

Today's Savanna goat in America Part II

Second of a three-part series

By Greg Brooks

In the first part of this series we talked about the origin/development of the Savanna goat from the indigenous goats in South Africa. We reviewed changes and developments to the breed from Koenie Kotze, who worked for the Cilliers family as stud-master in Africa.

In part 2, I want to review the individuals who were the founders or original importers of the Savanna in the United States. I started this part of the article by speaking to Brian Payne, who is one of the four importers of the Savanna here.

I quickly realized that the experience and history each of these original importers would be vast and could easily be an article for each one. I want to give tribute to each of them for bringing these amazing animals into the U.S. I decided that in order to keep this entire article to 3 to 4 parts it would be more concise to give the import numbers from each one.

Trevor Ballif wrote a very good article detailing the Jurgen Schulz imports in the May issue of 2016 *Goat Rancher*.

The original importers of the Savanna breed were Brian Payne, Jurgen Schulz and Kenneth Mincey and Denise Peterson. Brian Payne of Keri-Rose brought in 29 Savannas — 17 Bucks and 12 does. Brian has written many educational articles on the Savanna breed discussing history, herd management and why he chose the Savanna breed. Jurgen Schulz of JCS brought in 32 Savannas — 12 bucks and 20 does. Kenneth Mincey of MGF brought in 21 Savannas — 4 bucks and 17 does. Denise Peterson brought in embryos.

I was unable to talk to Kenneth Mincey or Denise Peterson, both whom I want to say thank you for their role in importing the Savannas.

These importers were responsible for bringing this breed to the United States. I know there were many hours spent by each individual, dealing with countless protocols and red tape getting them here. Today, based on regulations, the only countries we can import animals from are Australia, New Zealand and EU community. While we can import from these countries, regulations and quarantine rules drive the cost so high it is highly unlikely we will see any further imports until restrictions ease.

In all there were 82 known Savannas imported — 33 bucks and 49 does. This is the genetic material we were given to work with and

develop the Savanna here in the U.S. As we move forward from a genetic pool of 82 across our country, I think about the farms where they landed. Different habitats, different management philosophies and realizing not all ventures were successful. To say we started with a small gene pool would be an understatement.

These animals went to various breeders. Some continued to develop these animals, others closed their herd and continued to develop what they purchased.

In 2004 Dale Coody of Lawton, Okla., was on a mission trip and was told about these new Savannas. He did his homework and decided that he wanted to grow and promote this new South African breed of meat goat here in America.

He began traveling across the country looking for these Savannas. He began purchasing all the Savannas he could find. In 2005 Dale

began to promote the Savanna breed regularly in the *Goat Rancher*.

I was able to purchase my initial Savanna does from Dale. I called him from one of his ads in the *Goat Rancher* magazine. He was going to be making a trip to Wisconsin and we made arrangements for Dale to deliver my first Savanna goats.

I made a plan later that same year to make the trip to Oklahoma to spend some time at Dale and Ann's farm. I listened as he spoke about his trips to gather goats and the folks he met and built relationships with.

If you know Dale, once you get him talking you might be there a while. He has so much history and knowledge in his head it can be overwhelming to try and remember all he said. I can say with no hesitation that I have met very few folks that have as much

passion for Savanna goats as Dale Coody.

In the United States, it was Dale Coody who did the heavy lifting — paying for advertisements each month to get the Savanna goat in front of as many faces as possible. It has been my pleasure to get to know Dale and Ann Coody.

Thanks Dale for your hard work and devotion to promoting this breed!

Next month we will cover the third and final part: "Savannas in America: Now what?"

(Greg Brooks raises meat goat at Brookside Acres in Greenfield, Ind. He can be contacted at greg.brooks27@yahoo.com.)



Dale Coody and his Savanna goats were featured on the cover of *Goat Rancher* in September 2005.