

# CASHMERE GOAT WELFARE

– CODE OF PRACTICE –  
V0.2 DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

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# CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	3
<b>2. Requirements of the Cashmere Goat Welfare Code of Practice</b> .....	4
<b>2.1 Feeding and drinking water</b> .....	5
<b>2.2 The farming environment</b> .....	5
<b>2.3 Husbandry management</b> .....	6
<b>2.4 Health</b> .....	8
<b>2.5 Fibre harvesting</b> .....	8
<b>2.6 On-farm transport and transfer</b> .....	9
<b>2.7 Humane slaughter</b> .....	10
<b>2.8 Farm inspection and auditing</b> .....	11
<b>3. Assessment of compliance</b> .....	11

# 1. Introduction

Being able to provide evidence of responsible cashmere production in ways that demonstrate high standards of animal welfare is an essential requirement for the long-term sustainability of the cashmere industry.

This Cashmere Goat Welfare Code of Practice is jointly issued by the Sustainable Fibre Alliance (SFA) and the China Association for the Promotion of International Agricultural Cooperation International Cooperation Committee on Animal Welfare (ICCAW).

This Code of Practice has been written in line with ICCAW's 'Farm Animal Welfare Requirements – Cashmere Goat' and the SFA Sustainable Cashmere Standard. Both the ICCAW Requirements and this Code of Practice are founded on the Five Freedoms of animal welfare:

- Freedom from hunger or thirst;
- Freedom from discomfort;
- Freedom from pain, injury or disease;
- Freedom from fear and distress;
- Freedom to express normal behaviour.

This Code of Practice sets out the requirements for welfare-friendly cashmere production on-farm. For further guidance on off-farm transport and slaughter, see ICCAW's 'Farm Animal Welfare Requirements – Cashmere Goat'.

This Code of Practice can be used to guide production by cashmere goat farmers to improve husbandry practices on-farm. Because of the diversity of cashmere goat production systems and enterprises, the Code of Practice specifies requirements that apply to raising cashmere goats in housing, semi-housing and grazing production systems. Farms that operate semi-housing systems should comply with all requirements for both housing and grazing production systems. The Code of Practice sets out requirements that are applicable to all farms that raise cashmere goats, and additional requirements that apply to farms run by enterprises.

This Code of Practice can also be used to guide assessment of compliance with animal welfare standards on cashmere goat farms. Assessment of compliance can lead to accreditation by the SFA and ICCAW. The Cashmere Goat Welfare Code of Practice recognizes that there are both minimum requirements that must be adhered to, and good practices that should be adopted. The specific requirements of the Code of Practice are divided into mandatory requirements and good practice requirements, which are given in Section 2.

Further information on assessment for farm accreditation purposes is given in Section 3.

Throughout this and supporting documents, the following words have been used to describe what is required, recommended or possible:

- 'must' or 'shall' indicates a requirement strictly to be followed
- 'should' indicates a recommendation
- 'may' and 'can' indicate an action or outcome is allowed or possible.

## 2. Requirements of the Cashmere Goat Welfare Code of Practice

This section sets out the requirements for welfare-friendly cashmere goat husbandry in eight units:

1. Feeding and drinking water
2. The farming environment
3. Husbandry management
4. Health
5. Fibre harvesting
6. On-farm transport and transfer
7. Humane slaughter on-farm
8. Farm inspection and auditing

For each unit, there are mandatory requirements, good practice requirements applicable to all farms, and additional good practice requirements for farms managed by enterprises.

## 2.1 Feeding and drinking water

**Desired outcome:** All goats have access to sufficient forage and feed suited to their nutritional needs according to their breed, physiological stage and health condition so as to maintain health and prevent prolonged hunger, and access to water to prevent goats dehydrating.

