Meat Goat Project Training

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Session I: Selection

Questions to ask yourself

- How much experience do I have?
- Where do I plan on exhibiting my goat(s), and do I know the rules?
- How many goats do I need?
- What is my BUDGET?

Selection continued

Questions to ask yourself

- Where should I get my goats?
- What size goat is best for my child?
- Have the goats been disbudded?
**Selection, continued**

- **Genotype vs Phenotype**
  - Genotype is what the animal should be.
  - Phenotype is what the animal appears to be.
  - Use both to make the best decision...

A poor quality goat will always be poor quality.

A high quality goat can be ruined without proper care.

A high quality goat with a lot of work, proper care and some luck can be a CHAMPION.

**Selection, continued**

- **Structural correctness**
  - Head should be held erect
  - Neck should come out of the TOP of the shoulders
  - Stand & Walk balanced – wide and straight
  - Strong, level top-line – especially behind shoulders

Long loin and long hip

Hip should be as level as possible

Heavy bone and strong pasterns

**Selection, continued**

- **Structural correctness, continued**
  - Growth indicators: Long canon bone and long neck
  - Muscle indicators: Forearm and shape of hip

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Selection, continued

• Muscle
  - Broad, thick rack and loin
  - Firm and hard handling
  - Deep, heavily muscled leg and rump
  - Stifle should be the widest part of the leg when viewed from behind

Selection, continued

• Topline
• Rump
• Forearm

Selection, continued

• Muscle
  - Wide through the chest floor
  - Powerful through the shoulder
  - Smooth and clean over the point of the shoulder
  - Top of blades tie neatly and tight at top of shoulders
  - Large forearm

Selection, continued

• Width of Chest
  - Watch out for FAT
Selection, continued

**Volume and capacity**
- Relationship of body length to body depth and width.
- Proportional
- Long body and adequate depth
- Should have some spring or shape to the rib

**Rib Shape**
- Well sprung (cylindrical)
- Flat ribbed/sided

Selection, continued

**Style and balance**
- How well do the body parts connect?
- Neck blends into the shoulder
- Shoulder blends into the rib cage
- Rib cage blends into the loin
- Loin blends into the rump
Selection, continued

- **Style and balance**
  - Overall “EYE APPEAL”
  - A goat with good style and balance will be the FIRST goat that will catch your eye when you walk into a pen.

Selection, continued

- **GOATS TO AVOID**
  - short bodies
  - shallow bodies
  - narrow based
  - “bulldog” front ends
  - flat ribbed
  - early maturing

Selection, continued

- **On the move**
  - View goats on the move to ensure structural soundness and correctness
Session II: Ethics, Facilities, and Equipment

Ethics

- Minor Issues
  - Don’t wait to the last minute
  - Honor your tag-in dates
  - No switching tags
  - Report lost tags to Extension Agent or Ag Teacher

- Major Issues
  - Illegal use of LEGAL drugs – prescription
    - Steroids
    - Analgesics
    - Anesthetics
  - Illegal use of ILLEGAL drugs
  - If you choose to use these or allow them to be used on your goats ...YOU SHOULD BE BANNED FROM SHOWS

Facilities

- Barns/sheds
  - Access to shade and sunshine
  - 15 sq. ft./goat of shed space
  - Well drained and well ventilated
  - Escape from cold weather

- Fences
  - Predator proof
  - Height = 48” or higher
  - Galvanized wire with 4”x4” stays
  - Galvanized panels with 4”x4” squares or 2”x4” squares
  - Avoid “Cattle Panels” if possible

- Feeders
  - Self-feeders
    - Place on blocks 6” off of the ground
  - Feed troughs
    - Top of trough should be hung level with top of goat’s shoulder
  - Clean troughs regularly
  - Individual or Group
  - Metal, Plastic, or Wood
Facilities, continued

- Water Containers
  - Automatic or Manual
  - Small
  - Drain easily
  - Clean regularly
  - Locate in the shade
  - Plastic, Rubber, or Metal

Facilities, continued

- Exercise Facility
  - Track or Road
    - Oval, Circular, Straight, etc.
    - Net wire, Construction fence, etc.
  - Dog
  - 4-Wheeler (not safe)

