



The Goat Source

The Goat Source Newsletter *Volume 3 Number 2 February 2006*

Here is your February issue of The Goat Source Newsletter. It's hard to believe that January is history! My milkers are dried off and so chores are a snap – It's like a mini vacation!! Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to your friends.

What's New This Month?

- Determining the age of Goats by their teeth.
- Clipping Your Goats
- This Month's Quiz...
- Classified Ads
- Answer to the February Quiz
- Helpful Hints

Determining the Age of Goats by their Teeth

Determining the age of an animal by looking at the front teeth can be very easy (if you can get her to stand still!). Age of an animal up to four years can be told by looking for the presence of permanent teeth on the lower jaw.

Goats have front teeth on the lower jaw and a dental pad on the upper jaw, as well as molars for grinding their food. These molars are located on both upper and lower jaws in the back of the mouth.

As your goat matures, larger permanent teeth will appear on the lower jaw. A new pair of teeth will appear each year of an animal's life. Four pairs of teeth can be found in the front of the mouth and by comparing the size of the teeth, you can determine an animal's age. Baby teeth are much smaller than permanent teeth and a kid will have four pairs of these small teeth. As the kid approaches a year of age, the pair of teeth in the middle will fall out and be replaced by larger permanent teeth. At age two, the animal will now have two pairs of permanent teeth, at age three the animal will have three pairs and at age four the animal will have four pairs. Once the animal has reached four, it is considered mature, sometimes called "solid mouth". An older doe may be missing some teeth and is referred to as "broken mouth". When buying a goat of unknown origin, "mouth" her to get an approximate idea of her age. Practice by looking at the teeth of animals in your herd of a known age.

Clipping your (hairy) Goats!!

The goats around my place are extremely hairy this time of year so I thought I would talk about the "dehairing" process!! I use a pair of Oster™ A-5 clippers. This time of year the only thing I clip is the belly, udder and tail. I use a number 10 blade for all but the udder. I use a number 40 blade on the udder and blend into the fore udder area. Make sure your blades are sharp and your clippers are clean and greased. Use the proper lubricants during clipping. A clean goat is easier on the blades than a dirty goat, but may not be practical during the winter.

Clipping during the colder months is for several reasons:

- Cleanliness of milk
 - Clip udder
 - Trim back of legs, flank area and belly area
- Preparation for kidding
 - Clip udder
 - Trim tail
 - Clip back of legs, long hair around flanks and belly
- Ultrasound Pregnancy detection
 - Clip long flank hair
 - Use a #40 blade and trim udder, especially up in the flank and side area, where the ultrasound probe will be placed.

Clipping during the hotter months can be for:

- Getting rid of long, hot hair
 - Use a rug blade for an all over body clip, and a #10 for legs, belly and head
- Clipping for show
 - Same as above, but pay attention to detail. Trim up long hairs around the feet and the inside of the ears. Don't forget the chin whiskers!
 - Careful clipping of the udder with a #40 blade

Fiber goats require a different approach. Check out how to shear for fiber at these links:

<http://www.angoragoat.com/mohair.html>

<http://www.fibergoat.com/Information.htm>

This Month's Quiz...(Anatomy of the Goat)

What is the abomasum?

Classified Ads...

Coming soon – Myhome-elibrary.com

A membership site with great deals on all kinds of information products!!

Goat Source newsletter subscribers will get a discount on membership. Find all kinds of interesting and relevant information at a bargain price!!

Answer to the February Quiz:

The abomasum is the fourth or true digestive part of a ruminant's stomach. It contains gastric juices and enzymes that begin the breakdown of complex materials. The abomasums of suckling calves are used as a source of rennet, a rennin-containing commercial enzyme preparation used to make cheese.

Test your knowledge of the parts of the goat:

<http://vetmedicine.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?zi=1/XJ&sdn=vetmedicine&zu=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ics.uci.edu%2F%7Epazzani%2F4H%2FJava%2FGoatPartsTest.html>

Helpful hints:

Use a knife switch as a shut off for your electric fence. Install one on every pen so when you have to troubleshoot (and you will) you can isolate sections of fence and eliminate a lot of hassle finding the trouble spot. By shutting off the fence in the middle, you can tell if the fault is in the first part of the fence or the last. Do this several times and you will have the short isolated in no time!! You can find a knife switch wherever electric fencing supplies are sold.

That's all for this month,...

See you next month!!

Leslie, The Goat Source

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