

Meat Goat

Conformation Selection Criteria

The USDA Institutional Meat Purchase Specification Criteria for live goats and carcasses are based on consideration of conformation (muscle to bone). Selection 1 goats or carcasses have a high proportion (by weight) of meat to bone. Selection 3 goats and carcasses have a low ratio of meat to bone. Terminology from USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Institutional Meat Purchase Specifications for Fresh Goat Series 11 is used to describe characteristics for each selection classification.

Selection 1 live goats and/or carcasses have a superior meat-type conformation without regard to the presence of fat cover. They shall be thickly muscled throughout the body as indicated by:

- A pronounced (bulging) outside leg (*Biceps femoris* and *Semitendinosus*).
- A full (rounded) back strip (rib and loin, *Longissimus dorsi*).
- A moderately thick outside shoulder (*Triceps brachii* group).

Selection 2 live goats and/or carcasses have an average meat-type conformation without regard to the presence of fat cover. They shall be moderately muscled throughout the body as indicated by:

- A slightly thick and a slightly pronounced outside leg (*Biceps femoris* and *Semitendinosus*).
- A slightly full (flat or slightly shallow) back strip (rib and loin, *Longissimus dorsi*).
- A slightly thick to slightly thin outside shoulder (*Triceps brachii* group).

Selection 3 live goats and/or carcasses have an inferior meat-type conformation without regard to the presence of fat cover. The legs, back and shoulders are narrow in relation with its length and they have a very angular and sunken appearance.

Numbering System for Selection Classifications

Each selection classification can be divided into 100 parts. The highest selection for live goats is 1^{99} , and 3^{00} is the lowest selection score. Selection scores are usually assigned to the nearest 10 parts, e.g. 1^{10} , 2^{40} or 3^{20} .

| Relative Conformation | Selection Classification | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------|----------|
| | No. 1 | No. 2 | No. 3 |
| Highest conformation score | 1^{99} | 2^{99} | 3^{99} |
| Middle conformation score | 1^{50} | 2^{50} | 3^{50} |
| Lowest conformation score | 1^{00} | 2^{00} | 3^{00} |

Market Kid Goats

Selection 1 1⁵⁰

Selection 1 kid goat shows a typical meat goat in the middle of the classification or 1⁵⁰. The three views of this goat show superior meat conformation with thick muscling throughout the body that will give a high meat-to-bone ratio. Moderately thick muscling appears through the chest, and the muscling over the back strip is full and rounded. The outside leg has bulging muscling, and the outside shoulder is moderately thick. The kid goat exhibits the desired muscle-to-bone ratio desired to give superior meat yield.



Selection 1 1⁵⁰

Selection 2 2⁵⁰

Selection 2 classification requires moderate muscling throughout the body. This goat shows average muscling desired for the conformation selection class, a Selection 2⁵⁰. The chest muscling is moderate, and the back strip muscling is flat, reflecting slight fullness along the back. The outside leg has only slightly thick muscling, and the shoulder muscling is slightly thin. The leg muscling is slightly higher than expected for a goat with 2⁵⁰ selection classification, and the shoulder muscling is thinner than desired for a goat in the middle of Selection 2 classification. This goat with Selection 2⁵⁰ classification will have a medium meat yield, because of the average muscle-to-bone ratio.



Selection 2 2⁵⁰

Selection 3 3⁷⁰

Selection 3 goats have inferior meat conformation. This goat has slightly thin muscling through the breast and along the back and very thin muscling through the leg. The legs, back and shoulder are narrow compared with the body length. The sunken appearance at the top of the shoulder, below the loin, top of the rump and base of the leg indicates the lack of conformation and poor yield of meat from this goat.



Selection 3 3⁷⁰

These pictures also show that goats will appear different in different lighting conditions. The three views above show the same goat, but under different light, so that the coat color is a different shade in the three pictures. Shadows also will change the visual impressions of live animals.