



The Farthest North Goat Association Newsletter

March/April 2007

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FNGA officers:

President: Annette Bray 488-0872
 Secretary: Lynn Pomeroy 488-1263
 Treasurer: Mary Nebert 457-1670
 Mailing address:
 c/o Mary Nebert
 862 Redpoll Lane
 Fairbanks, AK 99712

March Meeting Notice

The next meeting will be held Saturday, March 10th in the small auditorium of Noel Wien Library at 1:30 p.m. The small auditorium is to the right as you enter the library. We will be watching a video by Hilary Matthews called "Goat Breeding and Kid Rearing."



Disclaimer: The FNGA or individual authors are not liable for any information found within this newsletter. The articles are for information purposes only and it is up to individual to research and competently apply any knowledge or procedures to their own goats.

February Meeting Topics:

- The main focus of this meeting was a clinic given by Laurie Powalski on performing fecal exams. Thank you Laurie for all the time you invested, much appreciated.
- Steve Rice brought up the information that the large animal livestock judge coming to judge the Tanana Valley State Fair (not the dairy goat judge) wanted to know if people are interested in an AI clinic is willing to give such a clinic. He mentioned that he is familiar with goats.
- Steve Rice had some still born kids at different stages of development and wanted to know if there was interest in doing a dissection or an anatomy lesson.

Reminders:

- 1) Give your doe an clostridium/tetanus booster 1 month before she kids.
- 2) Dehorn you kids earlier rather than later. Buck kids should be dehorned at about 5 days. Doe kids can be dehorned from about 10-14 days.
- 3) Make sure your pregnant does have free access to loose mineral. It is important to have both selenium and copper in sufficient quantities.

Letter to the Editor:

I would like to add to your observation on the white buckets. White buckets are not enough. My goats have been requiring me to personally HOLD the buckets for them while they drink!

They may or may not drink water if i just put the bucket in the bucket holder, but if I *offer* them the bucket (bending over holding it the entire time just killing my back and arms) they will drink over a 1/2 gallon at a time. And Milly requires water while she is on the milk stand.

Oh, and it has to be nearly hot, not just a little warm.

Sincerely, Sue Singler

(note: If readers have any comments on the articles, feel free to submit them as a letter to the editor)

Raising Goat Kids The Bray Way—Focus on wethers but includes doelings as well

By Matt Bray

(Authors note: This article was originally written for a clinic for potential youth that were interested in raising market wethers. However, we generally feed our doe kids the same way. Our method of raising kids, to be frank, tends to be a little labor intensive. However, historically our kids are been some of the more growthy kids in the area. For the swiss breeds, primarily toggenburgs and saanens, the first 6 months of their lives are the most critical for their growth. Inadequate nutrition or growth in this period can affect how large the goats will be as they mature. Doe sthat grow well can have several advantages including earlier breeding. Also realize, that there are many different ways to feed kids, this is just one way that works well.)

The following are guidelines when raising wethers for meat goats. Notice the title! It is stated in such a way to reinforce the idea that the advice given is the Bray family's method of raising their young goat kids. Everyone has different approaches but our approach almost always produces wether kids that weigh at least 80 lbs by the time they are 6 months old. I have had wether kids reach over 100 lbs by six months old.



Supplies:

The requirements for raising wethers are really very minimal and simple.

Housing/Pen: You must have a pen for your wethers. This pen should have protection from the elements. For most people, they are raising meat wethers during the summer, thus protection from the cold is not necessary. The elements in this case are wind and rain. If raising wethers in the cold, you should have an insulated shelter that maintains a temperature above 20F. The pen should ideally have 6 foot fences, primarily for protection from the neighbor's best friend---their dog. Allow your wether enough room to play as well.

Bottle/Nipple: In most cases, you will need a way to feed milk to your wether. You want a soft latex or rubber nipple that can fit on a plastic pop bottle. Do not buy the hard rubber nipples. Feed supply stores such as Jeffers, Valley Vet, Premier One Supplies, and KvVet supply carry nipples and goat supplies. These are animal supply stores/catalogs that all have internet sites where you can get all the supplies you may need and usually at a much cheaper price than local feed stores. However, you will need to buy food supplies locally.

Basic feeding supplies: The wether needs a feed dish for grain, a WHITE water bucket, and a way to feed hay efficiently. Throwing hay on the ground is not an efficient way to feed hay. Goats are not cows. They don't like to graze. They are browser (i.e. shrubs, trees, etc.). IF you put in on the ground they will eat some, but as a whole you are just throwing your money away.

Bedding: Straw (best) or wood chips work well.

Stock health supplies (see below): vaccines, wormers, and maybe antibiotics.

