The status of native goat rearing in Mazandaran Province

Alireza Zabiholla-Zadhe Samakoush
Animal Science Research Department, Mazandaran Agricultural and Natural Resources Research and Education Center, AREEO, Mazandaran, Iran

History of goat breeding in the province
Archeological findings in North of Iran presents a golden cup which there is outstanding patterns of some goats on it. This golden cup belongs to years earlier than 900 B.C. and reveals the ancient history of goat rearing in the North of Iran.

Population
Goat population of Mazandaran province is now approximately 290,526 heads. The native goat of Mazandaran includes about 7.8 percent of the total population of the province livestock.

The types of rearing systems
Goat breeding in the province, like most parts of the country is mostly carried out by traditional and nomadic systems. Goats are reared in the forest and mountainous areas of the province.

Job creation
Due to low tendency to goat meat consumption, population of goat is declining in the region, and then goat rearing does not play a significant role in the economy of the house holders and most of the goat breeders keep goat for its stock leading role in their herds.

Appearance features
Goats in Mazandaran are meat type. The dominant color of body is black, but the combination of Brownish, white and gray can be seen in herds. In the appearance this ecotype has small ears, strong legs, having strong hiking ability and mountain climbing. Males have horns and long hair coverage, and females are often polled.

Table 1. Annual production of Mazandaran goat (kg)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lactation length (days)</th>
<th>Milk</th>
<th>Cashmere</th>
<th>Hair</th>
<th>Carcass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Reproductive characteristics of Mazandaran goat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Puberty age (months)</th>
<th>Mating age (months)</th>
<th>Parturition interval (months)</th>
<th>Fertility (%)</th>
<th>Twinning (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Economic traits of Mazandaran goat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Birth</th>
<th>Weaning</th>
<th>6 Months</th>
<th>Mature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>41.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Items use of products
Goat milk is more expensive than sheep milk in the area and generally used for cheese production. Goat hair is applied in making ropes also it is used in construction of rural ovens. Skin is used to make leather and also as a container for local cheese preparation and reservation (Cheese processed in skin).

Measures for identifying and genetic improvement
There has not been any measure archived to preserve this genetic resource such as Zell sheep, in the province. Provincial officials are tending to cross this well adapted breed to local environmental condition with the high performance pure breeds of Sannen or Alpine goats. For the first time, cross breeding plan of Mazandaran native goat with Sannen goat was performed in Mazandaran agricultural research center which resulted to improve the economic performance of the herd.

Suggestions ways to improve performance
1. Crossbreeding of Mazandaran native goat with high performance breeds to increase the economic traits in the herd
2. Improvement of flock lambing percentage by promoting three times birth in two years (with an adequate diet)

Fig. 1. Male (right) and Female (left) Mazandaran native goat
Fig. 2. Flock of Mazandaran native goat