

LET'S TALK GOATS!

Basic Goat Facts

- Female goats are Does or Nannies
- Male goats are Bucks or Billies
- Young goats are Kids (AKA doelings or bucklings)
- Neutered males are Wethers
- Goats are herding animals and do get lonely when by themselves.
- Goats are intelligent animals
- Goats are good at climbing trees, cars and buildings
- Goats have a distinct pecking order (you will always have a "queen" in your herd.)
- Goats can live for 15 to 18 years and does can breed until well into their senior years.
- Goat milk is healthy and nutritious
- Goat milk is more digestible than cow's milk due to lactose molecule size (many lactose intolerant can drink goat milk)
- They are the smallest domesticated ruminant
- Goats are herbivores and are considered browsers and will eat leaves, grass, shrubs, etc.
- Goats have been used by mankind longer than cows or sheep

Goats need fresh water, dry fresh food, and a shelter. Not only can you milk goats, but their meat is tasty and goats usable on a homestead to eat down weeds and other vegetation.

What do goats eat? Hay is the general name for a number of dried grasses and legumes such as alfalfa and clover. Commonly used plants for hay include types of grasses such as Ryegrass, Timothy, Bluegrass & Orchard grass. Legume hays such as alfalfa and clover tend to be higher in protein. Feeding goats a mixed grass hay and other greens may be best as alfalfa can be too rich and may cause health problems. We feed our goats a mixture of alfalfa, alfalfa pellets, sweet grain, Chaffhaye (which is a naturally fermented alfalfa hay), soaked beet pulp, wheat/Austrian pea fodder, black oil sunflower seeds, fresh carrots and lettuce/chard and in the summer, weeds from our garden. We also have a mineral block out for them. We limit our corn and other straight grains to prevent belly aches.

This is just a partial list of what is poisonous to a goat: Avocado leaves, Foxglove, Black Walnut, Holly trees/bushes, Lilacs, Milkweed, Mountain Laurel, Nightshades (tomato plants leaves), Oleander, Rhubarb and Cherry leaves, Azalea, Red Maples, Lily of the Valley

Breeding your goats: Many goats breeds are seasonal breeders. They will go into heat in the fall (from August - December) We generally breed in mid-September for a February kidding season. Most goats' gestation is about **145-150 days**. We keep track of when our males and females breed so that we know approximate birth dates and can be home during a birthing to assist if needed.

Goats have horns! We have our babies disbudded at 10 days old using a heat dissbudder and wether any males with a bander that we aren't using for our breeding program. Find someone trustworthy to do this!! Horns do get stuck in fences. And disbudding can be dangerous if you do not know what you are doing.

Male goats are stinky!!! While in rut and around females in their breeding season, male goats have a "beautiful" smell, will urinate on themselves among other interesting actions and will call out to you and his ladies... Be careful, because you will look like a goat to him. Does seem to love it. But be warned it is extremely hard to get their stench out of your clothes and takes a good scrub to get the smell off of your skin. I have a single outfit that I wear when working with our males and I toss it at the end of the season. Males will knock down fences or anything in their path to get to the ladies. A males needs at least a 5 foot fence to prevent jumping over over for a "play-date". My males do live with my females during off-breeding season.

Although there are many different breeds of goats, our homestead chose to have Nubian Dairy goats. We milk twice a day, first thing in the morning and in the evening. We use their milk for drinking, baking, making butter, cheese, and yogurt. You must have at least 2 goats as they are herd animals and need companionship or they can get depressed and lonely. We both hand milk and use a manual milking machine from www.henrymilker.com.

You can purchase mix breeds of dairy/meat goats, full bred goats or registered purebreds goats. Our goats are all registered. The only real difference is that registered goats have proven bloodlines. This prevents inbreeding and gives healthier generations of goats for better milking lines. We carefully select our goats for their lineage and breed accordingly. This allows us to pick and choose who is breeding with whom. We currently have 3 bucks and 10 does on our homestead as well as several wethers. We plan on adding a new lines from Colorado to our herd in the spring as well.

