

Popular Article

Care and Management of Goat Farming Irrespective with Economics

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Introduction

Goat farming is a predominant livestock activity in dry and rain fed regions of the country. The productivity and profitability of the goats under this rearing system can be improved through introduction of quality breeding bucks, reducing environmental stress through shelter and general care, following proper health care measures and providing adequate locally available feeds and fodders.

Selection of male and female

Female

- Female around one year of age can be used for breeding purpose. Females should be mated only when they reach 70 per cent of the average adult body weight
- Female selected for breeding purpose should be true to its breed character in terms of morphological characteristics, physical conformation and animal should be strong, healthy and have a normal gait

- The animal should have a strong, long back and a broad rump. The front leg should be straight with a deep and broad chest. Angular hind legs with wide roomy hindquarters (provides good space between inner aspects of two thighs) give an indication about future development of udder. The udder should be voluminous, symmetrical with medium-sized teats.
- Breeding too young females results in more weaklings and thus results in higher kid loss.
- The females having poor milking capacity and physical deformities should be removed from the breeding flock.



Male

- Males selected for breeding purpose should be true to its breed character in terms of morphological characteristics and physical conformation.
- Males should be strong, masculine, and legs should be strong with a normal gait.
- The male's mother should be a high milk producer, and there should be no genetic defects in both the parent.
- Kids showing higher body weight gain at 60 days and 6 months of age should be retained for future use as breeding bucks.
- Male kids born as twins should be preferred.

Reproductive management

- Breeding bucks in the flock should be replaced once in 2 to 3 years. Introduce breeding bucks from other flocks so that inbreeding can be minimized.
- Preferably, females may be bred during April-May and during October-November months. Female showing signs of heat in morning need to be mated during evening and vice versa.
- Females may be provided with extra 100 to 200 grams of locally available grains along with mineral mixture during mating season which will increase the chances of multiple birth.
- The females in advanced stage of pregnancy (100 to 150 days) should be managed separately and needs to be given additional feed supplement for getting higher body weight in kids and milk yield in females.
- During the major breeding season, always keep vigil that breeding bucks do not loose body weight and feed them

with extra 200 to 300 grams of locally available grains and chunni.

Kid Management

- Clean nostrils and body of newborns properly, cut the naval cord one inch away from the body with new blade, apply diluted tincture iodine and provide first milk (colostrum) during first few hours of life.
- For first 10 days, kids should be housed along with mother round the clock and allowed free suckling. However, in females having high milk yield, suckling by kids needs to be restricted by using udder bags as excessive milk feeding leads to diarrhea.
- Thereafter, kids can be housed separately and allowed to suckle twice a day if milking is practiced. If milking is not practiced, kids can be housed along with mother during night hours.
- Young ones should not be allowed for grazing for first two to three months and tender tree fodder leaves may be made available along with crushed grains in the shed.
- Surplus Male kids having medium and low growth may be castrated at two to three months age and used for fattening while kids with faster growth may be retained for future breeding purposes.

Feeding Management

- Animals should be given 6 to 8 hours of grazing with grain supplements along with small quantity of salt.
- Feeding of wheat straw should be avoided and leguminous straw should be given.

- For lactating animal, grain should be given at rate of 400 grams per day per liter of milk produced.
- Adult male and female Goats should be given 300 to 400 gram dry fodder and 200 gram grains to meet out daily requirement.
- Composition of concentrate mixture for grazing animals: Grains: 70 to 80%, Wheat Bran: 10 to 15%, Cake: 5%, Salt: 1%.

Housing Management

- Goats require shelter/housing for protection from inclement weather such as rain, excessive heat during summer and cold during winter in addition to protecting from predator attack.
- The housing should be made of locally available materials.
- At any given time, 10 percent more animals can be accommodated without compromising the production, health and welfare of the animal.
- The optimum floor space requirement for goats is given below.

Age/Category of Goats	Covered Area (m ² /goat)	Open Paddock (m ² /goat)
0-3 months	0.2-0.25	0.4-0.5
3-6 months	0.5-0.75	1.0-1.5
6-12 months	0.75-1.0	1.5-2.0
Yearling Goats (above 12 months)	1.0	2.0
Adult Goats	1.5	3.0
Pregnant and Lactating Goats	1.5-2.0	3.0-4.0
Bucks	1.5-2.0	3.0-4.0

Health Management

- The shed should be maintained neat and clean with provision for adequate ventilation.
- Sprinkle lime powder once in 15 days to avoid dampness in floor.
- Hooves should be trimmed at regular intervals, wash mouth, hooves and udder with Potassium Permanganate (KMnO₄) solution when any wounds or abrasions are found.
- There is need to practice regular vaccination against important infectious disease and animals should be dewormed at regular intervals.
- Dipping of goats to be carried out before and after the winter season to prevent external parasites.
- Contact a Veterinary doctor in case of any disease outbreak.

Name of disease	Primary Vaccination		Repeat Vaccination
	Primary Dose	Booster Dose	
Foot & Mouth Disease (FMD)	At 3 months age	3-4 weeks after 1st dose	Once in six months
Peste-des-petits ruminants (PPR)	At 3 months age	Not required	At 4th Year
Goat Pox (GP)	At 3 months age	3-4 weeks after 1st dose	Once in a year
Enterotoxaemia (ET)	At 3 months age	3-4 weeks after 1st dose	Once in a year (2 dose with 1 month interval)
Hemorrhagic Septicemia (HS)	At 3 months age	3-4 weeks after 1st dose	Once in a year

Marketing

- In order to the get maximum return from goat farming, selling goats and its products to middlemen should be avoided at any cost.
- Animal should be sold on basis of body weight and not on visual appraisal.
- Maximum profit can be obtained by selling the animal between 6-9 months of age in small and medium sized breed and 9-12 months of age in larger breeds.
- During festive times (Holi, Bakrid, New Year or any sacrificial occasions), price of the animals get very high, so try to sell the animals during these period.