

Goat Care and Maintenance

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Signs of a healthy goat. . .

- Eyes clear and bright. Tearing or cloudy eyes probably mean a pinkeye infection.
- Coat smooth and shiny - A dull coat could indicate parasites. Fluffed up coat means the goat is not feeling well.
- Good appetite
- Attitude alert - Hunched back and droopy tail mean something is wrong.

Feed

- A goat requires at least 2% of its body weight in feed per day to maintain its weight.
- You have to increase that amount for the goat to gain. Its not easy to make goats gain.
- You're doing pretty well if it gains 1/4 lb. per day.

Pasture

- Pasture is ultimate source of roughage
- Goats are browsers not grazers
- Be sure to provide mineral and protein
- Rotation grazing helps control parasites
- Rotation grazing boosts forage yields

Hay

- For adults, make good quality hay available
 - Never feed moldy hay (known to contribute to goat polio)
- Mix Hay of Grass, Alfalfa & Clover is ideal
- Grass Hay
- Alfalfa
- Start kids on good, leafy alfalfa hay that is topped with a small amount of grain. Slowly increase the selected ration.
- Hay is normally fed during the first part of the feeding program but should be eliminated in the later stages to prevent goats from developing a large stomach.

Feed

- Does & Bucks (adult)

- Suggested Grain Ration Ingredients*

Coarse Corn

Oats (whole)

Extruded Soy Beans 38% or Soy Beans

Vitamin A,D & E

Iodized Salt

Soybean oil

Ammonium Chloride

Coccidiostat

* For more info see the links & info page on www.vkvboers.com

Ration Quantities

- Never make abrupt changes in your feeding program. Make gradual feed changes so your goat will stay on feed and continue to grow and develop.
- Suggested Grain Ration Quantities (Adult Does)
 - Dry Does – no grain
 - 5 weeks Pre-breeding, start with $\frac{1}{2}$ lb per day and increase up to 1 lb per day per animal
 - Nursing does – 1-2 lb per day per animal
- Suggested Grain Ration Quantities (Adult Bucks)
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ lb per day depending on workload

Feed for Kids

- Start kids on creep feed early
 - Make available at 2 weeks
 - Big Gain Kid Starter 18% pellets work great
 - An 18% complete pelleted starter containing Deccox for the control of coccidiosis. This pellet, formulated for young kids ages 0-4 months, contains a blend of multiple carbohydrate sources for superior performance.
 - **NOTE:** DO NOT supplement with other minerals as the Big Gain has all the mineral they need and an added mineral will provide too much **phosphorus** which could cause Urinary Calculi.



Water

- *Water* – All animals need adequate supply of fresh, clean water
- *Water* should never be totally removed from the goat. However, rationing water before a show will help remove the “fill” and improve the goat’s appearance in the show ring.

Mineral

- Mineral is important for efficient growth
- Mineral is important to health and breeding
- Mineral – Goats **NEED** copper
 - Sheep can't have copper so use care if raising both goats and sheep together
 - Purina Goat Mineral is a good option
 - Sweetlix Goat Mineral Blocks (make sure it's not the “all in one” as that lacks copper)
 - Mineral or feed ration should have ammonium chloride to a ration will help prevent urinary calculi.



General Maintenance

- Hoof Trimming

- Have to trim hooves 1 or 2 times a year

- Vaccinations

- CD&T (overeaters + Tetanus)

- Kids before 8 weeks + a booster before 12 weeks of age.
- Does and Bucks need once a year booster

Worming

- Worm at least twice a year, more if needed
 - Valbazen
 - Panicure for pregnant does
- For more info, see the Parasites in Goats article posted on the links & info page at www.vkvboers.com

