What is in that Alphabet Soup of a Name?

I often peruse one of my favorite dairy goat periodicals and come across a beautiful dairy goat that catches my eye. My next thought is, "I wonder who that is?" as I search for the name. More often than not, the name is buried amongst an alphabet soup of accolades: SGCH ARMCH PGCH FMCH Herdname SI Jane Doe 2*M 3*D 2*DLT+ *P 03-02 89 VEEV and her littermate brother SGCH ARMCH PGCH FMCH Herdname SI John Buck ++*B ++*S 2+*DS ++*B 03-02 89 VEE. What do all those credentials mean?

Many dairy goat registries offer programs to highlight performance merit based on production, conformation, as well as genetic merit. Some programs are competitive while others only require meeting minimum standards. The National Dairy Herd Improvement Association (DHIA) has developed Uniform Operating Procedures & Quality Control, originating with the dairy cattle industry, that are used to identify animals across the country with superior production. This program has helped to increase milk weight, percent butterfat (%bf) and protein through generations of selective breeding.

While details of the specific requirements for merit awards may differ across registries, comparisons can be made in order to understand how the titles are similar. The registries that are the subject of this review have specific production requirements for Nigerian Dwarves: American Dairy Goat Association (ADGA), American Goat Society (AGS), Nigerian Dwarf Goat Association (NDGA) and Miniature Dairy Goat Association (MDGA). The International Dairy Goat Registry (IDGR) didn't respond to a request for clarification of their program in time to include them in this review. *Table 1* highlights the titles awarded by these registries. As you can see, some have Star (ST) programs in addition to Advanced Registry (AR) programs. Generally, the Star programs are either One-Day or Owner Sampler (O/S) programs, while the AR programs are long-term testing through the DHIA program and quality assurance. In addition, generational indicators often are included as a prefix to the title, eg 3*M which means that this doe is the 3rd successive generation to have been awarded the *M in her maternal lineage.

Kudos to NDGA for having different titles for meeting different requirements! Not all stars are the same, and NDGA has titles which differentiate those earned by performance, heredity, and progeny!

Table 1: Production Merit Award Titles for Does

Earned through:	ADGA[1]	AGS[2]	NDGA[3]	MDGA
Progeny	*M (ST)	*D (ST)	*DP	*P
One day test	*M (ST)	*D (ST)	*DD	*P
DHI Testing:				
• Minimum milk vol *or* bf	*M (AR)	*D (AR)	*DAR	*P
• Minimum protein	*M (AR)			
• Minimum milk vol *and* bf	*M (AR)	*D (AR)	*DAR+	*P
• Minimum duration & milk vol or bf	*M (AR)		*DLT	
• Minimum duration & milk vol *and* bf	*M (AR)		*DLT+	
• O/S minimum milk volume or bf, (or protein ADGA only)	*M (ST)	*D (ST)	*DAR *DAR+ (vol & bf)	*P
• O/S minimum duration and milk volume, or bf, (or protein ADGA only)	*M (AR)		*DLT *DLT+ (vol & bf)	

[1]Over height does (>22.5") cannot receive *M award (one day test); Over height does are not eligible for Top Ten recognition; O/S program not eligible for Top Ten recognition

[2]Over height does (>22.5") may earn AR or Star program awards but are not eligible for Top Ten recognition; O/S not eligible for Top Ten recognition

[3]Over height does (>21.0") are not allowed to participate in NDGA DHI testing

Registries have programs where Star Merit may be achieved during a One-Day Test. These programs typically require 3 supervised milkings in 24 hours. Milk is weighed, and samples are taken for component (% butterfat) analysis by specified laboratories. Points are granted for the volume of milk, percent butterfat, and also take into consideration the doe's stage of lactation. *Table 2* highlights the point structure and minimum requirement for earning the One-Day Star for Nigerian Dwarves.

