



The Goat Source

The Goat Source Newsletter Volume 4 Number 8 August 2007

Here is your August issue of The Goat Source Newsletter. It's been hot and dry here. We only got one major rain so far and it is long gone. The first cutting of hay was disappointing, really dry and weedy. Speaking of weeds, my kids are growing just like weeds! I am going to keep a black Nubian/Boer Cross wether and try to train him to pull a cart. His name is Chunky Monkey, and he is a real chunk!! He discovered the roof on the kid barn and now he will hop up and stomp around just to hear the noise!

Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to your friends.

WOOHOOO!!! Just after I reported a severe lack of rain – WE GOT 2 ½ Inches in two days!!! WOOOHOOOO!!!

What's New This Month?

- Why Do We Need Correct Conformation?
- This Month's Quiz...
- Classified Ads
- Check out my new Video
- Answer to the August Quiz
- Helpful Hints

Why Do We Need Correct Conformation?

When choosing to buy a doe or buck, why do we pay attention to how they look? After all, we are interested in how our goats perform, not just how pretty they look, aren't we? I for one, figure if I have to look at it every day, it's going to be pretty. But there is an even better reason – form follows function and good performance follows correct

conformation. All of the pieces need to fall together and fit correctly for a goat to function well and live a long, productive life.

Take, for example, a correct bite or how the jaws meet. Ideally, the teeth of the lower jaw should meet evenly with the gum of the upper palate. Under shot or overshot jaws can impair the goats ability to eat, ranging from mild to severe. A twisted or “wry” face can also cause difficulty in eating. Animals with these defects are not “pretty” as in they are not functional. Some breeds are more prone to these defects.

Correct feet and legs are a must – an animal that cannot walk certainly cannot maintain herself. Well shaped feet, strong pasterns and good bone will hold a doe (or buck) up and let them travel freely and easily. A goat that walks easily will eat more, drink more and stay in better shape, thus being much more productive. Does that stay fit have less trouble conceiving and carrying a pregnancy and deliver kids more easily. Bucks have less trouble servicing does and live longer if they are able to get around on strong feet and legs.

A well shaped and tightly attached udder is another must! Even on a doe that is not going to be milked, correct udder attachments will make life much easier for both you and the doe and kids. An udder that is lower than the hocks and loosely attached, will have lots of problems and may even cut a doe’s life short. A low hanging udder is prone to cuts, scratches, and bruises, which may lead to mastitis. A low udder is harder for kids to find in the first few hours of life and so you must be attentive and help the kid find its’ vital first meal. A tight, high udder eliminate most of these problems. Extra teats can be a problem. Some breeders will kill a kid that has extra teats, some breeders will just ignore them. It is a highly heritable trait, so you must decide if you will tolerate them in your herd. Note that extra teats or teats that have been cut off are considered a serious defect in dairy goats. Personally, any goat in my herd that has extra teats is a meat goat. I had one experience with kidding a goat with extra teats and ended up euthanizing the doe, due to mastitis problems.

Participating in programs such as showing and appraisal can help you determine how your goats “look” and how it will affect their performance and longevity. Make sure that “pretty face “ functions well and you will have a goat that lives a long and productive life!!

This Month's Quiz

What is a Burdizzo?

Classified Ads...



Look for this stylish and functional tote at The Goat Source Shirt Shop <http://www.cafepress.com/goatsource>

I can customize it with your herd name and logo! Just the thing to haul all your stuff to the summer shows and fairs! Discount for ordering three or more custom items at one time. Other cool items available!! (Let me customize a calendar for you for 2008!)

Computerized recordkeeping for your goats –Easy and affordable software for goat keepers! **The Goat Keepers Notebook**

<http://www.goatsoftware.com/affiliates/idevaffiliate.php?id-127>



Here's a cool tool - You'll never need another ladder!

It's the **BIG LADDER STORE**

<http://www.bigladderstore.com/cgi-bin/affiliates/clickthru.cgi/applegoat>

Check out the classified ads in the Goat Source Forum!

Place your ad **FREE!** Farm and goat related items only, please!

www.goatsource.com/forum

Give the Gift of Goat! - <http://www.cafepress.com/getyergoat?pid=598960>

Check out my new Video

http://www.goatsource.com/Video/The_Goat_Source_July_Blog_2007.wmv

Answer to the August Quiz:

A burdizzo is the tool used to castrate bucks by severing the cord without breaking the skin of the scrotum. Visit this link for more information:

<http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/4H/meatgoats/castrating/castrate.htm>



Cart Goats Anyone?

I found this neat site with small carts that could be used for goats:

<http://www.k9carting.com/carts.html>

Helpful hints:



Keep an assortment of short lead lines with a snap on both ends handy. They can be used for collars in a pinch and are great for tying up a doe to trim her feet. Buy them at one of the supply houses or make them yourself. The one pictured is from Caprine Supply.

When it is time to vaccinate in the hot weather, use a little lunch cooler with an ice pack in it to keep your vaccine cool. I pre-draw enough shots for the goats in the pen I am working and place them in the cooler, also. Place the cooler up out of harms way on a wire spool or a post. Put used syringes back into the cooler and then discard into the “sharps” can when you are done. I use a large coffee can with a lid for my used needles. It is labeled “Sharps” and when it is full, I take it to the hazardous waste division of the local landfill.

The older I get, the harder it is to read the tiny instructions on the vaccine bottles. I use a sharpie marker and write the correct dosage on the bottle large enough to read, for a quick reference.

Keep the label from your mineral mix and take it with you to the feed store next time you need mineral. That way you are sure to get the right minerals the first time!!

That's all for this month,...
See you next month!!

Leslie, The Goat Source

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Information in this newsletter is not guaranteed to be accurate. However to the best of my ability, I will try to make all information as complete and correct as possible. It is up to you, the reader, to determine how to best apply the information presented! Use your common sense!! If you notice errors, please bring to my attention! Due to the nature of the Internet, some links may not work, or may have moved. Please let me know about non-working links as soon as possible!

Thanks, Leslie, The Goat Source