

**Disease and Treatment Records:** Health records are essential for monitoring the health status of individual goats and the herd. They include:

- Disease occurrence and clinical observations.
- Veterinary treatment and medication details.
- Vaccination records.
- Deworming records.
- Dates and doses of medicines administered.
- Mortality rate and causes of death.
- General herd-health information.

These records support disease prevention, timely treatment, and evaluation of herd health.

**Financial Records:** Financial records help assess the economic performance of the goat-farming enterprise. They include details of income, expenditure, and other financial transactions. Important entries include sales revenue, feed costs, veterinary expenses, labour costs, equipment purchases, depreciation, outstanding payments, loans, and the value of farm assets. Maintaining financial records allows the farmer to assess profitability and identify areas where production costs can be reduced.

### Important Points to Remember During Record-Keeping

Accurate recording of these details helps maintain reliable breeding, production, health, and financial records. The following details should be included in farm records and field notebooks whenever relevant:

1. Date of mating.
2. Breed of the male and female.
3. Date of kidding.
4. Whether the kidding was the first, second, or third.
5. Number and sex of kids born.
6. Number of kids born dead.
7. Birth weight of each kid.
8. Complete health records, including vaccination and medication details.
9. Cause of death of any animal.
10. Identification of the animal sold and the sale price.

### Conclusion

Farm records are essential for efficient goat-farm management. They provide reliable information about animal identification, breeding, production, feeding, health, and finances. Proper record-keeping helps farmers evaluate herd performance, identify superior breeding animals, monitor expenses, and improve profitability. A simple, accurate, and regularly updated record-keeping system is therefore fundamental to successful and sustainable goat farming.

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