Disbudding/Banding

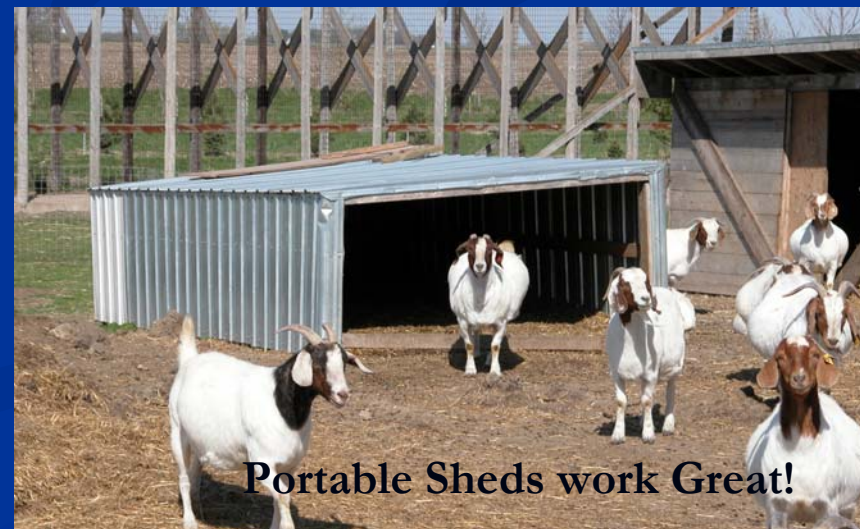
- If you plan to dehorn, it is preferred to “disbud” goats at 10 to 14 days of age. The older the goat is and the larger the horn, the more stressful it will be on the goat.
- **Tipping:** You should tip horns 4 to 6 weeks before the show to allow the horns to heal properly.
- Banding should be done as young as possible to reduce stress to the buck
- It is advisable to vaccinate your goats against tetanus before disbudding and/or castration

The Right Equipment

- One of the major advantages of a club goat project is that you do not need expensive facilities.
 - Adequate shelter
 - Feeders
 - Good fences are a must to keep goats safe
 - Gates make handling goats easier

Lodging

- Goats need shelter from wind and rain
 - They can handle the elements but...
 - They don't like to be wet
 - Ideally the shed area has at least 15 square feet of space for each goat.
 - They also need an area where they can get outside in the sunshine.
 - Ventilation is key – make sure your shelter has plenty of fresh air



A Sample Setup

- A few Gates and a Portable Shelter is all you need to create a home for your goats



Fence Feeders

- Self-feeders are preferred for feeding goats.
 - Self-feeders should be at least 6 inches off the ground.
 - If you hand-feed goats, use movable troughs that hang on the fence.



Hanging Fence Feeders (Hay Rack #3060) available at hoeggergoatsupply.com \$13.50

Wooden Feeders

- Wooden feeders can be used to feed both hay and grain
- Less sterile feeding surface than metal feeders



Plans to build Available at
premier1supplies.com



VKV Double-Sided Feeders

- The “W” feed pan discourages kids from lying in the feeder and there’s less waste.
- Higher sides keep goats OUT!
- Basket allows feeding hay from the top
- Pans below for feeding grain
- Ends of grain pan are open for easy cleaning/drainage
- Easily feeds 12 animals



Available at vkvboers.com

VKV Round Bale Feeders

- Significant labor savings
- Goats can not get in it
- Specifically made for horned animals
- Reduces waste - hay doesn't spill through
- Feeds ~35 animals
- Accommodates any size/weight round bale
- Designed to safely load the feeder without endangering nearby animals



Available at vkvboers.com

Paddock Fencing

- The fence should be at least 42 inches high to keep goats from trying to jump.
- The most desirable pens are galvanized livestock panels 5 feet tall with 4-inch squares.
- Use electric scare wire on dividing fences
- Visit premier1supplies.com for fencing ideas

Pasture Fencing

- Electric is a must
- High tensile is the ultimate solution
- Be careful of “Woven Wire” fences
- Poly temp fence works well for dividing fences
- Standing water (river) over 4’ wide will work as a dividing fence

Gates

- Cattle Gates Do NOT keep goats in
- More Gates = less work when dealing with goats



Available at vkvboers.com

Head Gates

- Great for treating an animal who needs attention (hoof trimming, injury care, vaccination, tagging etc.)
- Portable Head Gates very handy
 - Can be attached to any solid structure: 4 wheeler, gate, tree, feeder
 - Light-weight & easy to move, take the head gate to the animal rather than bringing the animal to it
 - Use it in the kidding pen for grafting or milking



Warming Huts

- If you're planning to kid, warming huts are nice & cozy...



Thank You!

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