Table 2: One Day Test Point Calculations

	ADGA Points	AGS & NDGA points	MDGA points
Per pound of milk	1	5.5	5.5
Per pound of butterfat	20	111	111
# days fresh	0.04 per 10 full days*	0.0555**	0.0555
Minimum Total Points for Star Award (Nigerian)	7	35	55

*maximum of 1.44 points for miniature breeds (equivalent to 360 days fresh)
**maximum of 19.98 points for NDGA (equivalent to 360 days fresh)

While One-Day Testing is a useful tool to get "a snapshot" of a doe's lactation, many breeders are interested in documenting the lactation over a length of time in order to evaluate the persistency of lactation. Some does will have very high production for a few months as when she would normally be feeding her kids, and then dramatically drop production when kids would normally be weaned. Other goats may have such persistent lactations that they are difficult to dry off at all! DHI programs are valuable for following lactations over many months, typically testing once a month for overall volume as well as butterfat and protein. Minimum volumes of milk, fat, and/or protein have been set by various registries which qualify does to be recognized with Star or Advanced Registry titles. *Table 3* and *Table 4* highlight requirements for does and bucks. Please note, this is a review and the detailed requirements vary with registry and may change with time, so please refer to the detailed regulations for your registry of interest.

Table 3: Minimum Requirement for Advance Registry or Star Production Awards

	ADGA			AGS & NDGA		MDGA (Nigerians)	
Age Fresh (yr-mo)	Milk (lbs)	Fat (lbs)	Protein(lbs)	Milk (lbs)	Fat (lbs)	Milk (lbs)	Fat (lbs)
≤ 2-00	600	21.00	18.00	500	25.00	600	29.0
2-01	603	21.09	18.08	502	25.10	602	29.2
2-02	605	21.18	18.15	504	25.20	605	29.5
2-03	608	21.26	18.23	506	25.30	607	29.7
2-04	610	21.35	18.30	508	25.40	610	29.9
2-05	613	21.44	18.38	510	25.50	612	30.2
2-06	615	21.53	18.45	512	25.60	614	30.4
2-07	618	21.61	18.53	514	25.70	617	30.7
2-08	620	21.70	18.60	516	25.80	619	30.9
2-09	623	21.79	18.68	518	25.90	622	31.2
2-10	625	21.88	18.75	520	26.00	624	31.3
2-11	628	21.96	18.83	522	26.10	626	31.4
3-00	630	22.05	18.90	524	26.20	629	31.6
3-01	633	22.14	18.98	526	26.30	631	31.7
3-02	635	22.23	19.05	528	26.40	634	31.8
3-03	638	22.31	19.13	530	26.50	636	31.9
3-04	640	22.40	19.20	532	26.60	638	32.0
3-05	643	22.49	19.28	534	26.70	641	32.2
3-06	645	22.58	19.35	536	26.80	643	32.3
3-07	648	22.66	19.43	538	26.90	646	32.4
3-08	650	22.75	19.50	540	27.00	648	32.5
3-09	653	22.84	19.58	542	27.10	650	32.7
3-10	655	22.93	19.65	544	27.20	653	32.8
3-11	658	23.01	19.73	546	27.30	655	32.9
4-00	660	23.10	19.80	548	27.40	658	33.0
4-01	663	23.19	19.88	550	27.50	660	33.1
4-02	665	23.28	19.95	552	27.60	662	33.3
4-03	668	23.36	20.03	554	27.70	665	33.4
4-04	670	23.45	20.10	556	27.80	667	33.5
4-05	673	23.54	20.18	558	27.90	670	33.6
4-06	675	23.63	20.25	560	28.00	672	33.7
4-07	678	23.71	20.33	562	28.10	674	33.9
4-08	680	23.80	20.40	564	28.20	677	34.0
4-09	683	23.89	20.48	566	28.30	679	34.1
4-10	685	23.98	20.55	568	28.40	682	34.2
4-11	688	24.06	20.63	570	28.50	684	34.3
≥5-00	690	24.15	20.70	572	28.60	690	34.6