Mandatory requirements	
2.1.1	Goats must have access to adequate nutrition, suited to each animal's needs and physiological state, unless a restricted diet has been specified by a suitably qualified person. <b>If a farm uses a grazing or semi-housing system</b> , when the pasture cannot maintain goats in good condition, appropriate supplementary feed must be provided.
2.1.2	The proportion of roughage in the diet must be sufficient for goats to ruminate.
2.1.3	Feeding equipment must be kept clean and maintained.
2.1.4	Goats must not be fed spoiled, mouldy or contaminated forage or feed.
2.1.5	Animal-derived feeds other than dairy products are prohibited.
2.1.6	Use of hormone growth promoters or non-therapeutic antibiotics for growth promotion is prohibited.
2.1.7	Drinking water equipment should be inspected daily, cleaned regularly and maintained.
2.1.8	Goats (including kids) must have access to sufficient, clean and fresh drinking water each day, unless required not to, by a suitably qualified person.
Good practice requirements applicable to all farms	
2.1.9	Goat farms should avoid sudden changes in the type of forage or feed and quantity fed by gradually changing feed types or volumes over a period of more than 7 days.
2.1.10	Feed troughs should be placed at a suitable height and the number and length of feed troughs should be matched with the number of goats fed to ensure that all goats can eat at the same time without crowding
2.1.11.1.12	If a farm uses a housing system, there must be a period of low level lighting daily to promote resting behaviour.
Additional good practice requirements applicable to farms run by enterprises	
2.1.13	Purchased feed and feed additives should have "pollution-free" certification
2.1.14	Goat farms should keep records of all purchased feeds, including lists of ingredients and content provided by the supplier, and keep records of feed formula and ingredients for feeds mixed on-farm.

## 2.2 The farming environment

**Desired outcome:** Goats are kept in an environment that provides the conditions needed for health, safety, comfort and normal behaviour.

Mandatory requirements	
2.2.1	All facilities must be inspected frequently and maintained to prevent injury to goats.

2.2.2	Metal wires, plastic, cloth strips, wool and other objects that may be accidentally eaten by goats in goat sheds, activity areas, pastures and the surrounding environment must be removed whenever found and electric wires must be inaccessible to goats												
2.2.3	Goats must have access to shelter to protect from extreme weather and from wild animals												
2.2.4	Air quality in goat sheds must be maintained so that there is no distinct ammonia smell or airborne dust.												
2.2.5	Goat must have access to an area with dry bedding.												
2.2.6	Goat sheds must be designed so that there is natural lighting in the shed.												
<b>Good practice requirements applicable to all farms</b>													
2.2.7	Goat sheds should provide enough space for goats to move and rest, as indicated by these minimum space requirements: <table border="1" data-bbox="331 689 1321 779"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Bucks</th> <th>Bucklings</th> <th>Does</th> <th>Doelings</th> <th>Kids</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>m<sup>2</sup>/head</td> <td>4</td> <td>1.5</td> <td>1.5</td> <td>0.8</td> <td>0.5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Bucks	Bucklings	Does	Doelings	Kids	m <sup>2</sup> /head	4	1.5	1.5	0.8	0.5
	Bucks	Bucklings	Does	Doelings	Kids								
m <sup>2</sup> /head	4	1.5	1.5	0.8	0.5								
2.2.8	<b>If a housing production system is used</b> , there should be an outdoor exercise area that is 2.5 times larger than the area of the goat sheds.												
2.2.9	Fences around exercise areas should be ≥1.2m high and maintained												
2.2.10	Exercise areas should have environmental enrichments (e.g. mounds, steps, raised platforms, stumps etc).												
2.2.11	Goat farms should be equipped with isolation pens for weak, disabled, injured and sick goats												
2.2.12	<b>If the farm uses a grazing system</b> , effective measures should be taken to prevent goats from eating poisonous and harmful plants and to prevent attack from predators												
2.2.13	Fully slatted floors should not be used in goat houses.												
<b>Additional good practice requirements applicable to farms run by enterprises</b>													
2.2.14	Goat farm design should conform to the requirements of NY/T 682, including the requirements therein to enable biosafety measures to be implemented.												
2.2.15	Goat farms should meet the requirements of the NY/T 1168 standard for animal waste treatment and disposal.												

