



Present Situation And Trends In The Cyprus Sheep And Goat Sector

C. Papachristoforou* , G. Hadjipavlou# ,

D. Miltiadou* , O. Tzamaloukas*

***Cyprus University of Technology**

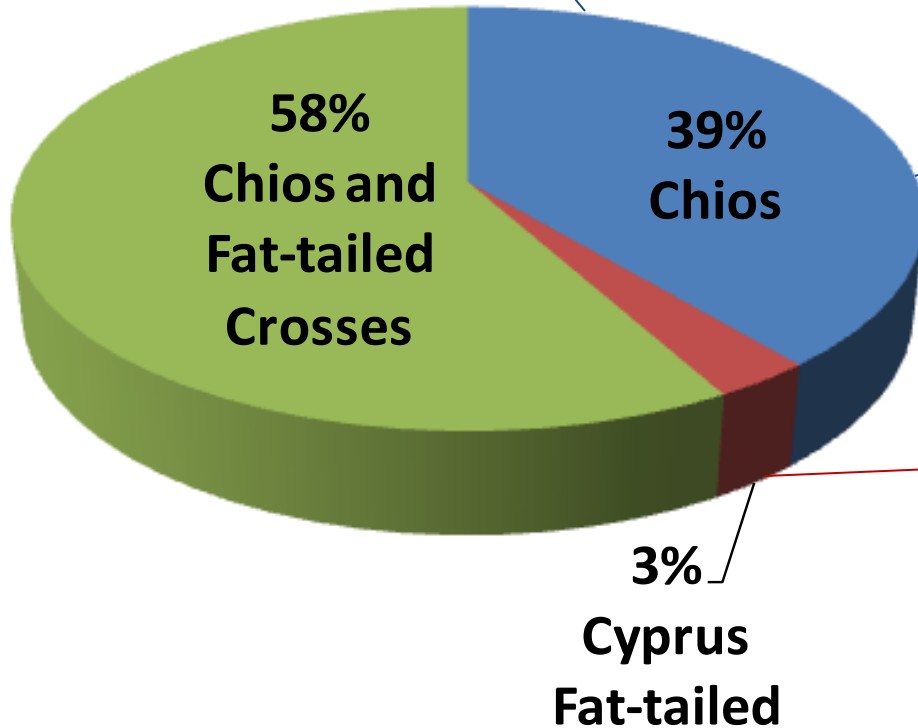
#Agricultural Research Institute, Cyprus

Introduction

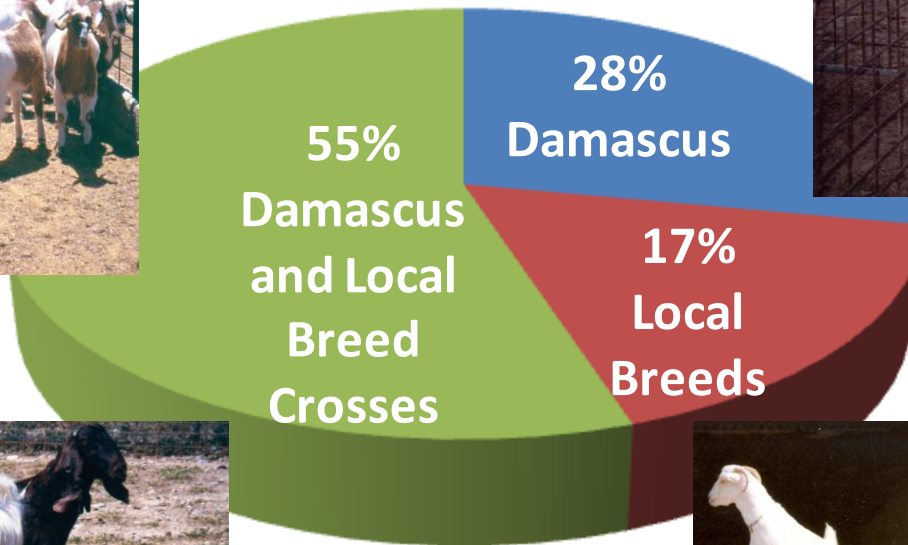
The sheep and goat sector:

