

# Dairy Goat Housing



## Dairy goats require good housing in order to:

- meet dairy goat requirements and enable better flock management (saving production resources)
- secure the goats against exposure to adverse weather
- prevent the risk of theft and attack by predators and parasites
- protect feed and equipment from damage
- For the goats comfort

## Site selection

- The goat house should be built on a well-drained area and sited downward from the farm house if the land is sloppy
- The house should be close enough to monitor the dairy goats but far enough to minimize odours (at least 50 meters).
- It is important to consider the possibility of future expansion of the housing facilities.
- The site for goat housing should be fenced off with controlled entry and exit points.
- The orientation of the dairy goat house:
  - The dairy goat shed/house should be built along the east-west axis to manage heating up or wind flow through the shed/house.
  - Building the house along a north-south axis is preferred in humid areas.

## Housing materials

- Iron sheets are the recommended roofing materials. Other roofing materials may include thatch grass, reeds or polythene
- The floor could be concrete or timber (2 inches x1 inch).
- The walls of a goat house can be made from timber (planks, offcuts) (see figure below), rafters, mud, or concrete/stones/slabs.



An ideal dairy goat house

### Specification of a dairy goat house

It is recommended that dairy goats are kept in raised slated floor housing. The following are minimum specifications for an ideal goat house;

- It should have a raised slated floor (See Figure below) that is strong enough to withstand the weight of the goats and last a long time

#### Slated floor



- Be large enough for the number of dairy goats to be accommodated comfortably
- Allow free movement for all dairy goats
- The floor should be raised at a height of 1-1.5 m from the ground. The slats width is about 70-100 mm with a slot space of 10-25 mm. This is important to allow the droppings to fall on the ground and allow ease of cleaning
- The following space requirements are recommended:
  - cubicles; milking place (1.2 m x 2.1 m); feed and water troughs (0.3 m wide); and a walking area (1.8 m).

- The space allowance for the various goat categories are as follows:
  - » kid (0.3 m<sup>2</sup>);
  - » doe (1.5 m<sup>2</sup>),
  - » pregnant doe (1.9 m<sup>2</sup>), and
  - » buck (2.8 m<sup>2</sup>).
- A dairy goat house should have provisions for buck pen, maternity pen, milking area, isolation pen, store, manure storage pit, fodder chopping area, and water tank/catchment.
- Maternity pens should be easy to clean and have well-maintained dry beddings (e.g. grass hay, wood chips or shavings)
- Be well ventilated - air circulation, dust levels, temperature, relative air humidity and ammonia gas concentrations should be at levels that will not harm the dairy goats
- Have suitable isolation pens for sick or injured dairy goats as far away from the main goat house as possible



Compiled by: Waineina RW, Wasike CB, Wahome C, Mwangi SI,  
Serem RK, Mukhebi L and Ilatsia ED

Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization,  
P.O. Box 57811-00200, Nairobi, KENYA.

Tel: 254-020 4183301-20/ 254-020 4183720 Fax: 254-020 4183344

Website: [www.kalro.org](http://www.kalro.org)