## 2.3 Husbandry management

Desired outcome: Goats are managed and handled in way that avoids fear and distress and enables goats to express their normal behaviour.

<b>Mandatory requirements</b>	
2.3.1	It is prohibited to abuse cashmere goats in any way, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• chasing goats;</li> <li>• driving them using whips, sticks, stones, electric goads or loud shouting;</li> <li>• catching them by grabbing their fibre coat, dragging a goat; or</li> <li>• lifting a goat by its skin, ears, tail, horns or head.</li> </ul>

2.3.2	Goats must be observed at least once a day to check for sickness, injury or abnormal behaviour.
2.3.3	Extra care must be taken when handling kids, pregnant goats and injured or sick goats.
2.3.4	Transcervical and/or intrauterine (laparoscopic) artificial insemination (AI) and embryo transfer are not allowed, and other artificial insemination methods must only be implemented by competent trained personnel.
2.3.5	Goats must only be kept in isolation during a period of quarantine when a goat first enters a farm; or when they are sick, injured or convalescing; or for other reasons to protect goats' welfare.
<b>Good practice requirements applicable to all farms</b>	
2.3.6	Does should be mated for the first time when their body weight has reached more than 70% of adult body weight, or if they are over fifteen months old, and the first mating age of a buck should be over eighteen months old.
2.3.7	Before mating, suitable breeding does should be selected from the herd, and sick or disabled does, does with poor maternal instincts, and does with low production performance should be removed.
2.3.8	The breeding interval between two mating activities should not be less than 8 months
2.3.9	If a goat farm uses natural mating, the ratio of bucks to does should be 1:30~1:50, depending on the age of the buck.
2.3.10	All kids must receive sufficient colostrum, whether by natural methods or manual assistance, within 24 hours of birth, with the first feed occurring within 2 hours of birth
2.3.11	Lactation management measures should be formulated for kids so that kids that are unable to suckle sufficient milk are manually fed
2.3.12	Kids should not be weaned until they are 2.5 months old in the housing production system, 3.5 months old in the grazing system or when they reach 35% of their adult weight.
2.3.13	Castration is only allowed to enable proper management and to ensure the welfare of the goat and must be carried out using methods that minimize pain and suffering, including pain relief, in suitable conditions and with post-operation observation and care.
2.3.14	Disbudding and dehorning are only allowed to enable proper management and to ensure the welfare of the goat and should not be carried out routinely. If carried out, these procedures should be carried out using methods that minimize pain and suffering, including appropriate pain relief, in suitable conditions and with post-operation observation and care.
<b>Additional good practice requirements applicable to farms run by enterprises</b>	
2.3.15	Goat farm technicians and keepers responsible for managing goats should be trained in animal welfare.
2.3.16	Records of all animal welfare training received by each staff should be kept.

## 2.4 Health

**Desired outcome:** Goats are managed in a way that supports good health and prevents disease and enables prompt identification and treatment of sick or injured goats.

<b>Mandatory requirements</b>	
2.4.1	Sick or injured goats must be promptly identified and appropriate observation, treatment, care and feeding should be provided.
2.4.2	Sick goats that do not respond to treatment or that may be subject to chronic suffering must be promptly euthanized.
2.4.3	It is prohibited to throw away the bodies of diseased goats or to use them to feed other animals.
2.4.4	Preventive measures such as vaccinations must be undertaken in accordance with local laws and regulations and the advice of a qualified veterinarian and records of vaccinations should be kept.
2.4.5	Goats that are under medical observation or that have received treatment should be checked at least twice a day.
<b>Good practice requirements applicable to all farms</b>	
2.4.6	Newly purchased goats should be quarantined for 30 days and only mixed with the herd after they are confirmed as disease-free.
2.4.7	Hoofs should be checked at least once a year and trimmed when necessary to prevent lameness.
2.4.8	Therapeutic medicines should only be used according to the manufacturers' instructions (and under a qualified veterinarian's advice when required)
<b>Additional good practice requirements applicable to farms run by enterprises</b>	
2.4.9	Goat farms should employ a qualified veterinarian
2.4.10	Goat farms should have a written health plan formulated in accordance with NY/T 1168, NY/T 5030 and NY/T 5339. The content should at a minimum include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biosafety measures;</li> <li>• Disease prevention and control measures;</li> <li>• Drug use and residue control measures;</li> <li>• Safe treatment measures for goats that have died of disease and for waste;</li> <li>• Other measures related to animal welfare and health (e.g. feed, feeding, management, environment, etc.)</li> </ul>
2.4.11	Implementation of the health plan should be reviewed at least annually, the review records should be archived, and the health plan should be updated or revised according to the review findings and relevant requirements.