- **Important part of animal production in Cyprus**
- **Contributes ~18% to the total value of animal production**
- **Faces challenges of different types**
- **Does not fulfill its full economic and production potential**

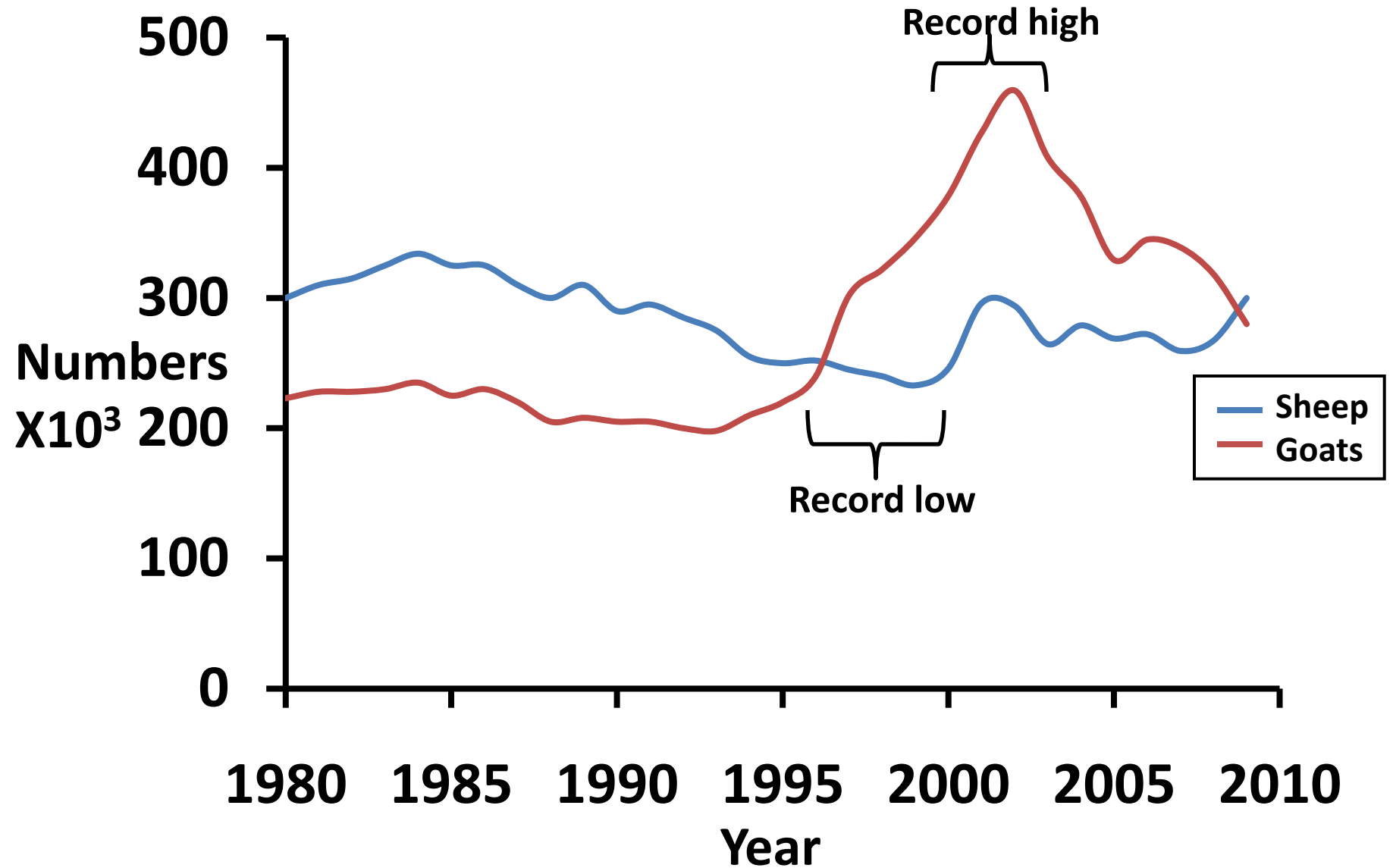
Breed Composition of Sheep



Breed Composition of Goats



Sheep and Goat Populations



Sheep and Goat Populations

Sheep population

- Stabilised around 300,000
- 30-year record low between 1995-2000 (mean 244,000)

