

Why would a biotech company keep a secret herd of goats?

The typical image of a modern biological research lab involves high-tech machinery and table-sized microscopes; at most, there might be some dishes of cells or a few mice floating around. For people with those images in mind, yesterday's [odd report](#) on how federal inspectors were surprised to find 841 goats at a California biotech facility they didn't even know existed might come as a surprise. Why, you might wonder, would Santa Cruz Biotechnology need a secret herd of goats at all?

As it turns out, goats (along with rabbits and a handful of other animals) play a key role in modern bioscience—but on the supply side, not the research side. A paper found in a major science journal might well have depended on a goat in some way; it's just that the lab never saw the animal. Instead, the goat probably lived at a facility like the one that's under investigation, while the research lab received the goat's contribution via a UPS shipment.

So what does a goat (or a bunny) offer a biologist? Antibodies.

View the full article here: [Why would a biotech company keep a secret herd of goats?](#)