## 2.5 Fibre harvesting

**Desired outcome:** Fibre harvesting is conducted in a way that minimizes fear, distress, pain and injury.

<b>Mandatory requirements</b>	
2.5.1	Cashmere fibre must only be harvested when the fibre begins naturally to shed
2.5.2	If goats are restrained during fibre harvesting, goats may only be restrained either a) by tying a rope around two lateral legs or b) using a grooming stand. For a), the rope must not be tied too tightly, so as to avoid poor blood circulation or other injuries, and the rope must be untied as soon as possible after harvesting. For b), the head must not be held in an unnatural position and must not be held so tightly the goat panics.
2.5.3	It is forbidden to bind three or four legs or for the operator to use their legs or feet to step on any part of the goat.
2.5.4	During fibre harvesting, techniques and equipment should be used to minimize discomfort and injuries to goats.
2.5.5	If in the process of fibre harvesting there are skin injuries, goats should be treated immediately and observed for one week to confirm recovery.
2.5.6	Fibre must only be harvested when the climate does not pose a health risk to goats. Harvesting must be suspended on days with rain, snow or other severe weather conditions
2.5.7	During the harvest season, all tools used for shearing or combing cashmere fibre should be in a proper state for use: shearing equipment should be appropriate for use on goat fibre and in good working order, and combs should not be so sharp that they might cause skin damage.
<b>Good practice requirements applicable to all farms</b>	
2.5.8	Goats should not have access to food for at least 8 hours before harvesting, so as to avoid damage to internal organs if goats struggle during harvesting
2.5.9	If the weather becomes cold after fibre harvesting, measures should be taken to avoid goats from suffering from cold (e.g. goats should be dressed in goat clothing or kept in the shed).
<b>Additional good practice requirements applicable to farms run by enterprises</b>	
2.5.10	The fibre harvesting operators should be trained in fibre harvesting skills and animal welfare related knowledge to make sure that they are capable of this work.
2.5.11	A veterinary technician should be at the fibre harvesting site to treat goats injured by fibre harvesting in a timely way.
2.5.12	Records should be kept of injuries sustained during fibre harvesting.

## 2.6 On-farm transport and transfer

Note: These requirements apply only to transport for the purpose of transfer between locations on the farm and transport for other purposes under the control of the farm manager.

Desired outcome: Goats are transported in a way that minimizes fear and stress and ensures the welfare of goats.

### **Mandatory requirements**

2.6.1	All goats must be fit for transport. Goats that are sick, injured, unable to stand unaided, does in the last 2 months of gestation or goats that otherwise are at risk during transport, must not be transported unless for veterinary treatment.										
2.6.2	For journeys over 8 hours, goats must be provided water, feed, and rest according to their needs										
2.6.3	Vehicles, loading and unloading facilities must be adequately designed, constructed, maintained and operated to avoid injury and suffering and ensure the safety of all goats being transported.										
<b>Good practice requirements applicable to all farms</b>											
2.6.4	Transport vehicles should be disinfected and cleaned before each use										
2.6.5	During transport goats should have enough space to stand up and lie down. This table shows the minimum space requirements <table border="1" data-bbox="507 725 1042 918"> <thead> <tr> <th>Type</th> <th>Area for each goat (m<sup>2</sup>)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Buck</td> <td>0.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Doe</td> <td>0.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pregnant Doe</td> <td>0.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Yearlings</td> <td>0.2</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Type	Area for each goat (m <sup>2</sup> )	Buck	0.4	Doe	0.3	Pregnant Doe	0.4	Yearlings	0.2
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2.6.6	Goats should be protected from extreme weather during transport										

## 2.7 Humane slaughter

**Note:** These requirements apply only to on-farm slaughter of goats.

**Desired outcome:** Goats are slaughtered on-farm in a way that causes minimal stress and pain, and results in a rapid loss of consciousness followed by death without the animal regaining consciousness.