Goat population

- 280,000 in 2009, exhibiting downward trend
- 30-year record high between 1999-2003 (mean 404,000)
- Recent population changes associate with management of scrapie disease
- Population trends correlate with meat and milk production

Sheep and goat products

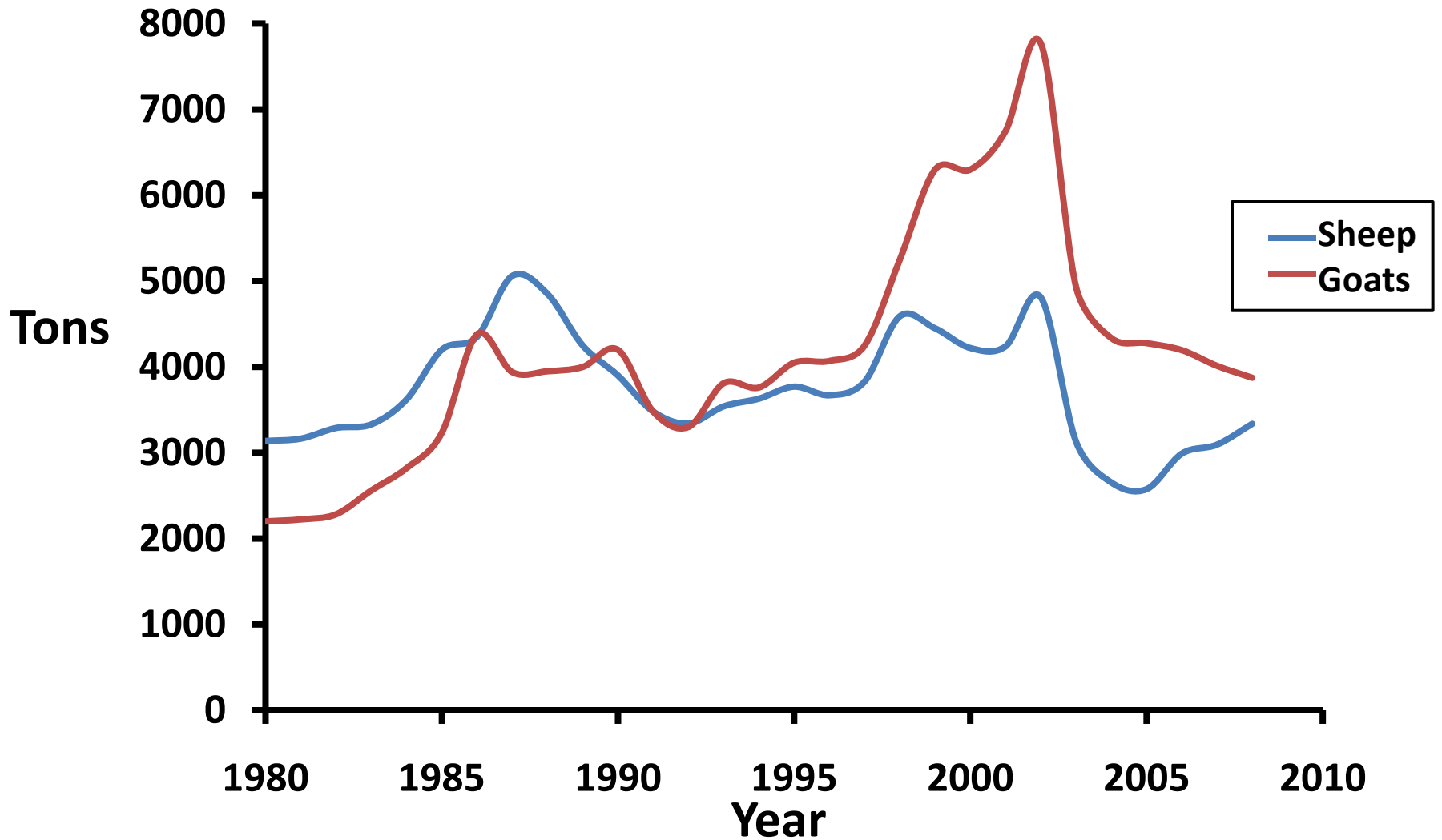
Meat production

- Covers ~90% of consumer demand