Table 4: Production Merit Awards for Bucks

Earned through:	ADGA	AGS	NDGA[3]	MDGA
Ancestry	*B	*S	*DS; *DG	*B
• Both parents star animals	*B[1]	*S[7]		*B
• Both his dam and sire's dam are star animals	*B[1]	*S[7]	*DS	*B
• Dam has earned AR or one day award and sire has a progeny award	*B	*S[7]	*DS	
• His dam has earned star through progeny			*DG	
Progeny[4]	+B; ++B	+S; ++S	+DS; +DAR	+B; ++B
A. 3 daughters from 3 different dams who have earned AR star	+B (AR)	AR +S	+DAR	+B
B. 2 sons that have earned AR plus	+B (AR)	AR +S		+B
C. A and B above	++B (AR)	AR ++S		++B
D. 3 daughters from 3 different dams who have earned star	+B (ST)	+S (ST)	+DS	+B
E. 2 sons that have earned plus (ST)	+B (ST)	+S (ST)	+DS[2]	+B
F. Has one AR son and one plus (ST) son	+B (ST)	+S (ST)		+B
G. 2 daughters that have star, and 1 son that has earned plus (AR)	+B (ST)	+S (ST)	+DS[5]	+B
H. 2 daughters that have star, and 1 son that has earned plus (ST)	+B (ST)	+S (ST)	+DS[5]	+B
I. Combined 2 different qualifications (D, E, F, G &/or H)	++B (ST)	++S (ST)	2+DS[6]	++B

[1]Dam must have earned *M AR on milk volume and butterfat or a *M ST doe (milk volume and butterfat both for if O/S ST).

[2]sons from 2 different dams

[3]Over height bucks (>23.0") at the time they become eligible for the award will not receive the award. NDGA recommends having bucks Height Certified at the age of 3 years and recorded on their Registration papers.

[4]With NDGA, multiple +DS awards can be earned through additional progeny with different dams (eg 2+DS for 6 daughters who earn *DD(*DAR or *DLT) of 6 different dams.

[5]Daughters from 2 different dams

[6]Bucks may receive several Progeny Award (+DS) certificates, but there may be no doubling of offspring or their dams.

[7] AR*D must meet both milk and butterfat requirements.

In addition to production, conformation is vitally important to ensure a long productive lifespan. Dairy goat judging at shows as well as at linear appraisal sessions strives to recognize animals with the structural traits which are correlated with enabling longevity and production as well as some traits that are more cosmetic or breed "type" traits (color, nose shape, ears, etc) which contribute more to "form" than "function". Titles are awarded to does and bucks who win a number of championships under a number of different judges with minimum numbers of competitors. Rules vary by registry, in addition to which traits receive more emphasis during judging. *Tables 5, 6,* and *7* show the judging scorecards used by the 4 different registries for does, junior does and bucks respectively.

Table 5: Doe Show Scorecard

		ADGA	AGS	NDGA	MDGA
General Appearance		**35**	**35**		**35**
	Stature	2			
	General appearance			12	
	Style, upstandingness, length of bone, & femininity		3		3
	Head & Breed Characteristics	5	6	5	6
	Front End Assembly	5	4	5	4
	Back: Topline & rump (& neck MDGA)	8	8		8
	Rump			10	
	Legs, Pasterns, Feet	15	14		14
	• Fore legs		4	3	
	• Rear legs		4	3	
	• Fore feet & pasterns		3	2	
	• Rear feet & pasterns		3	2	
Dairy Strength		**20**	**15**		**25**
	Angularity		3	6	10
	General openness, flat bone, sharp withers, width				10
	Neck		3	4	
	Withers		3		
	Ribs				3
	Flank				
	Thighs				
	Skin				2
	Skin & Ribs		3	4	
	Thighs & Flank		3		
Body Capacity		**10**	**15**		**10**
	Chest	4	7	10	5
	Barrel	6	8	10	5
Mammary System		**35**	**35**	**24**	**30**
	Udder Support	13	12	3	7
	Fore Udder	5	6	7	5
	Rear Udder	7	7	6	6
	Balance, Symmetry & Quality	6	6	4	8
	Teats	4	4	4	4
Totals		100	100	100	100

