

No kidding – goat meat is likely to become a new healthy fad

FORT VALLEY – After extensive research this year, Fort Valley State University scientists found that goat meat, known as chevon, has some health benefits the general population may not know about.

The scientists identified and quantified every fatty acid present in chevon and lamb. They found that chevon has lower amounts of saturated fatty acids and higher amounts of unsaturated acids than lamb.

Simply put, goat meat is very low in fat and high in protein and iron, said Dr. Govind Kannan, one of the scientists who worked on the study along with animal and food scientists Drs. J.H. Lee, Brou Kouakou and Will R. Getz.

“This day and age everybody is concerned about their fat intake,” Kannan said. “With goat meat, people can eat red meat because they are eating a healthy product, a product low in fat. And, the type of fat in goat meat is healthier than in beef, lamb or pork.”

The total fat content of goat meat is generally less than 3.5 percent, which makes it leaner than beef, pork or lamb, said Kannan, also director of the university’s Georgia Small Ruminant Research and Extension Center where the experiments took place. said.

“We want to promote this because it’s a healthy meat. We want consumers to benefit from this lean, low-fat product,” he added.

Globally, goat meat is very popular. Kannan is convinced that this type of red meat will become more well-liked in the United States.

“I strongly believe it will catch on here because it’s healthier and people will realize that it’s good for them. People don’t want to give up red meat. At the same time, they’re conscious about they’re health,” Kannan said.

The texture and taste is different from lamb and beef which are more acceptable in the United States. FVSU scientists are furthering their studies by researching how to extend the shelf life of goat meat and to make it more tender.

The Georgia Small Ruminant Research and Extension Center, created in 1986, is the largest facility of its kind east of the Mississippi River. It is recognized as a national leader in goat research.

During the past five years, scientists at the center have secured more than \$3 million in research grants, published more than 60 peer-reviewed scientific papers and book chapters, and have made numerous presentations at national and international scientific meetings.

Cattle, sheep and goat producers, and scientists who study these animals, come from all over the world to visit the center.

For more information about the health benefits of goat meat, or the Georgia Small Ruminant Research and Extension Center, contact Kannan at (478) 827-3085 or govindak@fvsu.edu.