- Corresponds to 7% of total meat production
- Contributes 10% to the total value of animal production



Sheep and goat products

Meat



Sheep and goat products

- **Animals slaughtered in 2008**

Species	Number
Lambs	134 484
Kids	140 997

- **Majority of lambs and kids slaughtered at 3-6 months old**

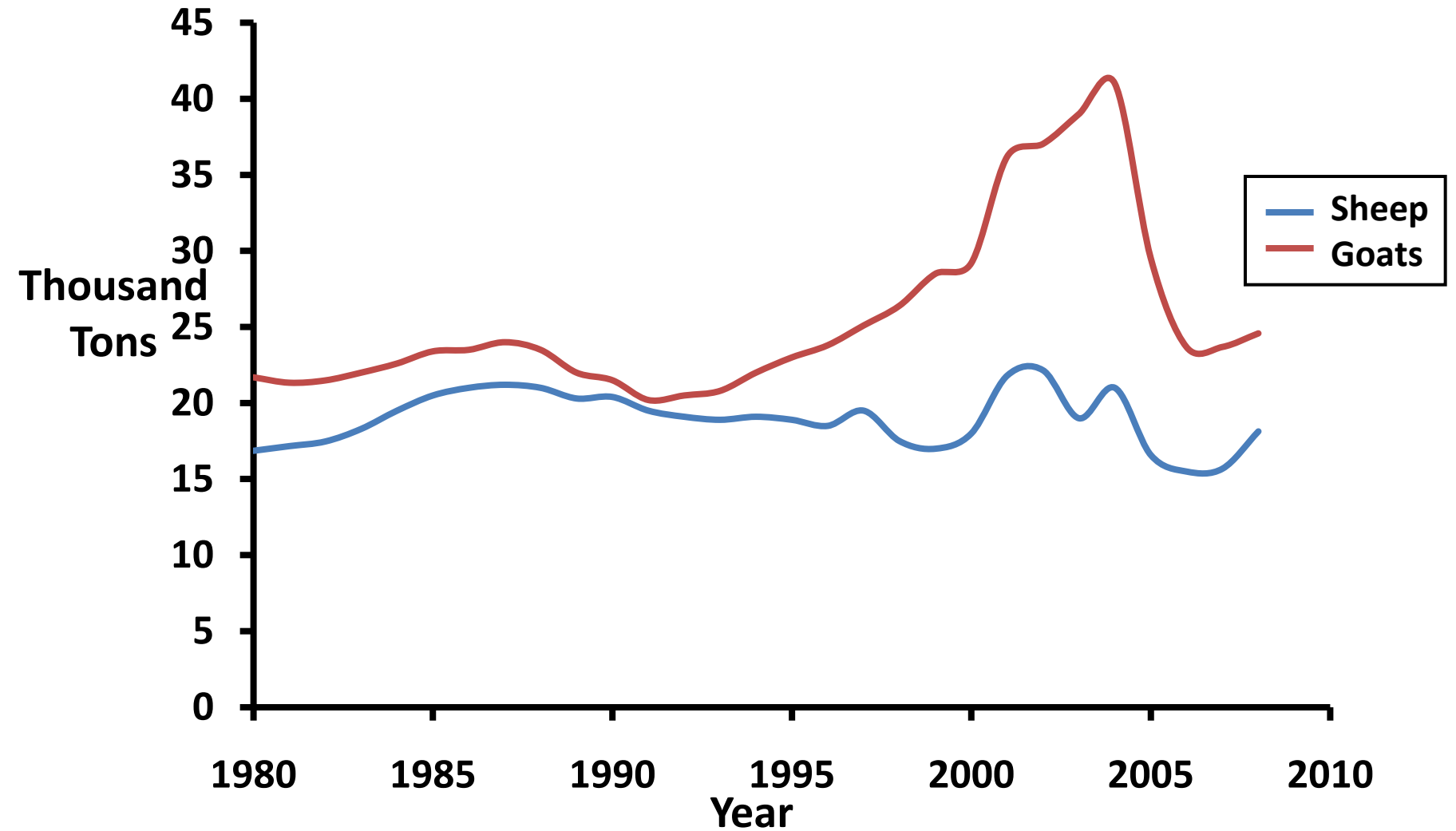
- **Increased demand around Christmas and Easter**

