

Evaluating the Nigerian Dwarf
(American Goat Society Breed Standard)

Because the Pygmy and Nigerian Dwarf are miniature goats with a maximum allowable height, size is not necessarily an advantage, especially in young stock. A young animal nearing the maximum height may well continue to grow to the point of disqualification, but should not be penalized unless they are over height and must be disqualified. Remember that you must judge the animals as they are today in the ring, not on what they might be. At the same time, extreme smallness without strength is not the goal either, especially if function or health is compromised. As in all breeds, dairy character is the “willingness to milk and the strength to sustain it”. That means, in addition to the angularity and openness, an animal must have width and substance. Capacity, both mammary and body, should be judged in relation to the size of the animal. A 19" goat shouldn't be expected to have the same capacity as a 22" goat but should in proportion to size.

The Nigerian Dwarf, while being small in overall stature, does not show the proportions typical of achondroplastic dwarves. The ideal Nigerian Dwarf should exhibit balanced proportions similar to that of the Swiss breeds of dairy goats, giving the impression of being a miniature instead of a dwarf. They may carry a little more weight in proportion to their size than the Swiss dairy goat.

Conformation - Short stature, long bodied, wide but refined, does standing no more than 22.5 inches at the withers and bucks no more than 23.5 inches.

Head - Moderate length, refined, straight nose. Blue eyes are not uncommon and should not be favored or discriminated against.

Ears - Medium length, narrow, upright and alert

Neck - Moderately long, feminine but not too refined in the doe, no dewlap. The neck will be more muscular and heavy in the buck.

Body - Long, deep, wide with level topline and slightly sloping rump, well sprung ribs especially at rear of barrel

Legs and Feet - Short, refined, widely set, straight, short pastern

Coat - Short, straight, with loose, pliable skin

Color - Any color or combination of colors are acceptable

Udder - wide, deep, capacious, strongly attached, soft, pliable, widely spaced teats

Breed Specific Faults (Moderate to Serious depending on magnitude)

Curly coat

Roman nose

Breed Disqualifications

Pendulous ears or LaMancha type ears

Height at withers over 23.5" for bucks and 22.5" for does

Evidence of myotonia (fainting)