Preface

Dorper sheep and Boer goat are two breeds indigenous to South Africa that have brought much joy and welfare throughout the world. With these breeds’ outstanding characteristics in terms of adaptability to various environments, hardiness, high fertility and, most importantly, superior growth rate and carcass quality, it is not surprising that a special issue of Small Ruminant Research is dedicated to report on these remarkable breeds of sheep and goats.

With the need world-wide to socially uplift and help especially the rural small-scale farmer, these animals create an opportunity to provide in a growing demand for animal protein. Whether it is extensive or under-intensive production system, the Dorper and Boer goat is ideal for the commercial and stud breeder. This issue is, thus, aimed at demonstrating the versatility and potential of these breeds, whether it is in temperate, the tropics or the semi-to-arid areas of the world. With this edition, an opportunity is created to condense a magnitude of multi-disciplinary information and make it available for researchers, producers and education and extension specialists — to the benefit of all.

This publication is hopefully the first of a series of special issues to be periodically published by Small Ruminant Research. The objective is to high-light certain specialized areas or outstanding species that can contribute to creating sustainable animal production systems around the world.

Small Ruminant Research has already published numerous articles dealing with the Dorper sheep and Boer goats, abstracts of these articles are reprinted in this issue to add information not already included in the reviews.

The editors wish to thank the contributors to this special issue for their valuable contributions. They have provided state-of-the-art information in their respective specialization.

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