Major Goat Diseases - CAE – Caprine Arthritis Encephalitis (CAE) is a virus that affects goats in multiple ways. Most often characterized by big knees, the virus also does irreparable damage to the lungs as well and affects the immune system leaving the goat defenseless against most common ailments. Can spread via milk from mama to babies and in saliva.

CL - Caseous Lymphadenitis (CL), also known in some parts of the world as "cheesy gland", is a disease that affects a goats lymphatic system, most often characterized by an external abscess - lump. CL manifests itself either internally, externally, or both and is very contagious to all other goats as well as humans. The size of the abscess is largely dependent upon the immune system and overall health of the goat. An abscess that is allowed to rupture will contaminate the ground for many years and infect other goats that come into contact. Likewise, a goat with internal CL can cough out the bacteria and spread it to other goats as well. There is not a vaccination that cures or prevents CL or CAE in goats. These two diseases are ones that goat breeders try to keep out of their herd.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A GOAT WHEN PURCHASING

1. General = Are they friendly? Do they interact with other goats, humans, dogs, etc? Check teeth, joints, chests, hips and lymph system. Check hooves. Check for lumps, runny nose and eyes? Is their general health good?
2. Does - Are their teats uniform? Breeding history? Did they lose any kids? Did you have to assist in birthing? Were they good moms? How much milk were you receiving? If a doe has already been milked, ask if you can put her up on a stand. Does she kick?
3. Bucks - who you want to use for breeding. Is there a record of babies sired? Check that their testicles are uniform.
4. If purchasing a kid - Are both parents on site? Can you interact with the parents to see their personalities and mannerisms? Have they been disbudded? Or are the polled (born hornless)?

COMMON BREEDS OF DAIRY GOATS IN THE US

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Nubians have very long floppy ears that should extend about 1 inch beyond the muzzle. They can be any color and should have a convex (Roman) nose. Nubians are one of the larger breeds of goats with a height requirement of 30 inches weighing around 135 pounds. This breed of goat tends to produce somewhat less milk than other breeds, but their milk tends to be higher in protein and butter fat content than other breeds. They tend to be a little bit more stubborn than other dairy goats and make a distinctive sound. Even Nubian kids sound like they are complaining. This is probably the most popular breed of dairy goat in the US. Most Nubian goats in the US derive from English lines developed by crossing English dairy goats with African and Indiana lop-eared breeds. [ADGA averages for 2010 lactations: 1835 lbs milk, 4.6% fat, and 3.7% protein] Nubians can withstand hotter climates. Nubians can more fleshy than most dairy goats and are used for meat as well as milk.

LaManchas have ears that are so small that it looks like they don't have ears at all and can be any color. The breed originated in Oregon from crosses of short-eared goats with Nubians. They have a straight nose and are a small breed. LaMancha does are required to be 28 inches in height and a weight of around 130 pounds. The LaMancha sound is typical of other goats. LaManchas are usually more calm and docile than other breeds. They are recognized to be a very productive breed of goats. [ADGA averages for 2010 lactations: 2246 lbs milk, 3.9% fat, and 3.1% protein]

Alpines (French Alpines, British Alpines, and Rock Alpines) can be almost any color, except solid white and light brown with white markings (characteristics of the Toggenburg breed). This breed originated in the French Alps and was first imported to the US in 1920. Their face should be straight and they have erect ears. They are a medium-large breed with a requirement of does to be 30 inches in height and around 135 pounds. They are popular with dairies due to the amount of milk they produce and they are recognized as the leading dairy goat breed for milk production. [ADGA averages for 2010 lactations: 2396 lbs milk, 3.3% fat, and 2.8% protein]

Oberhaslis (Swiss Alpines prior to 1978) have very specific color standards. They are a bay color known as Chamoise, with a black dorsal stripe, udder, belly, and black below the knees. They should also have a nearly black head. Another acceptable color would be all black, but this is only acceptable for does. They have erect ears and are considered a medium-small breed. Oberhaslis does are required to be 28 inches in height and weight around 120 pounds. They produce a moderately high amount of milk and milk components. [ADGA averages for 2010 lactations: 2256 lbs milk, 3.5% fat, and 2.9% protein]

