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Integration of livestock in crop based agriculture is preferred due to several reasons. Goats are reared as the livestock component of farming systems, especially in dry areas. However, for many poor rural families goat farming is unable to provide a sufficient means of survival. A study was carried out to identify potentials and constraints in goat farming in rural areas of Hambantota District of Sri Lanka. Hundred farmers selected at random from five divisional secretary's divisions were interviewed using a pre-tested structured questionnaire. Livestock development instructors, market middlemen, farmer-leaders and potential farmers were also interviewed. Free grazing is the most common management system in the area. Inadequate management practices has led to high kid mortality rate. Management of herds is comparatively better in remote rural areas than in urban areas.. Although, a potential demand exists for milk and milk products, milking is not practiced. Farmers confront legal and social barriers in operations such as transporting and processing of animals, and inadequate veterinary services are identified as the most dominant constraints for development of the industry. Goat farming in small scale is not economical due to presence of economies of scale.

Producer's co-operatives or similar organizations would help to obtain the benefits of economies of scale through production of milk and milk products, and finding solutions for marketing problems and socio-legal barriers. Selecting remote areas as target areas in introducing goats would lead to higher success than such programs in urbanized or irrigated areas, where well integrated diverse economic activities already exist.