- **Carcass categories**

Age Category (months)	Percentage Slaughtered	Average Carcass Weight
0-3	8%	13.0
3-6	65%	15.0-18.0
6-9	15%	25.0
9-12	12%	35.0

Sheep and goat products

Milk



Value of sheep and goat products

Quantities and values for 2008

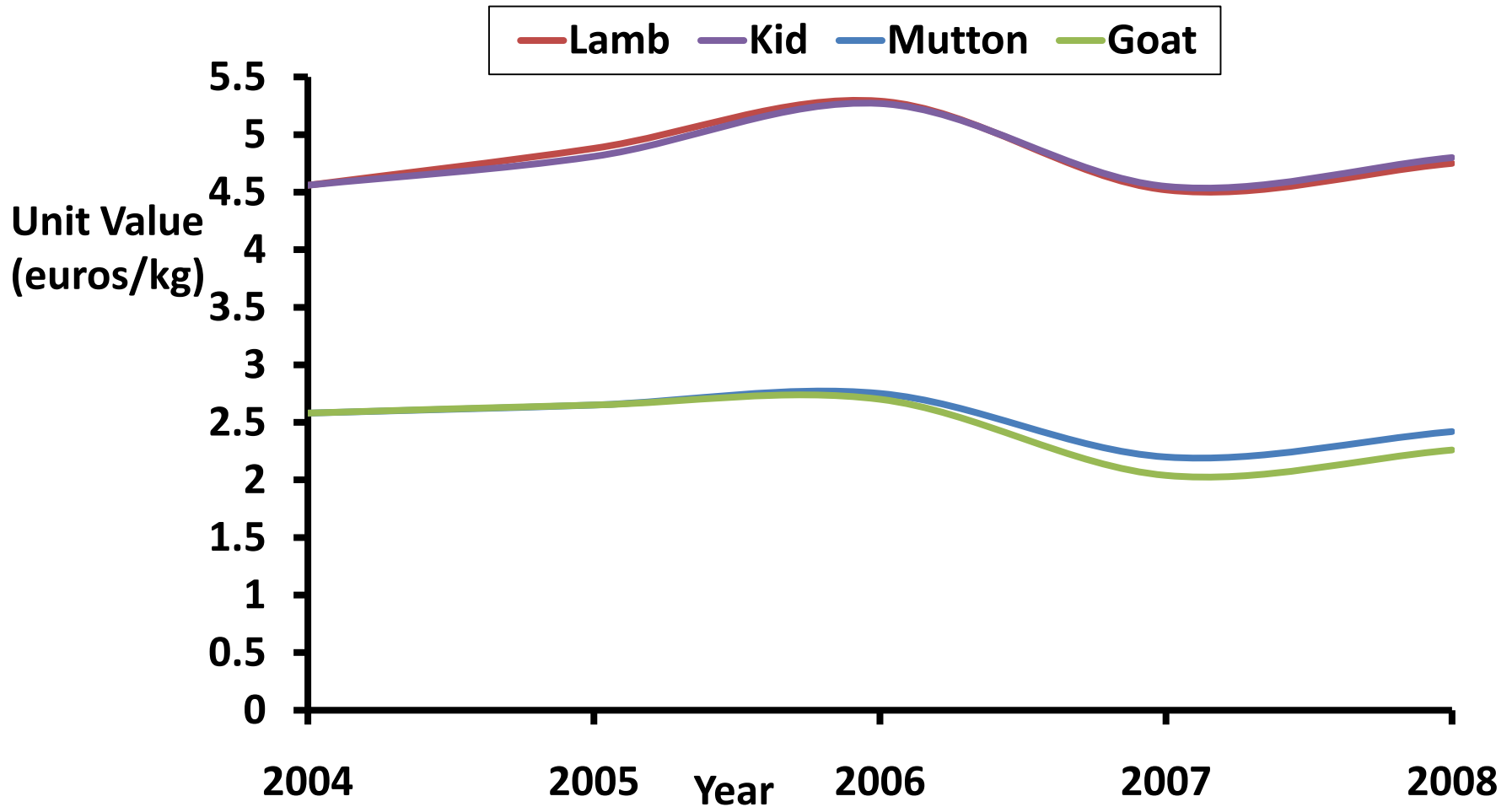
Source		Quantity (tons)	Value (€ 000's)	Total value (€ 000's)
Sheep	Meat	3337	14294 (47.8 %)	29909
	Milk	18136	15615 (52.2%)	
Goat	Meat	3874	16097 (54.9 %)	29332
	Milk	24581	13225 (45.1%)	

