



## Collaborative Arrangements for Meat Goat Producers

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A collaborative arrangement among meat goat producers requires agreement among members to work together, for an extended period of time to achieve a common goal. A meat goat producer may find numerous opportunities for collaborating with other producers. A collaborative arrangement among may be for the purpose of reducing production costs, marketing or processing.

Collaborative farmer groups are usually not quick or easy to establish. Successful collaborative efforts take a great deal of time, commitment, communication and planning. Development of collaborative farmer ventures usually begins when a group of farmers with similar issues or challenges begin to look for ways to achieve together what seems impossible or impractical alone. It may be difficult for individual goat producers to maintain a constant supply of product which is often necessary for optimal efficiency in processing, transportation and marketing.

Farmers that seek to have more control over the success of their operation or industry often look to a collaborative venture as a possible solution. Collaborative ventures can provide group strength in negotiating terms of sale with buyers. Collaborative farmer arrangements can be as simple as pooling goats for sale in larger lots to creating a legal processing cooperative to operate a harvesting and processing plant and marketing a branded meat product.

Collaborative meat goat ventures may take on many forms including legally organized cooperatives, associations or alliances. Legally organized cooperatives are often developed to address issues which require capital investments, handling of money, significant legal issues or a bona-fide cooperative structure. Associations are often developed as a means of formalizing collaborative promotion programs, educational and networking opportunities and public relations activities. Alliances are often developed for the purpose of developing a structure to pool goats from several producers and then market larger, uniform lots of goats to buyers. Marketing alliances provide a “strength in numbers” opportunity and oftentimes create new marketing opportunities for small-scale producers.