***Lesson: Exploring Dairy Goats***

**Purpose:** When we discuss value-added agriculture, we often talk about producers meeting the needs of a niche market. As a source of milk that has many different qualities than traditional milk from a cow, goat milk serves as a way to fill the needs of a specific group of consumers. Goat milk provides consumers who are looking for a product that meets their cultural preferences, or nutritional needs, an excellent alternative to milk from cows. There is a lot that can be learned about the dairy goat industry.

**Directions:** Go to the following website: http://www.agmrc.org. Click on Commodities and

Products, Livestock, Goats, Dairy Goats. Use the information along with any other needed research to answer the following questions.

1. What are the nutritional benefits of dairy goat milk and goat cheese (chevre)?
2. Where do producers mainly sell their products? Why do you think this is so?
3. Most of the goat milk production occurs in Wisconsin, California, Iowa, Texas, and Minnesota. Why do you think these states are able to lead the U.S. in goat milk production?
4. How does the price of goat milk compare to the price of cow milk?
5. Considering the nutritional benefits, and high sale prices of goat milk, why do you think more producers do not switch from cow milk production to goat milk production?

**Reinforcement Activity: Dairy Goat Value**

For this activity, you should begin by reading the article “Women in Agriculture Teach Others about Value-added Goat Milk Products”. In this article, the authors share the importance of adding value to raw goat milk. When you have finished reading the article, you should work on creating your own product that adds value to goat milk, in hopes that you will be able to sell the value-added product. For example, if your product is goat milk soap, you will need to determine the necessary information you will need to produce and sell goat milk soap. Some of that information would be: the process required to make the product, the time required to make the product, who you will market the product to, how your product will fill a niche in the market, what your product is called, and what a catchy slogan for your product might be.

When you have all of the necessary information, prepare a short informational presentation which could be used to promote your product to potential investors. Remember to focus on why you need their investment, and how it will be profitable to them.