Table 6: Junior Doe Scorecard

		ADGA	AGS	NDGA	MDGA
General Appearance		**55**	**56**		
	Stature	2			
	General appearance			12	
	Style, upstandingness, length of bone, & femininity		3		4
	Head & Breed Characteristics	10	10	5	10
	Front End Assembly	8	8	5	10
	Back: Topline & rump (& neck MDGA)	12	13		14
	Rump			10	
	Legs, Pasterns, Feet	23	22		22
	• Fore legs		6	3	
	• Rear legs		6	3	
	• Fore feet & pasterns		5	2	
	• Rear feet & pasterns		5	2	
Dairy Strength		**30**	**22**		
	Angularity		4	6	9
	General openness, flat bone, sharp withers, width				9
	Neck		4	4	
	Withers		5		
	Ribs				4
	Flank				
	Thighs				
	Skin				3
	Skin & Ribs		4	4	
	Thighs & Flank		5		
Body Capacity		**15**	**22**		
	Chest	7	10	10	8
	Barrel	8	12	10	7
Totals		100	100	76	100

Table 7: Buck Show Scorecard

		ADGA	AGS	NDGA	MDGA
General Appearance		**55**	**56**		**60**
	Stature	2			
	General appearance			15	
	Style, upstandingness, length of bone, & masculinity		3		4
	Head & Breed Characteristics	8	12	8	10
	Front End Assembly	10	7	8	10
	Back: Topline & rump (& neck MDGA)	10	10		14
	Rump			10	
	Legs, Pasterns, Feet	25	24		22
	• Fore legs		6	5	
	• Rear legs		7	6	
	• Fore feet & pasterns		5	3	
	• Rear feet & pasterns		6	3	
Dairy Strength		**30**	**22**		**20**
	Angularity		4	7	8
	General openness, flat bone, sharp withers, width				8
	Neck		4	5	
	Withers		5		
	Ribs				2
	Flank				
	Thighs				
	Skin				2
	Skin & Ribs		4	7	
	Thighs & Flank		5		
Body Capacity		**15**	**22**		**20**
	Chest	7	10	13	10
	Barrel	8	12	10	10
Totals		100	100	100	100

When goats have earned titles, typically the stars and plusses are added to the registered names as suffixes. Show awards are added as prefixes once the animal wins the required number of Championships under the required number of judges as defined by the registries. In addition, ADGA and AGS have a modification of the permanent Champion prefix if milk production merit is also awarded. For instance, an ADGA permanent champion will have the CH prefix, and when she earns her *M, the prefix will be changed to GCH. For AGS, "AR" is added to Master permanent Champion, MCH, if AR milk requirements are met. These modified champion titles also apply to bucks.

Table 8: Milk & Show Titles

		ADGA	AGS	NDGA	MDGA
Milk suffix					
	Doe	*M	*D	*DP, *DD, *DAR, *DAR+, *DLT, *DLT+	*P
	Buck	*B, +B, ++B, +*B, ++*B	*S, +S, ++S, +*S, ++*S	*DS, *DG, +DS, +DAR, 2+DS	*B, +B, ++B, +*B, ++*B
Show prefix	Doe & Buck	CH	MCH	PGCH	FCH
Show & Milk prefix	Doe & Buck	GCH	ARMCH		FMCH
Virtual Show					VCH
Virtual Show & Milk					VMCH
Live & Virtual Show					FVCH
Live & Virtual Show & Milk					FVMCH
Superior Genetics[1] prefix		SG			
Superior Genetics[1] & Show prefix		SGCH			

[1]Must be in the top 15% (85th percentile ranking or higher) and have a Production Type Index value of 0 or greater for their breed in either PTI 2:1 or PTI 1:2 or both at least once in their lifetime.

