

Intro- Colleen Gray- Mills County Goat Superintendent

Tonight, I would like to quickly go over the main types of goats that can be shown at fair, preparations before fair and what is needed at fair.

**Dairy goat project** –Dairy goats (examples- Alpines, LaMachas, and Nubians) are much smaller than cows, cost much less to house and feed, and give family-sized amounts of milk daily. They are very affectionate, live about as long as a dog and make great companions.. If your family likes milk and dairy products, dairy goats may be the perfect animals for you. Suitable housing, vaccinations, worming, feed, water and supervision at kidding time is required.

At this point in time, babies are being born and does are freshening (coming into milk). If you are showing dairy that doe will need to be milked completely out twice a day or if she has kids nursing, the babies can do most of the work. It is always good to milk even with the babies nursing because the udder will then be even at fair. Some babies only like to nurse one side which makes the udder lop sided. The kids will get to where if they see you coming with the bucket, they will run to beat you to the doe and get the milk. Some of the uses for the milk is- household use, cheese making, feed the barn cats and sell for pet use to other households. Last time I checked- Iowa does not allow selling milk for human consumption (out the back door) but can be sold for pet use. (Label your containers- pet use only.) Please check current rules.

**Meat goat breeding doe project** – examples of meat goat breeds are Boer, Kiko and Spanish Meat Goat. Breeding does can be used for raising meat goat kids rather than (or as well as) for producing milk for humans. Just like a dairy goat they require suitable housing for over-wintering and kidding but they do not need milking. However, you must find a market for their slaughter kids every year. Meat goat does often graze on pastures from May through November but may need supplementary grain, especially when pregnant or nursing.

**Meat goat market kid project** –Goat meat is actually one of the most commonly eaten meats in the world and tastes somewhat like venison and beef. Market kid projects are short term projects. Goat kids (usually castrated males) are purchased in the spring when they are old enough to be separated from their mothers (weaned). This occurs when they are about 10 to 12 weeks old. You can also raise a kid from birth from your own meat goat breeding doe. Either way, the goal is to do a good job of raising them through the summer until they are ready to slaughter somewhere between 50 and 100 pounds. Before you get a meat goat kid, you need to be sure you are willing to have it slaughtered despite how tame it gets.

**Exotic goats-** such as Pygmy or Fiber Hair Type Goats such as Angoras can also be shown. They have their own classes and are more than welcome to show.

Items for Conference Judging can also be considered. Posters on goat breeds, cheese, items made from hair type goats. Let me know if you need ideas. I'll be glad to make suggestions.

The Fair Classes will be changing for Breeding Does and Market animals as we are growing in numbers. Please take special note.

Preparations for fair –

**Please Note** - **All** Market animals must come to Meat Goat Weigh-in (This includes Dairy wethers that will be shown in Market Classes) ID Tags will be placed on the animal. Market animals will be identified, ID recorded and weighed. Please plan to be there on time. Contact friends or neighbors if help is needed to get animals there. Meat goat weigh- in is April 25<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 AM to 10:00 AM. **Any goats to be shown at State Fair or Aksarben will also need to come to weigh in to be properly identified.** If you are considering showing there, please be sure to come.

Sexually intact animals (does) are required to have Scrapies and an Individual number for identification to come to fair, if you own a wether, they do not need the Scrapies number but will need an individual number. Individual ID's will be placed on Market animals at Meat Goat Weigh in. These numbers will need to be recorded in the Goat ID Sheets on or before May 15<sup>th</sup> and placed on the animal before leaving the premises to come to fair. Tags are usually used for meat type animals, tattoos for Dairy. The Vet or Show judge has been known to check for these numbers. Get them on the animal before arriving to fair.

Mills County has tattoo and tagging equipment. They can be checked out and used to tattoo your animals.

Dairy animals must be de-horned. Exotic and Meat type animal's horn tips must be blunted to come to fair.

Vaccinations and Worming need to be done- check with your vet for his recommendations. One very important shot is overeating and tetanus shot. This shot is a must do.

In order for a judge evaluate your meat kid, your kid needs to be properly prepared. Preparation includes teaching your kid or doe to lead and stand quietly when being handled by people, and having them well groomed so that the judge can really see his conformation and not have to look past a muddy coat or long shaggy hair. All this preparation needs to start several weeks before the show.

Training your kid – the first step to training your kid to behave well at a show is to familiarize him with people. You want him to trust you and other people rather than panicking at the sight of people. Take the opportunity every day when you feed and water him to approach him quietly rather than chase him. Scratching him between the ears, brushing him, and feeding him some feed directly out of your hands will help to make him want to be around you.

