

2025 Dakota Meat Goat Buck Performance Test

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The Dakota Meat Goat Test provides producers nationwide with an objective, centralized evaluation of growth performance, carcass merit and breed quality of meat-goat bucks under uniform management conditions. Bucks are ranked using a weighted performance index that incorporates key measures of growth and carcass value, allowing producers to identify sires with the greatest potential to improve terminal productivity within their herds. Eligible bucks may also earn breed ennoblement points through breed registration associations based on tested performance.

Summary

Seventy-four winter-born Kiko and Boer bucks from 21 consignors participated in the 2025 Summer Dakota Meat Goat Test, where they were evaluated over a 63-day centralized performance test for growth, carcass merit and breed standard. Growth performance was measured using average daily gain (ADG), while carcass traits, including ribeye area and backfat thickness, were evaluated by real-time ultrasound. Additional measurements included leg and scrotal circumference. Registered Boer bucks were also evaluated by a panel of three certified American Boer Goat Association (ABGA) judges for breed character, structural correctness and adherence to the ABGA breed standard. Sixty-eight bucks completed the performance test, with growth index scores ranging from 34.31 to 54.06 points and averaging 41.88 points. Across all breeds, bucks averaged 67.2 pounds at the start

of the test, gained 0.48 pounds per day over the 63-day evaluation and finished at an average body weight of 93.1 pounds. Kiko bucks averaged 0.50 pounds per day of gain, while Boer bucks averaged 0.44 pounds per day. Ultrasound evaluation showed an average ribeye area of 1.91 in² and backfat thickness of 0.10 in across all bucks. Boer bucks exhibited larger average ribeye areas (2.33 in²) than Kiko (1.75 in²) bucks. These carcass measurements provide producers with additional information on muscling and maturity pattern to complement growth performance when selecting breeding stock.

Introduction

The Dakota Meat Goat Test was established through a collaborative effort with the North Dakota Meat Goat Association and American Boer Goat Association to provide producers with an objective, centralized performance testing program for meat goat bucks. By evaluating bucks under uniform management conditions, the test generates standardized data on

growth and carcass merit to support more informed genetic selection decisions. The program also provides registered American Boer Goat Association (ABGA) bucks the opportunity to be evaluated against the breed standard and earn ABGA Ennoblement points.

Procedures

Seventy-four winter-born bucks from two meat goat breeds (Kiko and Boer), with birthdates ranging from Dec. 21, 2024, to Feb. 24, 2025, were consigned by 21 producers and received by the NDSU Hettinger Research Extension Center on June 17, 2025. To determine average daily gain (ADG), initial body weight was recorded when the testing period began on July 2, 2025, and at the end of the growth testing period on Sept. 4, 2025. At the beginning and the end of the growth testing period, real-time carcass ultrasound was performed to estimate ribeye area, ribeye depth and back fat cover between the 12th and 13th rib. Rear leg and scrotal circumferences were also measured at the end of the testing period. Registered Boer bucks were evaluated and scored by a panel of three ABGA-certified judges based on structure, breed character, any disqualifying faults and the breed association's established breed standard. Bucks were ranked using a Growth Index that combined average daily gain (30%), weight per day of age (30%), ribeye area adjusted to metabolic body weight (20%) and rear leg circumference adjusted to metabolic body weight (20%). Higher index scores indicate superior

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overall growth performance and muscling under the standardized test environment.

Results and Discussion

Sixty-nine bucks completed the 2025 Summer Dakota Meat Goat Test following the removal of six bucks by the Test Committee due to inability to adapt to the diet, chronic illness or other unforeseen circumstances. Individual buck data is presented in Tables 1 and 2 for Kiko and Boer bucks, respectively. Buck growth index scores ranged from 34.31 to 54.06, with an average of 41.88 points. The Kiko buck growth index scores ranged from 34.31 to 54.06 points, averaging 42.11, while the Boer bucks ranged from 34.42 to 49.44 points and averaged 42.29. The similarity in average index scores between breeds demonstrates that both Kiko and Boer genetics can perform competitively under a standardized management system, while the range of scores highlights substantial variation within breeds that producers can capitalize on through performance-based selection. Across the two breeds, bucks averaged 67.2 pounds at the start of the testing period and 93.1 pounds at the conclusion of the test, gaining an average of 0.48 pounds per day and 31.5 pounds over the testing period. Kiko bucks entered the test at an average weight of 53.4 pounds, gained 0.50 pounds per day and finished at 85.2 pounds. Boer bucks averaged 80.4 pounds at the start of the test, gained 0.44 pounds per day and concluded at an average weight of 112.0 pounds. Because the primary purpose of the Dakota Meat Goat Test is to compare bucks within a standardized environment rather than between breeds, growth differences among breeds should be interpreted with caution, particularly given the smaller number of Boer consignments. Carcass measurements provide producers with additional insight into muscling and maturity patterns. Bucks with larger ribeye