Sheep and goat milk:

- **Corresponds to 22% of total milk production in Cyprus**
- **Contributes 8% to the total value of animal production**

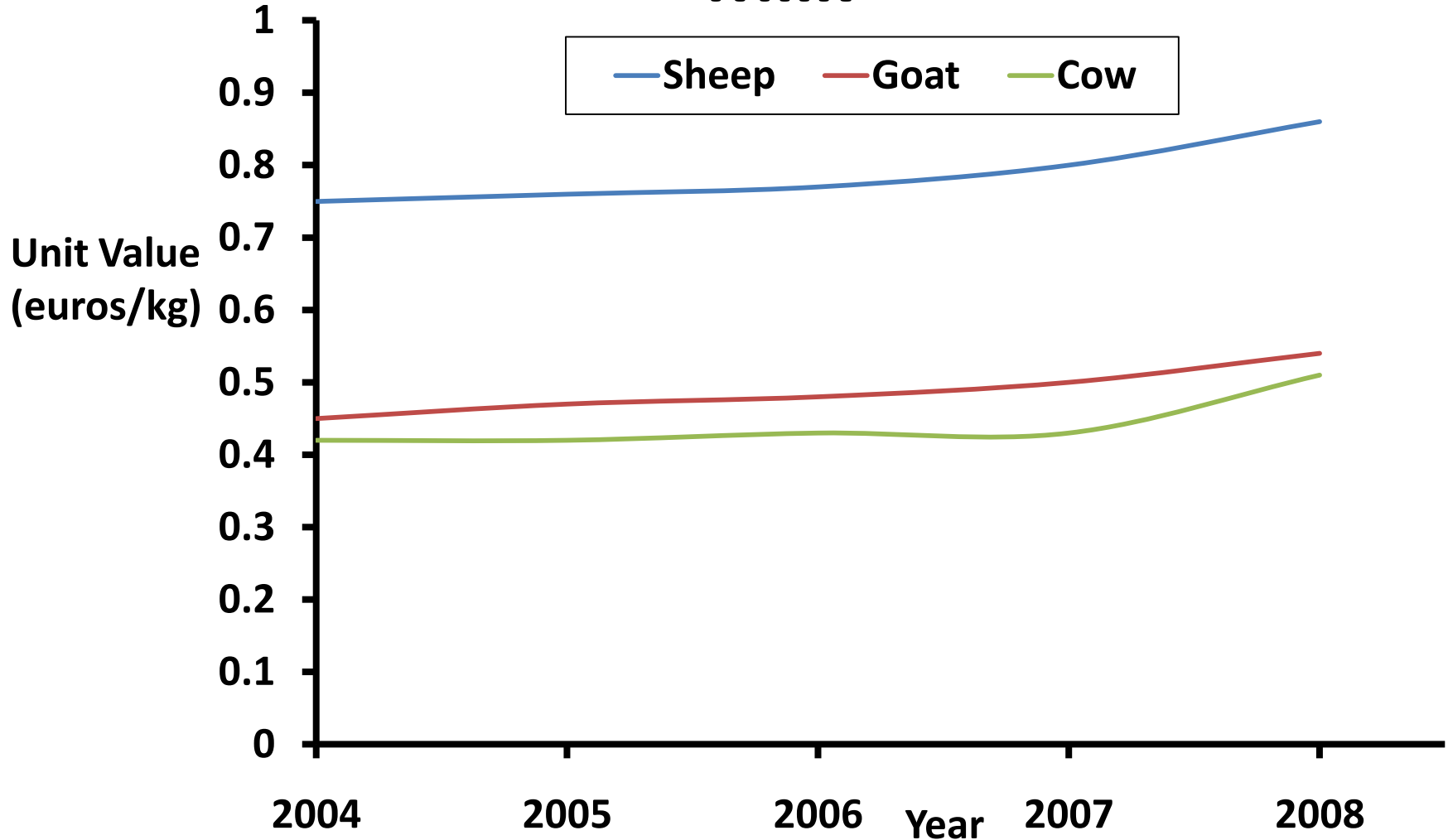
Value of sheep and goat products

Meat



Farm-gate price of raw milk

Milk



Sheep and Goat Farm Description

