

SETTING UP THE FARM



In 1999 Carla and Ann-Marie purchased Sutton Grange Organic Farm, 204 acres of free draining granitic, sandy loam. A dairy, cheese factory and sheds were built. The last 20,000 gallon water tank was installed in 2011.

The farm is situated east of Castlemaine, on 204 acres of rolling granite plains, 90 minutes north of Melbourne, 20 minutes east of Castlemaine and 30 minutes south of Bendigo. The farm is 320 metres above sea level and has an annual rainfall of 600mm. In summer temperatures are often in the 30°C – 38°C range and in winter the nights can be as low as -5°C with the day 12 – 20°C. Autumn and spring bring milder weather.

Carla and Ann-Marie have established an organically certified goatherd (milking 80 goats) and farm cheese production (approx 10 tonnes per year) (National Association for Sustainable Agriculture Australia, NASAA). The cheese is marketed under the name ‘Holy Goat’. The goats have free range access to a rich variety of predominantly native grasses, herbs and shrubs. These deep rooted, fibrous pastures suit the natural feeding habits of goats and produce high quality sweet milk and cheeses with unique complexity and depth.

Holy Goat cheeses are all produced to capture the delicacy of goats’ milk. The cheese production is based on a slow lactic acid fermentation of the milk to produce delicate soft curds. Cheese is made everyday at Holy Goat. The cheese is sold to local, Melbourne and Sydney delicatessens and restaurants and at farmers markets. The cheese is highly regarded and we sell all of the cheese we produce.

There are 120 Saanen and British Alpine Goats in the herd. The goats are beautiful animals to work with – they are loving, playful, naughty and intelligent. Carla and Ann-Marie wouldn’t be cheese makers if we couldn’t care for the land and the goats that produce the milk. It’s the balance of these activities that makes their life fulfilling.