Table 1. Kiko buck performance summary

Test ID	70-Day ADG (lb)	REA (sq. in.)	Backfat (in.)	Index (pts)
204389	0.88	2.15	0.12	54.06
204391	0.73	1.95	0.12	50.11
204412	0.63	2.70	0.10	48.09
204413	0.68	1.92	0.10	47.76
204385	0.67	1.83	0.10	47.74
204397	0.59	2.03	0.10	47.18
204395	0.55	1.83	0.16	46.68
204414	0.60	1.63	0.10	46.46
204421	0.60	1.64	0.12	46.28
204428	0.60	1.58	0.08	45.91
204406	0.60	1.89	0.10	45.57
204386	0.55	1.66	0.08	45.08
204420	0.55	1.91	0.10	44.85
204431	0.52	1.94	0.06	44.70
204398	0.63	2.23	0.12	44.47
204426	0.61	1.50	0.06	44.47
204435	0.51	1.77	0.08	44.07
204399	0.56	1.77	0.08	44.02
204436	0.48	1.77	0.08	43.83
204396	0.45	1.97	0.13	43.19
204403	0.51	1.60	0.08	43.16
204388	0.55	2.19	0.08	43.08
204407	0.54	1.55	0.10	42.64
204434	0.41	1.75	0.08	42.44
204384	0.53	2.02	0.10	42.26
204383	0.47	1.74	0.10	42.16
204411	0.51	1.55	0.08	42.12
204424	0.49	1.16	0.06	41.47
204423	0.53	1.44	0.06	41.17
204427	0.50	1.89	0.10	41.10
204417	0.48	1.64	0.06	40.74
204409	0.48	1.88	0.10	40.26
204425	0.52	1.40	0.06	40.23
204430	0.40	1.78	0.08	40.03
204392	0.44	1.81	0.10	39.88
204410	0.39	1.64	0.08	39.59
204408	0.37	1.55	0.08	39.28
204433	0.41	1.60	0.06	39.12
204400	0.45	1.97	0.10	38.87
204419	0.40	1.66	0.06	38.76
204415	0.45	1.64	0.08	38.43
204429	0.41	1.66	0.06	38.16
204418	0.37	1.64	0.08	38.02
204387	0.46	1.86	0.08	37.85
204404	0.39	1.67	0.08	37.75
204432	0.29	1.64	0.10	36.96
204394	0.43	1.49	0.06	36.75
204405	0.35	1.55	0.06	35.60
204390	0.25	1.60	0.08	34.64
204401	0.37	1.39	0.10	34.58
204422	0.27	1.81	0.08	34.31
<i>Breed Average</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>1.75</i>	<i>0.08</i>	<i>42.08</i>
Overall Test Avg	0.48	1.91	0.1	41.87

ADG, average daily gain; REA, ribeye area

areas generally exhibit greater muscling, while increased backfat thickness may indicate a faster maturity pattern. Across all bucks, average ribeye area measured 1.91 in², and average backfat thickness measured 0.10 in. Boer bucks exhibited the largest average ribeye area (2.33 in²) and greatest average

backfat thickness (0.11 in), while Kiko bucks averaged 1.75 in² of ribeye area and 0.09 in of backfat. Evaluating carcass traits alongside growth performance allows producers to identify bucks that not only grow efficiently but also possess the muscling needed to improve the value of market offspring. Registered

Boer bucks received ABGA breed standard scores averaging 77.7 points (range: 68.0-86.3), providing producers with an objective assessment of structural quality and breed character in addition to performance data.

Table 2. Boer buck performance summary

Test ID	70-Day ADG (lb)	REA (sq. in.)	Backfat (in.)	Index (pts)	ABGA Standard Score (pts)
204371	0.71	2.48	0.14	49.44	67.33
204363	0.52	2.45	0.08	47.14	77.00
204373	0.60	2.28	0.10	46.53	70.67
204375	0.50	2.73	0.12	46.38	80.33
204366	0.53	2.42	0.08	45.97	82.00
204382	0.54	1.94	0.08	45.12	.
204374	0.48	2.60	0.12	43.77	71.00
204381	0.45	1.89	0.06	42.57	.
204370	0.44	2.19	0.10	42.06	75.67
204361	0.41	2.28	0.14	41.91	86.33
204367	0.41	2.59	0.10	41.65	84.00
204368	0.40	2.25	0.10	40.74	70.00
204365	0.32	2.59	0.10	40.53	73.33
204378	0.40	2.25	0.10	39.78	74.33
204362	0.33	2.20	0.10	38.20	89.67
204377	0.31	2.29	0.15	37.54	80.67
204376	0.29	2.53	0.10	37.44	69.00
204369	0.29	2.08	0.08	34.42	78.33
<i>Breed Average</i>	<i>0.44</i>	<i>2.33</i>	<i>0.11</i>	<i>42.29</i>	<i>77.74</i>
Overall Test Average	0.48	1.91	0.1	41.87	.

ADG, average daily gain; REA, ribeye area