Feeding:

When you look for the ideal way to feed a goat kid, just look to the NATURAL way. Dam raised kids always grow the best. How are goat kids raised by their mothers? First of all, the kids have access to milk 24 hours a day. Secondly, the kids generally nurse small quantities at a time. A good milking doe produces 1 gallon (4 qts or 128 oz) of milk a day. Typically a doe has 2 kids, so that would translate into at least 64 oz of milk a day. However, when the kid demands milk all the time, this may result in increased production by the doe. Thus, it is safe to assume that most dam raised kids are getting at least 60 oz of milk a day dispersed in small amounts throughout the day. The dam naturally starts to wean their kids at 5-6 months of age. So why is this significant? It has been proven that eating small quantities of any food spread throughout the day results in better digestion and absorption of the nutrients that food contains. This is true for dogs, humans, cats, moose, cows, etc..... The more food that is plunged into the digestive tract at one time, the less likely all of that will be used efficiently. Secondly, the kids have access to pretty much the same feed sources as the doe. So when the doe is eating hay, so can the kid. What does this mean?.....This means that if you are bottle feeding and really want your wether to grow, you feed him as many times a day as you can, let him have free access to hay and introduce grain by a month old. SIMPLE! That is all there is to it. SIMPLE! Also remember, goats are social animals. They grow best when they have company. This can be another goat, a sheep, or something that can live with the goat and that they get along with.

So this is generally how we feed starting from the new born kid:

Note: We feed warm milk at every feeding.

Assuming that you want to start on a CAE prevention program, you will need to take away the kid IMMEDIATELY. You then need to feed a colostrum based supplement, heat treated colostrum, or find CAE free colostrum to feed. This is what we do. We purchase a product called Nanny Replacer from Cuprem which is similar to a vitamin fortified milk replacer. We then use a product such as Goat Serum Concentrate or Bovi-Sera which are immunoglobulin serums which supply antibodies for the common or typical problems out there. The serum products can be given as an injection or mixed with the replacer. We feed 10-20 cc in the replacer. Place more of the serum in the earlier feedings as the kids are more receptive to the antibodies at this time. Note that these products do not supply immunities to local diseases that your doe will develop. The combination cited has produced good results for us. Generally speaking we try and give about 20 oz of milk/serum mix to the kid over the first 24 hours. As soon as you can after the kid is born, feed them 1 oz of the mixture, an hour later feed another oz. Two hours later feed 2 oz. Two hours feed another 2 oz. We then go to 3 oz after another three, then 4 oz after 4 hrs. Do not over feed your kid especially with replacement products. We learned the hard way when we fed a calf colostrums replacer along with to much quantity and caused perfora-



tion of the gut, resulting in death of the kid. If you want to continue a CAE prevention program, then you must always feed pasteurized milk. Pasteurize the milk by heating it to 165-170°F.

First Week: During the first week, we work the kid up to around 30-40 oz of milk dispersed thru the day in 5 to 6 feedings. Just feed milk and colostrum during the first 12-24 hrs. The first day the kids do not get more than 20 oz of milk spread over at least 6-7 feedings. Too much milk during this segment can literally destroy the digestive system. Most wether owners will not have to worry about the first 1-2 weeks of a goats life. The breeders take care of this. .

Week 1-4: During the next couple of weeks we work at increasing their milk consumption up to around 50 oz of milk. We feed 4 times a day, dividing milk volumes equally. Usually the kid will let you know when it is full. Don't force more! Stop!

Week 4: By the end of week 4, the kid is usually up to 60-72 oz of milk. We don't feed more than 72 oz. By week 4, your kids will probably eat hay. We let them have access to hay by weeks 2-3. They will barely eat it, but they will nibble. Also start introducing small amounts of grain by week 3. The nibbling of hay and grain activates the rumen. Don't overdo it, because the rumen gradually starts to motor up. Think of the rumen as an old man getting up in the morning. It takes a while for him to get going.

Month 1-3: From 1-3 months of age the kids are getting 60-72 oz of milk three times a day. They have all the hay the want to eat and around ½lb to 1 lb of grain a day.

Weaning: If your goat is less than six months of age and they are going to market, just keep the milk flowing. When we are raising doe kids, we usually wean at about 4-5 months of age. There is a magic period of time when all of the sudden the kid starts to get fat. This is when we wean. IF you want to reduce the amount of milk fed, I would wait till at least 3 months. Then reduce it by ½ and feed 1 lb to 1 ½ lbs of grain a day. I realize people want to wean because feeding milk can be a hassle, takes time, costs money....but your kid will grow better if he has some milk in his diet longer than three months. Not all milk, but at least some.