Animals Kept	Average flock size	Percentage of total farm units (%)
Sheep	150	21
Goats	110	46
Sheep & Goats	198 (106 & 92)	33

➤ Only 20% of milk produced is processed on farm

Main products:

- Local haloumi cheese
- Yogurt
- Anari (whey cheese)



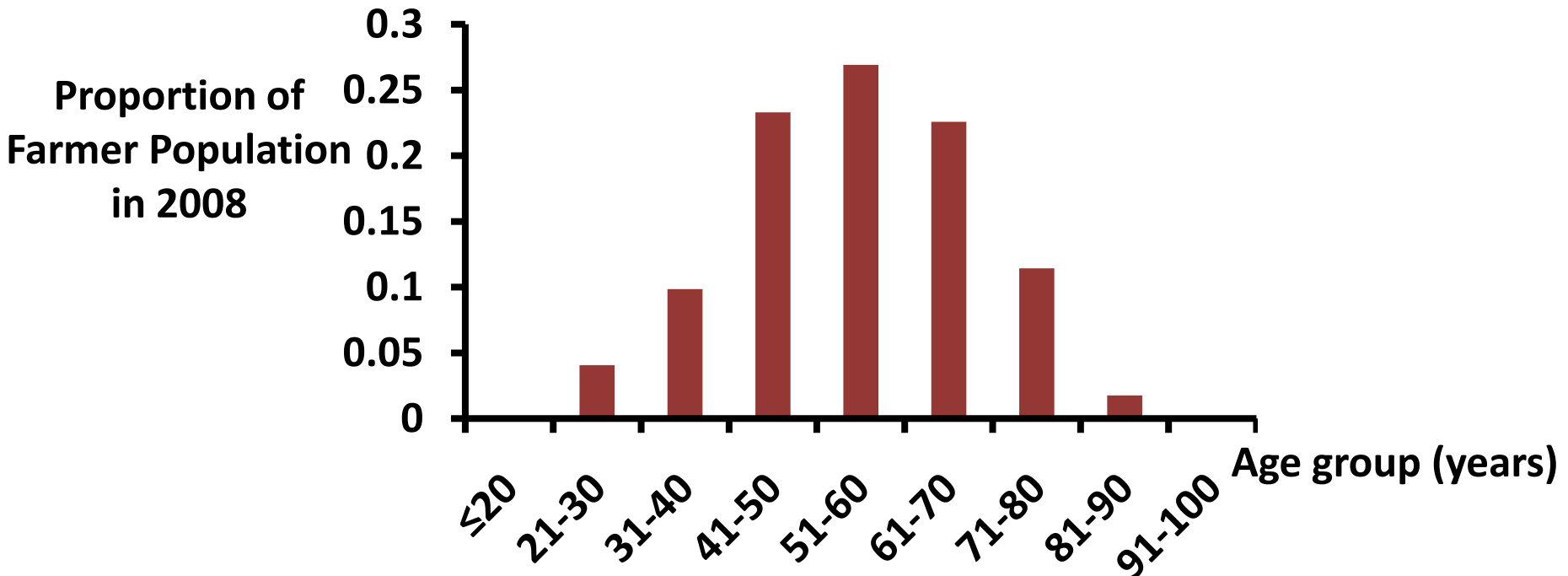
Trends and Challenges for the Sheep and Goat Sector