The National DHI program has also been useful in tracking conformational qualities in dairy cattle to enhance longevity, and is now in use to monitor structural traits in dairy goats. ADGA's linear appraisal program is essential for providing the data to the national database. Highly trained judges assess certain hereditable traits on a linear scale (1-50) which ranks these "linear" traits on the normal biological variation of each trait within the species. The intermediate/average is set at 25 for each trait. There are 13 primary linear traits and one secondary linear trait which can be categorized as "form" or "structural".

Table 9: ADGA Linear Appraisal Program – Linear Traits

Linear Traits (1-50)	**Trait**	**Trait Type**
Form	Stature	Primary
	Strength	Primary
	Dairyness	Primary
Structure	Rump angle	Primary
	Rump width	Primary
	Rear legs, side view	Primary
	Fore udder attachments	Primary
	Rear udder height	Primary
	Rear udder arch	Primary
	Medial Suspensory Ligament	Primary
	Udder depth	Primary
	Teat placement	Primary
	Teat diameter	Primary
	Rear Udder – Side View	Secondary

In addition to the linear traits above, appraisers evaluate other structural and functional traits and score them as the percentage of "ideal", and give a letter score based on the category the score falls into (E, V, +, A, F, or P). *Table 10* lists the traits evaluated.

Table 10: Structural and Functional Traits

Structural & Functional Traits (% of Ideal)	
	Head
	Shoulder assembly
	Front legs
	Rear legs
	Feet
	Back
	Rump
	Udder texture

Score (% of Ideal)	
Excellent (E)	90 and above
Very Good (V)	85 - 89
Good Plus (+)	80 - 84
Acceptable (A)	70 - 79
Fair (F)	60 - 69
Poor (P)	59 and below

Finally, the appraiser scores the four major categories (3 for bucks and young stock) as shown in *Table 11*. The major categories are scored using the percent of ideal levels also used for the structural and functional traits. Based on the scores in each of the categories,

and with the weighting given to each category commensurate with that used in the show scorecard, a Final Score is calculated as a numerical value. In print, the scores may be listed after the age at appraisal (yr-mo) in the order of the major categories listed below For example "03-02 89 VEEV" means the doe was 3 years and 2 months old at appraisal, had a final score of 89, with V in General Appearance and Mammary, and E in Dairy Strength and Body Capacity.

Table 11: Major Categories and Weighting for Final Score

Major Categories (% of Ideal)		**Doe – category weighting for FS**	**Buck – category weighting for FS**
	General appearance	35%	55%
	Dairy Strength	20%	30%
	Body Capacity	10%	15%
	Mammary	35%	
Final Score (1-100)			

What about those goats I noticed in my dairy goat periodical, SGCH ARMCH PGCH FMCH Herdname SI Jane Doe 2*M 3*D 2*DLT+ *P 03-02 89 VEEV and her littermate brother SGCH ARMCH PGCH FMCH Herdname SI John Buck ++*B ++*S 2+*DS ++*B 03-02 89 VEE? I hope this review provides a "cheat sheet" of sorts for deciphering those codes. Enjoy creating your own "Alphabet Soup" of accolades!

Resources

American Dairy Goat Association (ADGA)
http://www.adga.org/

- Production Testing
- Scorecard
- Linear appraisal

American Goat Society (AGS)
http://www.americangoatsociety.com/

- Production Testing
  http://www.americangoatsociety.com/milkpail/dhi_rules_procedures.php
- Scorecard
  http://www.americangoatsociety.com/education/scorecard_faulting.php

Nigerian Dwarf Goat Association (NDGA)
http://www.ndga.org/

- Production Testing
  http://www.ndga.org/milk-program-rules.html and
  http://www.ndga.org/305-day-chart-for-milk--butterfat.html
- Scorecard
  http://www.ndga.org/scorecard.html

Miniature Dairy Goat Association (MDGA)
http://www.miniaturedairygoats.net/index.html

- Production Testing
  http://www.miniaturedairygoats.net/milk_testing.html
- Scorecard
  http://www.miniaturedairygoats.net/judges_scorecard.html