Once he learns not to panic when you come into his pen and pet him, you can start to let him follow you on short walks around your land. Many tame goats will follow you without a leash. The next step is to buy him a collar and lead rope and teach him to tie. Tie him to a stout fence or post and stand close by while he struggles to free himself. You can use a quick release safety knot used for tying up horses if you know how to tie one. Gradually walk farther away as he becomes more resigned to being confined to one spot. However, do not leave a tied goat unattended. He could accidentally strangle and die. Practice this for about 10 minutes daily.

Next you can start to teach him to lead. Do not take a steady pull on the rope. This just makes it easier for him to lean against you. Instead give and take on the rope with short jerks. When he steps forward reward him by slacking up (giving) on the rope and praising him. Keep his head up with his collar or halter while you lead him. If he gets his head down it is easier for him to get out of control and run away with you. Teach him to lead with his front shoulder even with your leg. His head should be out in front of your body. Sometimes it helps to have a friend or family member assist you by pushing forward on his rump if he refuses to move forward with you. Try to get him used to having his legs stroked. This way you can start to teach him to properly set up. Every time you halt, set his front legs up first. Then set up his hind legs. Use the collar or halter to keep his body and head straight while you are setting him up. You want

his legs to be square, i.e. the front legs should be directly under his body and even with each other, not one in front of the other. The same should be true of his hind legs. His hind legs can be slightly spread apart and stretched back a little so he looks proud and alert and his body is really on display. Gradually he will learn to set himself up without waiting for you to move his legs around. You can also use pressure on his shoulders to train him to set up.

Be sure not to overwork your goat. Work him several times a week but never for more than around 10 to 20 minutes at a time. Try to stop at a high point when he is really behaving well. Familiarize yourself with the different rules for showing your goat in front of a judge. **Remember; remove any collars when not training to lead to avoid choking hazard. It is not fun to find your goat choked to death from getting hung up on something.**

A good time to clip and bathe your goat for the first time is around Memorial Day. It needs to be above 50 degrees at night so the goat does not get chilled. The winter's lice will die and the goat will feel and look so much better. The next clipping will be no sooner than ten days before fair. It is easier to clip the goats at home as fair is so hectic. The animal can have a quick bath the night before the show or the morning of.

There will be a Grooming clinic on May 18th and Showmanship clinic will be held on July 7<sup>th</sup>. I hope you can attend.

Research how to trim hooves correctly. You don't want goat to rock and roll on its feet. They will not walk correctly in the show ring. After a rain is a good time to trim so hooves are soft.

If you want to start collecting supplies - for fair, you will need:

Water bucket- that can be secured to the side of the pen, It needs to hold enough water for the day and it should be filled morning and night with cold, fresh water. I expect all goat members to think of the goats and if you see an empty water bucket in someone else's pen, fill it. Be careful not to let the goat out.

Feed- pellets, hay and any grain the goat is on. Do not change feed on the goat, should be what they get at home. The goats could bloat which would require a vet or get diarrhea. Hay can be placed in a corner of the stall. A wooden manger with cut out key holes can be made to go in the corner of the stall. It looks a lot neater for Herdsmanship. After your animal eats their grain at their scheduled feeding times, please remove the feed pans. Feeding times are usually morning and night. Consistent times are especially important for Milking Does.

Cleaning Supplies- Bags of Shavings will be placed in your pens at the beginning of fair. A leaf rake is good for shaking out manure out of the shavings. A tub is useful to carry dirty shavings to the dump area. A watering can can be used for the alley way to cut down on dust. The alleyways and around your stalls need to be kept clean. We have visitors coming to see your goats. I would like the goat area looking neat and tidy. All handles are to be laid down, feed covered up with a tarp and grooming boxes shut

Grooming supplies - Please lock grooming boxes and do not lose the key. I try to keep herd animals separated as much as possible and a tack area for each club. As the goat project grows, this might be harder to do but I will try. Fans can be brought. Please bring safe box fans and extensions cords. We do have to try to keep cords from being stretched across the alleyway so there is no tripping hazard.

I usually bring my milk stand for members to use and you are more than welcome to supply your own. I will look at the beginning of fair for space requirements for pens and stands.

Show Clothing requirements - Dark blue jeans, white, long sleeve button-down shirt with 4-H arm band on left arm, hard soled shoes to protect feet from sharp hooves.

It is always good to line up extra hands to help show goats in the ring. The extra hands needs to be a fellow 4-Her and it looks nice to have them wear a 4-H T-shirt or white shirt. You might even teach them goat showmanship so they exhibit your animal to its best appearance. It might be the class winner!

You are more than welcome to bring name plates for your goats. Make sure the goat cannot eat it or be removed easily. Visitors (especially little kids) like to see what your goats name is. Goats are very popular with the crazy things they do for attention.

Parents, please make sure the goat area is supervised as much as possible. If problems arise, I might need to make a club schedule to work the goat area during fair. I work so cannot be there as much as I would like to be. Please help me in making your child's and animals experience in the goat project is a good one. Feel free to e-mail, text or call 712-212-6515 Thank You!