- X Declining number of farming units**
 - 34% reduction from 2000 to 2008
- X Ageing farmers' population**
- X Variable climatic conditions**
 - roughage production
 - natural vegetation availability
- X Farming systems not sustainable as implemented**
- ✓ Family business a strong element of sheep and goat farming**

➤ Farmers' Age

A marker for the future of the sheep and goat sector

- Majority of farmers are 40-70 years old
- Only 4% of the farmers are under 30 years of age
- Consistent decline in the 31-40 age group



➤ Farming Systems

a) Semi-intensive (high input)

- High input in capital (animal feed) and labour
- Less investment in infrastructure and technology

❖ **Sensitive to fluctuations in feed prices**

b) Semi-extensive (medium input)

- Restricted use of natural vegetation
- Roughage and silage production (rain-fed crops)

❖ **Sensitive to climate change (e.g. drought effects)**

c) Extensive (low input)

- Exploitation of natural vegetation
- Concentrate supplements during critical periods

❖ **Only 5-10% of farms (mostly goats)**

➤ Labour in Sheep and Goat Farms

YEAR	FAMILY LABOUR	EXTERNAL (HIRED) LABOUR	TOTAL LABOUR
2004	4774 (88%)	661 (12%)	5435
2005	4654 (88%)	637 (12%)	5291
2006	4488 (86%)	724 (14%)	5212
2007	4240 (85%)	742 (15%)	4982
2008	3863 (84%)	735 (16%)	4598

- Declining total number of individuals working in the sector
- Sheep and goat farming largely a family business
- Somewhat increasing contribution of external (hired) labour

Future Prospects

Actions needed to ensure competitiveness and sustainability

A) For sheep and goats:

- **Breeding healthy, disease resistant animals (e.g. Scrapie)**
- **Conservation of local breeds /genetic resources
(well-adapted to climatic conditions/changes)**
- **Research to identify genetic markers for enhanced production, reproduction and health of sheep and goats**
 - **A collaborative project between the Cyprus University of Technology, the Agricultural Research Institute and other institutions is in progress
(funded by the Cyprus Research Promotion Foundation)**

Future Prospects

Actions needed to ensure competitiveness and sustainability

B) For sheep and goat products:

- Higher on-farm processing of milk products
- Added value of sheep and goat products

C) For sheep and goat farmers:

- Incentives for young individuals to continue family business
- Support for new sheep and goat farmers
- Enhanced education, knowledge transfer and extension services

Thank you for your attention