Equipment

- Mandatory (to have or have access to...)
  - Stiff brush to clean water troughs
  - Scales to weigh goats
  - Trimming table 45"L x 20"W x 18"H
  - Electric clippers
  - Syringes and needles
  - Goat blankets and/or socks

Clippers (Slick shearing)
Clippers & Guards (Fitting)

Equipment, continued
- Mandatory, continued
  - Show chains
  - Halter
  - Hoof trimmers
  - Drench gun
  - Portable feed troughs
  - Feed & Water buckets
  - Soft brush for grooming

Hoof Trimmers

Tattoo Outfit
(3/8” Numbers & Letters)

Equipment, continued
- Optional
  - Show box
  - Hot air blower or dryer
  - Portable livestock scales
  - Extension cords
  - Muzzles
  - Electric fans
  - Disbudding Iron
Session III: Health

Everything included in this section is based on advice received through written or oral communication with veterinarians across the country.

Primary sources are Dr. Gary Vannoy, Dr. Cole Younger, and Dr. Alan Cannedy.

It is my advice that you always consult with your local veterinarian prior to treating any goat.

Be aware of withdrawal times and extra-label use of products.

Common Digestive Diseases

- **Enterotoxemia – Overeating**
  - Cause – disturbance of normal bacterial flora
  - Prevention – Clostridium perfringens Type C&D vaccination – 1 time/month for 5 months
  - Symptoms – Diarrhea
  - Treatment – Clostridum antitoxin, Penicillin, Flunixen
  - Animals rarely recover

- **Acidosis**
  - Cause – access to too much starch and lack of roughage
  - Prevention – Feed a very small amount of leafy alfalfa
  - Symptoms – No appetite, Lethargic
  - Treatment – Antacids, Oral tetracycline, Probiotics, Thiamine, Lots of water
  - Animals can recover with early treatment

- **Coccidiosis**
  - Cause – feeding animals in dirty troughs or hay on the ground
  - Prevention – Coccidostat – Monensin or Decoquinate
  - Symptoms – Serious diarrhea, rapid weight loss
  - Treatment – Oral dose and water treatment using Corid
  - Animals can recover with early treatment

- **Internal Parasites**
  - Cause – Animals eating grasses/hay ingesting parasite eggs
  - Prevention – Fecal Egg Counts and FAMACHA
  - Symptoms – Decreased performance, fluid filled pocket under jaw
  - Treatment – Dewormer – Ivomec, Prohibit, Valbazen, SafeGuard, etc.
  - Animals will recover with treatment
Other Digestive Diseases
- Raising your own goats
- Floppy Kid Syndrome
- Ketosis - Pregnancy Disease

Diseases of the Nervous System
- Tetanus
  - Cause: A wound becomes infected with a certain neurotoxin
  - Prevention: Clostridium tetani vaccination with a toxoid
  - Symptoms: Stiffness and tetanic spasms
  - Treatment: Tetanus antitoxin at 500-750 units should protect for 10-20 days.
  - Animals will recover ONLY with very early treatment.

Skin and Subcutaneous Tissue Diseases
- Soremouth - Contagious Ecthyma
  - Cause: Parapoxvirus
  - Prevention: Vaccine ONLY if you have had the disease on your premises - LIVE virus
  - Symptoms: Lesions around the lips, gums, and incisors OR on the teats and vulva
  - Treatment: NONE
  - Lesions will regress in 3-4 weeks with or without treatment

Skin and Subcutaneous Tissue Diseases
- Ringworm - Dermatophytosis
  - Cause: Fungus infecting abrasions from clippers
  - Prevention: Bleach and Fungicides
  - Symptoms: Round, hairless lesion
  - Treatment: Topicals, injectables, orals
  - Animals will recover, but no instant cure
  - Do NOT go to a show with an infected animal!!!