Toggenburgs have very specific color requirements. They range in color from light fawn to dark chocolate and have white ears and white on their lower legs. The side of the tail and two stripes down the face must also be white. They have erect ears and they grow a shaggier coat than other dairy goat breeds. They have the smallest height requirement of 26 inches and weight around 120 pounds, but most of the Toggenburgs are moderate in size. The Toggenburgs are the oldest registered breed of any kind of livestock. They tend to be more spirited and less docile than other breeds. Toggs, as they are nicknamed, rank in the middle of breeds for average milk production, but one holds the all-time records! [ADGA averages for 2010 lactations: 2047 lbs milk, 3.0% fat, and 2.7% protein]

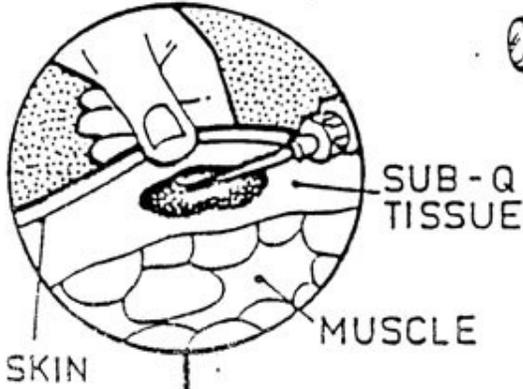
Saanens are usually pure white or light cream, but white is preferred. Their ears should be a medium size and carried erect, preferably pointing forward. They have short fine hair and often have a fringe over the spine and thighs. They have a straight or dished face. They originated in Switzerland, but now represent the second most popular breed of dairy goat in the US. The Saanens are the largest of all breeds with a required height of 30 inches and weighing around 135 pounds. They usually have a large udder capacity and are popular with dairies due to the quality of milk they produce. [ADGA averages for 2010 lactations: 2545 lbs milk, 3.2% fat, and 2.8% protein]

Nigerian Dwarf is a miniature breed of dairy goats. The balanced proportions of the Nigerian Dwarf give it an appearance similar to the larger, Swiss breeds of dairy goats. Shorter height is the primary breed characteristic of the Nigerian Dwarf, with does measuring no more than 22 ½ inches at the withers. They are known for their high quality milk, often with exceptionally high butterfat content. Their medium length ears are erect. The face is either straight or slightly dished. The coat is of medium length and straight. They are the only dairy breed known to occasionally have blue eyes. [ADGA averages for 2010 lactations: 729 lbs milk, 6.1% fat, and 4.4% protein]

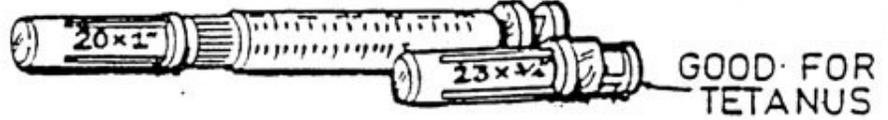
A common meat goat - **Boer** goat is primarily a meat goat with several adaptations to the region in which it was developed. It is a horned breed with lop ears and showing a variety of color patterns. The Boer goat is being used very effectively in South Africa in combination with cattle due to its browsing ability and limited impact on the grass cover. Producing weaning rates in excess of 160% the Boer goat doe is a low maintenance animal that has sufficient milk to rear a kid that is early maturing. The mature Boer Goat buck weighs between 240-300 lbs and ewes between 200-225 lbs. They can be bred with the dairy lines above.

INJECTION METHODS....

