



# The Goat Source

## *The Goat Source Newsletter* *Volume 3 Number 5 May 2006*

Here is your May issue of The Goat Source Newsletter. Spring has sprung and so have the chores!! The 15 min. chore vacation from the winter is a distant memory – 2 hours is more like it now. Of course, I get distracted, playing with the new babies and enjoying the personalities of the milkers. In the busy day-to-day rush, we have to remember that the main reason we have goats is because we enjoy them. Take time to do just that! Cuddle a kid, pet a doe, and even give the buck a scratch behind the ears.

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

### **What's New This Month?**

- What is Milk Fever?
- This Month's Quiz...
- Cross Contamination and How to Avoid It.
- Classified Ads
- Answer to the May Quiz
- Helpful Hints

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### **What is Milk Fever?**

A doe that has a stressful kidding may come down with “milk fever.” The classic signs of this condition are “no milk and no fever.” Milk fever may also occur in a pregnant doe that is carrying several kids, and is getting a diet unbalanced in calcium and phosphorus. She will become lethargic, wobbly and uninterested in food. If left uncorrected, she will probably die.

Pregnant does should be fed a balanced diet tailored to their needs depending on the stage of pregnancy. In late pregnancy, the growing kids begin using greater amounts of calcium and phosphorus and if it is not supplied in the diet, the doe will pull it from her own resources, eventually becoming a victim of ketosis. Untreated, she will become too weak to recover. You should observe your does carefully for signs that they may not be getting all of the nutrients they need.

Make sure that all pregnant animals have a balanced mineral mix available free choice. This will differ from region to region. Make them get some exercise every day even if all they want to do is lay around and complain (a Nubian specialty).

An excellent article laying out what nutrients are needed and where to get them can be found at the [Sannendoah](#) website. It is by Sue Reith of Carmelita Toggs. Your vet may have specific suggestions for your area. I also keep a bottle of CMPK (Calcium, Magnesium, Phosphorus and Potassium) on hand and a large (60 cc) syringe with a large gauge needle, just in case. Again, your vet is the person to consult, if you suspect you have a doe with “milk fever.” Proper nutrition throughout pregnancy will help prevent this life threatening condition.

## **This Month's Quiz**

Do all goats have horns?

## **Cross contamination and How to Avoid It.**

I think we would all agree, prevention of disease is much preferable to treatment. Simple precautions can help. Keep buckets for the babies, yearlings and older animals separate. A simple system of color-coding can make this easy. Pick a color for each group of animals and then use that color exclusively for those animals. Small buckets are available in a multitude of colors. Some of them can be run through the dishwasher and sanitized, great for when they get grubby.

House different age groups separately. Kids need time for their immune systems to mature enough to cope with the things that adults may handle with no problem.

When giving shots, use a new needle for each animal and at the very least a new syringe for each group of animals. Do the youngest animals first, decreasing the risk of spreading germs.

Tattooing can spread blood bourn diseases if proper sanitizing is not used. I disinfect my tattoo digits with alcohol and use a separate toothbrush for each group to scrub in the ink. Sanitize ears with alcohol before tattooing.

Milk does with mastitis last. Keep treated animals' milk separate from the bulk milk. Do not feed treated milk to kids, as it may encourage resistant bacteria to multiply, due to the low quantity of residue in the milk, which makes it easier for the resistant bacteria to breed.

Most of all, use common sense. Don't become so fanatical about germs, that you panic every time someone drinks out of the wrong bucket! Relax – most normal healthy goats can take a few strange germs with no problem!!

## **Classified Ads...**

Get the Digital Beginners Pack – made with the beginning goat keeper in mind. Resources to find the answers to your questions, forms for recordkeeping, articles and more.

[Click Here to Begin Learning!!](#)

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## **Answer to the May Quiz:**

No, some goats are born hornless. They are called “polled.” Unfortunately, the gene for hornlessness is sex linked to the gene for hermaphrodisim. This means that some of the hornless kids born to a polled to polled breeding will be sterile. They may appear normal, until breeding season. Abnormal kids may not come into heat, or may not settle. Some are visually abnormal at birth. Characteristics of both genders may be present.

## **Helpful hints:**

When packing for shows, I always mentally went through the things I would do as I arrived at the show, got the goats penned and ready to show. As I did this, I wrote a list of the things that I used. This evolved into my “show list,” all of the things I needed to take to the show. I checked off each item as I packed it into the truck. It sure helps to make sure you don't leave things behind. Just don't do like one of my friends did, and load everything into the truck, drive off and realize (belatedly) that she had forgotten to load the goats!

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That's all for this month,...

See you next month!!

*Leslie, The Goat Source*

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