Other Major Diseases
- Urinary Calculi - Urolithiasis
  - Cause: Kidney stones forming in the urethra blocking urination.
  - Prevention: Ca:P ratio, Ammonium sulfate or Ammonium chloride
  - Symptoms: Straining to urinate, legs spread apart, kicking at belly, etc.
  - Treatment: Methigel, Snipping urethral process
  - Animals will recover if treated early

Other Major Diseases
- Pinkeye - Keratoconjunctivitis
  - Cause: Chlamydia or Mycoplasma
  - Prevention: ???
  - Symptoms: Red/Pink Cornea, Watering of the eye
  - Treatment: Penicillin, Vitamin A & E
  - Animals will recover
Health, continued

- Other Major Diseases
  - Pneumonia
    - Cause – Viruses, Mycoplasma species, Chlamydia, or Pasturella bacteria
    - Symptoms – Mild cough, elevated temperature, lethargy
    - Treatment – Oxytetracycline and Nuflor
    - Animals will recover if treated early

Session IV: Nutritional and Exercise Programs

Nutritional Program

- Goal
  - Keep kids growing to achieve maximum growth potential
  - Maintain gut health

Nutritional Program, continued

- Water
  - 70% of muscle tissue is water
  - Water can regulate feed intake
  - During the year, do not restrict water
  - Just prior to show, restrict water only to decrease rumen size and help achieve the proper class.
  - Animals should never be starved for water

Nutritional Program, continued

- Protein
  - Young, fast-growing goats require high levels of protein
  - Excess protein is used as an energy source, but is expensive.
  - Older, more mature goats require less protein for growth and more energy to maintain their body.

Nutritional Program, continued

- Carbohydrates and fats
  - The most limiting nutrient in goat diets
  - Inadequate energy slows growth
  - Grains and protein supplements
  - Too much energy can be bad
Nutritional Program, continued

- **Minerals and Vitamins**
  - Na, Cl, Ca, P
  - Watch out for Selenium deficient areas
  - Completely balanced rations
  - Mineral supplements
  - Vitamin A
  - Vitamin B Complex

Nutritional Program, continued

- **Nutrition**, continued
  - Ad libitum or Self-feeding (PELLET)
  - 0-6 months old
    - 16-18% CP
    - ~ 2.5-4% Fat
    - ~ 10-15% Fiber
    - Coccidostat
    - Urinary acidifier – Ammonium Chloride
    - Small amount of alfalfa hay

Exercise Program

- Helps adjust finish on the goat
- Helps maintain a healthy goat at a healthy weight
- Increases muscle tone
- Hard and fast for a short time
- 300 to 500 yards
- 3 to 4 times a week
- Walking is NOT enough exercise

Hoof Trimming

- **Front feet**
  - Cut off end of inside toe, never remove the tip or point of the outside toe
  - Remove outside edge of outside toe at an angle
  - Level the inside toe and remove excess heels on both toes.
  - Remove any excess on the inside of the heels between the toes
Hoof Trimming, continued

- **Back feet**
  - Cut off end of outside toe, never remove the tip or point of the inside toe
  - Cut each toe level with the center of the hoof and heel
  - Remove excess heels on both toes.
  - Remove any excess on the inside of the heels between the toes

- **Every 2-4 weeks**
  - Sometimes it requires blood
  - Do not wait until the show, instead trim at least 2 weeks before the show

Slick Shearing

- Wash & Dry goats (optional)
- **Blade types**
  - Fine – 0.06” – Up to a week before
  - Medium – 0.08” – Up to a week before
  - Cover Cote – 0.25” – Day before
  - Xtra Cover – 0.25” – Day before
  - Hog Blade – 0.5” – ???

- “Sock” or “Cover” your goats to keep them clean and warm
- Waterless Shampoo can be used to touch up dirty spots before going into the showring

Clipping/Fitting

- Wash & Dry goats (optional)
- **#10 blade w/ guards**
  - 1” Guard
  - ½” Guard
  - ¼” Guard
  - ⅛” Guard
  - Freehand

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Show Instructions

- Take your own water
- Water your goats upon arrival
- Walk your goats for at least 15-20 minutes every 4-5 hours
- Weigh your goats
- Feed and water accordingly
- Allow your goats to rest

Session VI: Showmanship

Showmanship

- Is showmanship important?
  - YES
- What makes a good showman?
  - Hard work and long hours at HOME.
  - Concentration
  - Clean and neat appearance
  - Experience
  - Style and finesse
  - Attitude