SUB-Q SUBCUTANEOUS INJECTION



MADE IN LOOSE SKIN OVER SHOULDERS OR NECK

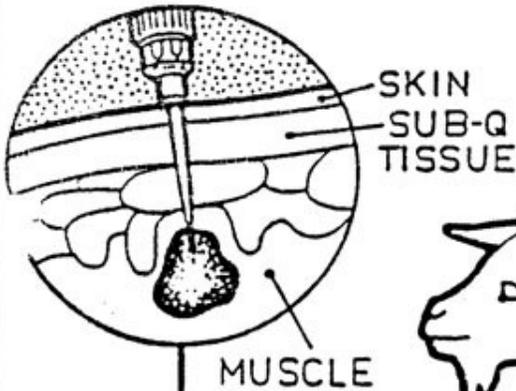


CLEAN SMALL AREA WITH ALCOHOL - PICK UP SKIN - INSERT NEEDLE - DISCHARGE DOSAGE

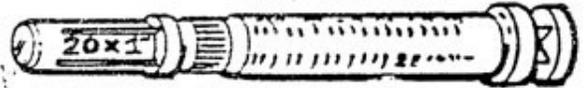
MASSAGE AREA AFTER SHOT



IM INTERMUSCULAR INJECTION

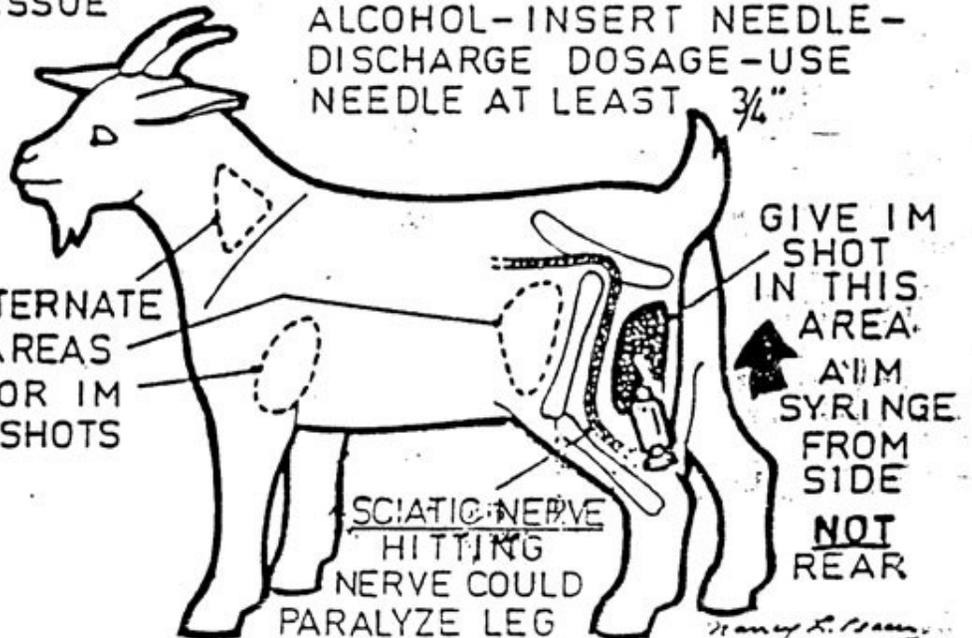


MADE DEEPLY INTO LARGE THIGH MUSCLE

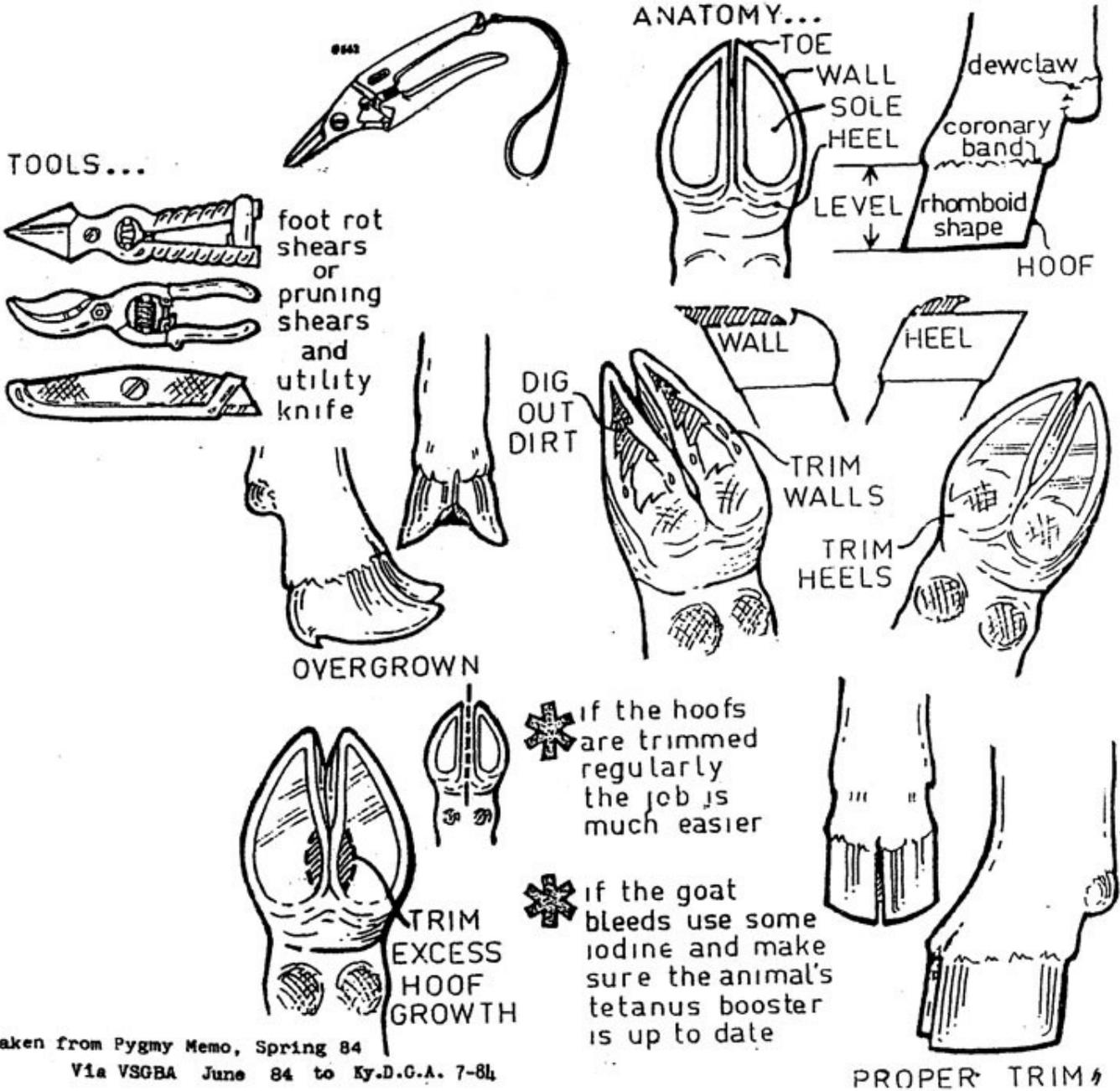


CLEANSE AN AREA WITH ALCOHOL - INSERT NEEDLE - DISCHARGE DOSAGE - USE NEEDLE AT LEAST 3/4"

ALTERNATE AREAS FOR IM SHOTS



- 1) If you are a beginner, help a friend trim their goat's hooves before tackling your own. *
 - 2) If your club feels like you could all use more practice hoof trimming, contact a goat producer with lots of goats and see if your club can trim their goats' hooves. As you are trimming, discuss the differences in leg and feet conformation that you observe among different goats.
 - 3) Teach a friend how to trim hooves or prepare a poster explaining how to trim hooves.
 - 4) Learn to sharpen shears or trimmers
 - 5) Survey a goat farm that is pasturing its goats and one that is keeping its goats in a bedded barn all the time and observe if there is any difference in how their hooves wear after trimming.
- * activity is suitable for cloverbuds.



Taken from Pygmy Memo, Spring 84
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