<b>Mandatory requirements</b>	
2.7.1	Goats must be promptly and humanely euthanized if they are experiencing pain or sickness and have no prospect of recovery.
2.7.2	Animals to be slaughtered on farm must be handled and killed in a way that minimizes pain and distress prior to death.
2.7.3	Goats must not be slaughtered in view of other goats.
<b>Good practice requirements applicable to all farms</b>	
2.7.4	If used for food, before slaughter the relevant regulations on drug withdrawal periods should be strictly adhered to
<b>Additional good practice requirements applicable to farms run by enterprises</b>	
2.7.5	Slaughter must only be conducted by trained and competent personnel who have also been trained in animal welfare as it relates to animal slaughter.
2.7.6	Records of animal welfare training provided to personnel involved in slaughter should be kept.

## 2.8 Farm inspection and auditing

Desired outcome: Goat farms seeking accrediting with this Code of Practice are able to transparently demonstrate the status of their compliance with each requirement.

Mandatory requirements	
2.8.1	All farms seeking accreditation must provide the certification body or their representatives with full access to the farm (subject to biosafety requirements) upon request.
2.8.2	All farms seeking accreditation must provide the certification body or their representatives with the information required to assess the status of compliance with each requirement.
Mandatory requirements applicable to farms run by herding households	
2.8.3	Farms run by herding households must respond to all questions in the farm inspection and farm audit forms used by farm inspection and audit representatives of the certification body.
Mandatory requirements applicable to farms run by enterprises	
2.8.4	Farms run by enterprises must designate a staff member to be responsible for liaising with the certification body or their representatives.
2.8.5	<p>Farms run by enterprises must provide access to the following written documentation (if they exist):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records of all forage and feeds fed, including feed formula and ingredient lists for feeds mixed on-farm (Requirement 2.1.14)</li> <li>• Records of all purchased feeds, including ingredients and content provided by the supplier (Requirement 2.1.13)</li> <li>• Records demonstrating conformity of farm design and operation with NY/T 682 and NY/T 1168 (Requirements 2.2.14 and 2.2.15)</li> <li>• Records of animal welfare training provided to all technicians and keepers (Requirement 2.3.16)</li> <li>• Evidence of veterinarian employment (Requirement 2.4.9)</li> <li>• A written health plan (Requirement 2.4.10)</li> <li>• Written documentation of health plan reviews (Requirement 2.4.11)</li> <li>• Records of training in animal welfare for fibre harvesting operators (Requirement 2.5.10)</li> <li>• Records documenting the number of goats from which fibre was harvested and the number of goats injured in fibre harvesting (Requirement 2.5.12)</li> <li>• Records of animal welfare training of all personnel involved in goat slaughter on-farm (Requirement 2.7.6)</li> </ul>

## 3. Assessment of compliance

When compliance with this Code of Practice is assessed for farm accreditation purposes, there are three levels of accreditation:

**Bronze:** All mandatory requirements have been met.

**Silver:** All mandatory requirements plus at least 50% of good practice requirements have been met.

**Gold:** All mandatory requirements plus all good practice requirements have been met.

After each farm's first successful accreditation event, each farm is expected to improve on at least one good practice requirement each year until Gold status is achieved.

This accreditation scoring system is intended to support and incentivize cashmere producers to engage in continuous improvement of cashmere goat animal welfare on their farms. The specific methods used to assess compliance with this Code of Practice are set out in the Cashmere Goat Welfare Code of Practice Assessment Guide.