Dairy Goat and Sheep Production Manager

Dairy farming

Job title	Dairy Goat and Sheep Production Manager
Department	Dairy farming
Reports to	Operations Director or Managing Director
Direct reports	Farm managers, stockpeople and farm staff across the sites
Location	*[To be confirmed by the employer]*
Contract type	*[Permanent / fixed-term / other]*
Salary and benefits	*[To be confirmed by the employer]*

Job purpose

The Animal Production Manager leads technical production across a group of goat and sheep farms, with a focus on dairy goats. The role sets standards for housing, feeding, health and breeding, manages the farm teams, and is accountable for production forecasts and the profitability of the livestock operation.

Key responsibilities

Policy and standards

- Write and roll out production policies, SOPs and targets for every farm
- Visit sites regularly to check procedures are followed and correct shortfalls
- Ensure compliance with animal welfare, medicines, movement and environmental rules

Husbandry and health

- Oversee the care of animals from birth through to sale or culling
- Make sure housing is adequate, clean and well maintained
- Set feeding programmes with the nutritionist for kids, lambs, milking goats and ewes
- Agree preventive health plans with the vet, including vaccination and parasite control
- Manage manure and animal waste safely and in line with environmental rules

Breeding and milk production

- Plan breeding seasons using natural service and artificial insemination
- Oversee pregnancy scanning, kidding and lambing
- Monitor milk yields and quality and improve milking routines
- Select replacement stock to improve genetics

Equipment and facilities

- Oversee the operation, repair and maintenance of production equipment, including milking machines
- Plan and prioritise investment in housing and equipment
- Keep maintenance records and service schedules up to date

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People, reporting and profit

- Plan, allocate and supervise the work of farm teams
- Prepare regular progress reports and production forecasts
- Manage budgets and hold profit and loss responsibility across the farms
- Respond to emergencies and take part in an on-call rota

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Degree in agriculture, animal science or a related subject such as animal engineering
- At least five years' experience in livestock production management in a similar business
- Practical knowledge of dairy goat and sheep husbandry, feeding, health and breeding
- Experience managing people across more than one site
- Experience of budgets and profit and loss responsibility
- Full driving licence, as the role travels regularly between farms

Desirable

- Experience of goat or sheep milking systems
- AI or breeding programme experience with small ruminants
- Knowledge of farm management software
- Postgraduate qualification in animal production

Skills and attributes

- Analytical and well organised, able to prioritise against several deadlines
- Clear spoken and written communication
- Planning, delegating and supervising the work of others
- Calm response to emergencies
- Commercial and financial awareness
- Technical problem solving

Measures of success

- Kid and lamb survival to weaning
- Milk yield per goat and milk quality results
- Production against forecast
- Cost per litre and profit against budget
- Scanning and kidding or lambing percentages
- Welfare and compliance audit results

Working conditions and safety

A multi-site role combining office work with frequent travel to farms and hands-on work on the ground. It includes on-call cover for emergencies and requires the physical ability to work with livestock while wearing PPE.

- Follow health and safety rules and safe systems of work, and wear the correct PPE
- Follow animal welfare, biosecurity and medicine-use procedures at all times
- Report hazards, accidents, near misses and concerns promptly

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This job description outlines the main duties of the role. It is not a complete list, and the employer may update it as the business changes, in consultation with the jobholder.

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