Showmanship continued

- Hard work at HOME allows you to...
  - get to know your goat.
  - learn your goat’s strengths.
  - learn your goat’s weaknesses.
  - learn your goat’s habits.
  - teach your goat to stand correctly.
  - teach your goat to walk with ease and style.
  - teach your goat to brace.
Showmanship, continued

- Halter breaking your goat
  - Use a light weight rope or commercially made halter
  - Tie goats to the fence
  - NEVER leave tied goats unattended
  - Increase the height you tie the goat until he stands at attention

- Chain breaking your goat
  - Use a light weight chain to break your goats to lead (NO pinch collars)
  - Use a snap on the chain to tie your goat to the fence
  - Start with just getting the goat used to being controlled by the chain
  - Increase the height you tie the goat until he stands at attention
Showmanship, continued

Training your goat to lead
- Once the goat is used to being tied, start training them to lead
- Pull slightly encouraging the goat to move forward
- If needed, pull there tail slightly
- Start by trying to take 5 steps or so
- Stop and set their feet, rub their neck and become buddies

Increase the distance you lead them from 5 steps to 10, 15, 20, etc.
- Continue this training process until the goat leads easily
- Work with your goat for at least 15 minutes per session

Training your goat to brace
- Set the goat's feet
- Apply slight pressure to goat's chest
- If the goat steps backward, pull his tail and let him move forward a few steps.
- Set the goat's feet and repeat the process until the goat braces
- Only brace the market goats

Too stretched

Too short
Just right

Rear-view or Head-in

Rear-view or Head-in

• Just right

Front-view

• Just right

Front-view

• Just right

Good leg and hand placement
A good brace can make a difference (same goat)

Section VII: Show Ring Presentation

Showmanship, continued
- Concentration on 6 points...
  - The judge
  - The ring steward
  - Your goat
  - The goat in front of you
  - The goat behind you
  - YOU
  - NOTICE: Parents are not one of these!!

Showmanship, continued
- Entering the ring
  - Know what to expect – Early classes
  - Keep the goat's head up
  - Make eye contact with the judge
  - Watch where you are asked to go
  - Look back at the judge
  - Every time you stop, be sure to set feet starting with the back feet first.

Showmanship, continued
- Head-in/ Rear view/ Side-by-side
  - Hold your goat's head up
  - Properly space your goats
  - Set back feet first
  - Brace... when the judge is handling or looking at your goat (wethers only)
  - Let the goat relax when the judge is not looking at your goat
Showmanship, continued

- Head-in/ Rear view/ Side-by-side

Right goat is too wide
Center goat is over-crowding left goat

Correct Spacing

- Side view/ Profile
  - Hold your goat’s head up
  - Properly space your goats
  - Set back feet first
  - Allow your goat to stand naturally or you may lightly brace
  - Brace if the judge handles your goat (wethers only)

Showmanship, continued

- Side view/ Profile

Over crowding front goat
Correct Spacing

- Walking around the ring
  - Hold your goat’s head up
  - Properly space your goat
    - Do not crowd the person in front of you
  - Walk with goat beside you
  - Do not drag your goat
    - Pull on tail if needed
  - Nice, slow, steady pace
    - Allow the judge to study your goat

Showmanship, continued

- Clean and neat appearance
  - Sharp colors
  - Nice shirt and pants
  - Combed/Fixed Hair
    - Ribbons, bows, etc.
    - Haircut
  - Comfortable Footwear
  - Nothing Revealing

Showmanship, continued

- Experience...
  - Will help you become a better showman.
  - Will allow you to help others.
  - How?
    - Watch
    - Ask questions
    - Answer questions
    - Participate in clinics and other shows

Showmanship, continued

- Style and Finesse
  - You and the goat will become one unit
  - Movements
    - Slow
    - Smooth
    - Fluid
    - Relaxed
    - Patient

Showmanship, continued

- No Chewing Gum
- No Hats or Caps
- Attitude
  - No tempers
  - Pleasant
  - Have fun
  - Do not OVER smile
  - Relax
Showmanship, continued
• What is wrong with these pictures?

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