

## The Golden Goat from Guernsey

The Guernsey goats in the United States today are the progeny of a lovely but rare breed of goat from the Guernsey island called Golden Guernseys. The exact origin of these goats is not certain, but they are believed to have begun developing thousands of years ago. They are genetically distinct from other European breeds.

The breed was threatened during the Second World War, and was only saved due to the efforts of Miriam Milbourne, who risked her life to hide a small herd. Miriam continued to develop the breed following the war and began the first Golden Guernsey registry in 1965. Two years later, Guernseys were imported into England, and in 1971 the breed was accepted into the British Goat Society. With the interest of British breeders, as well as the breeding-up program in the US, this rare breed is beginning to see their numbers grow.



*Photo courtesy of British Goat Society*



*Photo courtesy of DeGarmo's Big Veranda Farm*

**Guernsey Goat Breeders of America** has played an integral part in the development and promotion of the Guernsey breed in the United States today. Not only have they been very important in the progression and integrity of the of the up-breeding program, but due to the efforts of the club, in October of 2015, the ADGA recognized Guernsey goats as an "official" dairy breed. Registrations through ADGA are in progress, and we will be participating in all of the ADGA production programs.

For more information about the club or becoming a member, please visit the GGBOA website at [GuernseyGoats.Org](http://GuernseyGoats.Org) or visit them on facebook.



*Photo courtesy of Treasured Sunrise Acres*

# The Wonderful World of Guernseys!

Visit  
[www.GuernseyGoats.Org](http://www.GuernseyGoats.Org)

## Why Guernseys?

So why choose a Guernsey?

Guernseys are loved by their owners for their docile, gentle personalities as well as their yummy, sweet milk. Guernseys are a medium sized breed which makes them very easy to handle. These attributes make them a joy to work with and have in your herd whether you are a serious commercial dairy or a small home dairy milking for the family.

Guernseys are also known for their great feed conversion, meaning they eat less, but still produce generous amounts of milk for their size. One distinctive characteristic of their milk is that it makes wonderful cheese, often yielding higher volumes of cheese per gallon than other breeds even if butter fat and protein are comparable.

Grade Guernsey goats have been on DHIR milk test since 2004, and have proven they are a true dairy breed, with does

*Want to make cheese? Choose Guernsey milk!*



Photo courtesy of Treasured Sunrise Acres



Photo courtesy of Gloria Whitmoyer Andrews

producing 9-12 pounds of milk a day, with butter fat percentages at 4-5% and protein over 3%. Yummy creamy milk!

Though all Guernseys are "gold" like their ancestors the Golden Guernsey, their color can be a kaleidoscope of golds - from deep russet reds to flaxen blondes. Coats can be short to almost dragging the ground. The diversity of coats and colors leads to lots of different "looks" and all are within breed standard. In Great Britain, Guernsey's are generally shown unclipped, sporting their longer hair.

*Guernseys can produce 9-12 pounds of milk a day, often on less feed than other breeds.*



Photo courtesy of DeGarmo's Big Veranda Farm

## Guernsey Goats in the United States

In 1996, dairy goat enthusiasts began a program to establish the Guernsey breed in the United States. Because the US does not allow the importation of goats from Europe, the first Golden Guernseys were imported via embryo transplant in recipient does in North America. Those resulting kids were the South Wind (SWIND) herd in New York. There are few remaining Golden Guernseys in the US today. US breeders also began a "breeding-up" program accepted by the British Goat Society to produce British Guernseys (BG). This is done by artificially inseminating or breeding GG or BG bucks to dairy breed does in the US. Several GG semen imports were done for this program, as well using SWIND GG bucks, and also British Guernsey semen and bucks. The resulting kids from these breedings are then bred back to GG or BG, and those kids are bred back, and so on, until the 5th generation (31/32 Guernsey) when they are considered "full" British Guernseys.

The American Dairy Goat Association (ADGA) has accepted Guernseys into their database. Guernseys will be registered into an open herd book as American or Purebred Guernseys. Guernsey owners can participate in all ADGA production programs for herd improvement.

*Guernsey goats are now accepted into ADGA.*



Photo courtesy of DeGarmo's Big Veranda Farm