

support selling goat meat. Also, they felt that demand among non-ethnic consumers was virtually non-existent. None of the chain store representatives had ever been presented with any sales materials related to selling goat meat.

Chain store representatives said they would not carry goat meat for novelty's sake and believed goat meat would be less profitable than other meats. They were also concerned about their present customers' reactions to having goat meat in displays, as well as the dependability of supply. Additionally, non-sellers had relatively little knowledge about the quality of goat meat, its taste, or product forms customers would like.

Restaurants

Restaurants represent a major marketing channel where goat meat can be presented in a favorable manner to consumers. To explore this option, a mail survey of restaurants in Florida was conducted to determine the current level of market penetration of goat meat in the food service sector, the level of knowledge about goat meat among restaurant operators, and the likelihood of additional goat meat sales in these outlets. A total of 1,260 restaurants, half identified as serving barbecue and half randomly selected independent full-service restaurants, were mailed the questionnaire.

Of the 157 restaurants that responded to the mail questionnaire, only five were found to be selling goat meat. Five other restaurants had sold goat meat within the previous two-year period, but had discontinued. Inadequate, unreliable supplies and variable quality were major reasons given for quitting. There were no statistically significant differences between the barbecue restaurants and the randomly selected restaurants with respect to proportions offering or discontinuing goat meat.

The survey indicated that most restaurant managers know little about goat meat. Most were uncertain about preparation and cooking methods, the availability of supplies, quality, or potential impacts of goat meat sales on total sales and profitability. Despite the managers' lack of knowledge and uncertainty, there was considerable interest in adding goat to their menus. Fifty-five percent expressed some interest in serving goat meat.

Restaurant managers were also asked which of several product names would have the greatest appeal

to their customers. "Cabrito" and "chevon" were each preferred by 40 percent of the respondents, respectively; and "goat meat" by only 18 percent.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Our research has shown that few Florida-produced goats are entering commercial marketing channels. Most sales by livestock dealers went directly to individual ethnic customers, primarily American blacks, Hispanics, and Haitians. Based upon the total number of wholesalers selling goat meat in the three market areas studied, it is obvious that distribution of goat meat is very limited. The total quantity of goat meat handled by wholesalers also indicates that consumption is limited, even among ethnic populations.

Presently, the volume of goat meat sold through Florida chain supermarkets is low and the number of chains that carry goat meat is also small. The chain stores selling goat meat were small in size and catered to specific ethnic segments of the general population. In addition, very few commercial foodservice establishments serve goat meat.

The meager presence of Florida-produced goat meat in commercial marketing channels could be attributable to various reasons. Undoubtedly, limited commercial supplies and variable product quality are major difficulties. Further, it is also important to realize that there is tremendous resistance in conventional channels to expanded distribution of goat meat.

Price mark-up received by handlers at each market level was relatively low; these low margins, coupled with low volume, resulted in the general perception that goat meat sales would not be as profitable as other meat items. Hence, there appears to be limited economic incentive for meat wholesalers and retailers to carry goat meat.

Negative attitudes and perceptions of food retailers are a second problem which hinder the market development for goat meat. Retailers were uncertain about how their customers would react to the sales of goat meat. But more importantly, many of the representatives of retailers and restaurants not selling goat meat exhibited a lack of knowledge concerning goat meat. Many retailers did not believe goat meat would sell in the meat department; they felt goat meat would not appreciably affect total meat department sales. Furthermore, they had little idea of