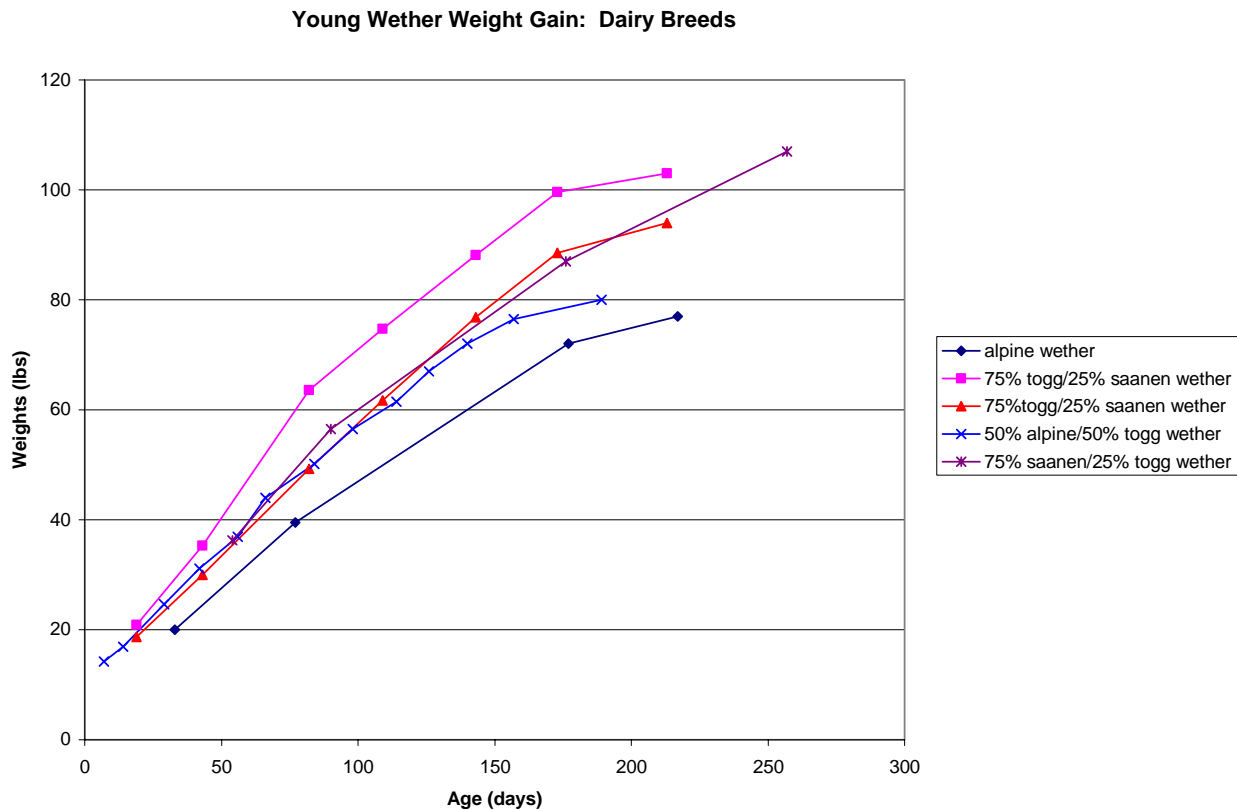
Grain: What should you feed? If you expect your wether to live beyond the auction, then they need to be a COB/Alfalfa pellet mix with 2 parts COB to 1 part Alfalfa. This balances the calcium to phosphorous ratio and helps lower the development of urinary calculi (i.e. urinary stones). If raising wethers for auction, COB/alfalfa/ Animax mix or normal goat chow such as DON's or Purina should be fine.

Milk: I feed goat's milk as I am a breeder and have access to the female dam in milk. IF feeding milk replacer, be careful. Milk replacer can cause diarrhea in your kids if fed too much. Once again, feeding smaller quantities, more times a day will help. There are lamb and goat kid milk replacers available. Lamb replacer is cheaper and works, however, your kid will grow better on GOAT kid milk replacer such as Purina. Also, you ideally want a replacer that is not SOY based. Once again it costs more but your kid will grow better. I have heard that SOY causes some digestive issues in kids resulting in poorer absorption of nutrients.

Note: Inadequate weight gain? During the first 3 months, your kid should be gaining at least 10

lbs a month (true for doe kids as well as wethers). IF not, ask yourself why. Kids do not grow well for two primary reasons: 1) not enough food and 2) parasites. Solution: treat for 2) (worming is discussed in health issues) and 1) possibly think about how you are feeding.

Below is a graph showing the weight gain for five of my wethers. This should give you an idea about average weight gains and where your wether should be at. I would consider the Alpine curve a minimum.



Health issues:

Goats are generally very healthy animals. A sick goat needs treatment very quickly to prevent weight loss or worse. Here are some basic prevention methods along with typical health issues that may develop.

