

## **Kikos vs. Boers**

By Terry Hankins

**There definitely is a difference in Kikos and Boers. It was very evident when we were raising both fullblood Boers and Kikos. These are weanling bucks, the same age and raised under the same management. The Kiko buck is muscled and slick; the Boer is rough-coated and pot-bellied, apparently from an infestation of worms.**

The Kiko breed of goat, long overshadowed by the popular and pretty Boer goat, is starting to make serious inroads into the meat goat industry. This growth in prominence is most notable in the Southeast and Midwest, where kids with Kiko influence can be seen at local meat goat sales on a regular basis.

Kikos are even carving a niche farther west where some producers are using Kiko bucks on their Spanish does to increase milk production and on Boer percentage does to tighten up udder problems.

Wether producers have found that crossing their Boer wether sires over percentage Kiko does - with their length and straight top line - is an ideal ribbon-winning combination.

Back east, producers have learned that Kikos can be raised in a hot and humid climate a lot easier than Boer goats can. Boers just weren't made to thrive where pastures get 50-60 inches of rain a year and there are no rocks to grind down their fast-growing hooves.

Boers were bred up over the last 80 years in South Africa, where most of the country gets less than 20 inches of rain a year, about the same rainfall as San Angelo, Texas. Boers never had to develop resistance to internal parasites, because it was too dry for worms to exist.

You can raise Boer goats just about anywhere, but they really thrive in areas west of Interstate 35. East of Dallas, lots of rain - west of Dallas, very little rain.

This difference in climate is why the Boer and Kiko perform so differently. The Kiko was developed from feral goats in New Zealand, where annual rainfall can run to more than 100 inches on both the South Island and North Island. Only the east coast of the South Island has a scarcity of rainfall.

The development of the Kiko in this temperate climate with high humidity, soggy ground and parasites galore made it the perfect goat for places like the Deep South, where we have been raising them since 1997.