Vaccines: Your wether needs a Clostridium C&D/Tetanus booster at 1 month and at 2 months of age. The animal supply catalogs listed above sell these vaccines for reasonable rates and don't require prescriptions. Vets may carry the vaccine and if they do, I guarantee that it will be more than from a supply catalog. If you are working within a club, you can easily buy one bottle of vaccine that will treat all the wethers in a club. This shot is designed to prevent the over proliferation of clostridium bacteria in the goats digestive tract. A goat with an over-growth of clostridium is usually a dead goat.

Worming: Worm your wether. The idea is to promote weight gain. Common wormers are ivermectin and Panacur. You normally can use horse wormer (of these types), just double the dose. Panacur is a very safe wormer that is hard to overdose on. Fiasco Farm (www.fiascofarm.com) has lots of information regarding goat wormers, medications, and doses.

Diarrhea: Diarrhea is the most common problem. Diarrhea occurs primarily due to two main causes 1) feeding issues and 2) bacterial overgrowth. Feeding issues are easily remedied by cutting back (usually on milk or grain) until the diarrhea clears up, then increase the food again. Bacterial overgrowth diarrhea in goats usually occurs due to coccidiosis which is a bacterium that can be picked up from the soil and especially poultry. If the diarrhea persists and becomes real liquid, it is probably this and can be treated effectively via ALBON (dog medication that most vets probably have).

Castration: There are three methods for castration: 1) cutting, 2) banding, and 3) burdizzo (crushing). Cutting and banding should be done by 1 month of age. The Burdizzo method can be done later. We castrate our meat wethers at 1 month by either the banding or burdizzo methods. The castration for the goat is usually not pleasant and may cause your wether to go off of his food for a day or so. I would encourage the prospective owner to look at the methods and decide. Commonly, your goat breeder where you purchased you kid from can do this or may have a recommendation.

Dehorning: Most dairy goat breeders will dehorn your kid at 1 week of age. For boer standards, contact your breeder. For dairy breeds I would recommend dehorning buck kids at 5-6 days and doe kids at 10-14 days.

Common illness: If your goats get a runny nose or a cough with discharge, then it is time to treat it with antibiotics. Penicillin tends to work well and is very cheap from the animal supply catalogs. Vets can also supply you with penicillin. Remember there is a one month meat withdrawal on most antibiotics. An antibiotic called Naxcel does not have this withdrawal conditions, but you must go through a vet to get it.

Available Animal and Produce Publications

(Contributed by Sue Singler)

The cooperative extension office puts out short publications, some of which are about goats. The catalog of publications is online, and some of the *free* publications are available online in PDF format (requires Acrobat Reader).

These free publications (and those that you have to pay for) are available through the cooperative extension office.

The website for all the publications is:

http://www.uaf.edu/ces/publications/pub_toc.html

under Agriculture and Natural Resources...

the website for Livestock Production and Marketing

Is: <http://www.uaf.edu/ces/publications/anrpubs.html#lpm>

Zucchini Lasagna

Preheat oven at 350° F.

Part 1 : Meat Sauce

Thinly sliced steaks* or 1lb. ground beef or moose

1 tsp. dried Basil

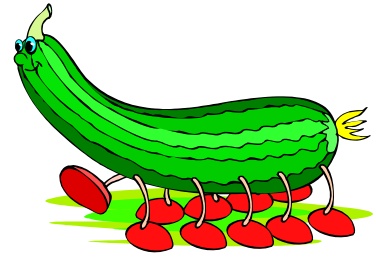
1 tsp. dried Oregano

1 can Tomato Sauce (15 oz)

3 tsp. Sugar (to balance the tart tomato sauce above)

Salt and Pepper to taste

Cook meat and add all other ingredients together in saucepan.



Part 2: Cheese Filling

1 1/2 cups Whole Goat Milk Ricotta cheese* or cottage cheese (more or less cheese to your liking)

1/4 cup or more grated Parmesan / Romano cheese

1 egg

Mix all ingredients in a separate bowl.

Part 3: Zucchini

About 4-5 medium sized Zucchini, or 3-4 cups, sliced thin (the thinner they are, the faster the lasagna cooks)

2 Tbs. Flour

1 cup Mozzarella cheese

Mix flour onto zucchini slices, this help thickens the sauce. Add mozzarella when layering.

ALTERNATE HALF INGREDIENTS FOLLOWING THIS ORDER:

1/2 amount of Part 3: ZUCCHINI , Mozzarella.

1/2 amount of Part 1: MEAT SAUCE

1/2 amount of Part 2: CHEESE FILLING

Repeat and add 1/2 cup or more of Parmesan cheese & mozzarella for topping.



BAKE for 1 HOUR 20 MINUTES or until zucchini is cooked through.

Topping will be golden brown.

Serve with Garlic bread and a side of salad. Enjoy!