

## Buck Care Should be a Priority Year-round, But Especially During Breeding Season

Dairy goat care can be categorized into three main seasons: kidding season, grow and show season, and breeding season. Like many goat breeders, I enjoy different things about each season, but I have to admit, I live for breeding season. All summer long I've studied my herd, groomed and preened the does, and spoiled them with the very best hay and grain, love and treats. I've vaccinated and dewormed faithfully. And, then in the showing, considered the judge's reasons. Always in the back of my mind are plans for breeding season. Simply dreaming about the winning combination of a best doe and her "beau" is enough to cheer any breeder through another year of chores, no matter what. But, it's easy to get caught up in the fun and forget to make buck care as high a priority as doe and kid care, not only during breeding season, but year-round as well. Bucks need every bit as much care and coddling, and sometimes more frequent and careful inspection, as does and kids. It is all too easy to take everything except that musky "eau de buck" for granted. Their care needs to be a priority if a successful breeding season is to be realized.

Many breeders tend to fall back on excuses for a buck's appearance at the end of breeding season and early spring, saying, "he runs off all his weight" and "well, he has been in rut and I haven't given him much attention." Like a well-trained and fit athlete, that buck needs to stay in shape to work and [stay healthy](#) throughout the year. He needs top care all the time. More often than not, bucks get the short end of the stick when it comes to dairy goat herd [health care](#). In many articles and books about dairy goat management, bucks are almost ignored. Here he is, half the herd genetics, and all the buck usually gets is an obscure line or two like, "and the same should be done for the bucks."

That's not good enough, folks. In the big picture, bucks play just as much a role in the success of any goat herd as any of the other female members. It's time, especially at breeding season, to make buck care a priority. Evaluation, preparation, and attention paid to the buck will protect and enhance the health of this important herd member.

It's a good idea to learn to evaluate the condition of the buck by paying close attention to his body condition score, ease of movement, and soundness for breeding. It will not serve him well to be in low body condition (score below two) or over-conditioned and fat. An animal that is too thin may not feel like he has the energy or desire to breed. If his low condition is due to under-nourishment, he may have in turn a low sperm count, poor muscle tone and limited strength for servicing a doe. He could be compromised when the weather turns colder and more demanding. If bones can be felt easily along his top line, forearm, and neck, the buck may be too thin. A buck will develop quite a thick neck as he approaches rut season, and a thin neck is a pretty serious sign of an underweight buck. Expect to need to

let his collar out a few notches come August or September.

On the other extreme, a fat buck may have compromised feet, legs and even back from carrying excess weight. He may be too large to service smaller does safely. The fat buck may have a lower sperm count, especially in the early part of the season due to a persistently higher body temperature through the summer. Animals kept in "show condition" are often really too fat. A good condition test is to "pinch an inch" of fat right behind his elbow, and feel the amount of fat over his ribs. However, if he is too fat going into breeding season, this is not a good time to put him on a diet. It's best just to keep him on a steady diet and remember not to feed him any extra. Let him run off the excess weight, as many bucks are apt to do when the air turns cooler and the does begin wagging their tails.



Unless the buck is foraging on very well-balanced pasture and browse, some grain supplementation will be needed to assure good condition. Concentrated feeds supply predominately energy, and when mixed with additives such as vitamins and minerals, are meant to balance the roughages that are being fed. These amounts need to be adjusted periodically to match the animal's condition, weather factors, and forages fed. When feeding these high-energy feeds, remember to balance them with legume hays to avoid a calcium-to-phosphorus imbalance. Molasses is a high-phos feed, so be cautious of sweetened feeds. Assure adequate water intake with plenty of clean fresh water and free-choice loose salt.

As breeding season approaches, special care must be taken to prepare each buck for his own breeding "Olympics" by carefully trimming his feet, and clipping and cleaning excessively long hair from his underside. Hopefully, it has already been determined that he is a fine representation of his breed and genetics, with no conformational abnormalities, no extra teats, and no jaw abnormalities. This is the time to give him a good breeding soundness exam. A breeding soundness exam starts with the buck's testicles. They should be adequate size for his age,

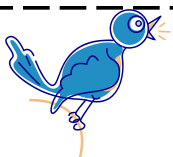
symmetrical, properly shaped, smooth of texture and well attached. They should feel firm, smooth over the surface, not lumpy, and be held fairly tightly near the body. A smaller than normal or softer than normal testes may be an indication of atrophy and a lowered sperm count. Inter-sex bucks may have small infertile testes as well. Swollen and hard or painful testes may be inflamed from infection or injury. Sometimes after a chronic infection or injury the testes actually hardens and shrinks up and this may be noticed during palpation. Be sure to check the sheath for scalded areas, scabs or excess discharges that may represent uro-genital diseases.

A healthy and well-fed buck will only be as good as his actual performance. Reluctance to mount and serve a doe may be the result of a physical or a mental problem. If his feet or legs, especially the joints of the hind leg bother the buck, he may not be able to mount the doe. This may happen from injury or arthritis. A buck that gets plenty of exercise will be in better shape to physically serve a doe. If he has been in tough competition with pen-mates, he may be reluctant to serve a doe for fear of being reprimanded by a more dominant buck. Training all bucks to serve a doe while being restrained at the end of a lead or by a collar helps to boost their confidence while maintaining an element of control for the breeder. This also comes in handy should a semen processor be contracted to visit the farm for semen collection.

When possible, and to further evaluate buck fertility, a semen evaluation for normal morphology, concentration, and motility of the sperm can be performed by the semen processor or veterinarian. An important factor in evaluation of the semen quality is the fact that the sperm cells in the semen collected today were processed in the testes up to 60 days ago (four to six weeks on the average). If the buck has not been used to service does, there may be a lot of "trash" cells in the first few ejaculates. Weather and previous health conditions affect semen quality as well. If he was sick and had a fever back then, the cells may be inferior. High environmental temperatures will decrease quality of the semen, too.

Bucks need continual evaluation in regards to condition, performance, and health all the way through breeding season so that when the last doe has been settled, he will be ready for a well-deserved rest. When breeding season is over it's easy to put the buck on a back burner until duty calls once again. It is a much better management practice however, to care for him regularly and keep him healthy. A buck should receive the same quality and quantity of care the does do. After all, he is half of the herd.

By Dr. Deb Mangelsdorf, DVM  
Konza Vet Clinic  
Reprinted from *The Dairy Goat Journal*



### EARLY BIRD MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS FOR 2012

P.O. Box 898 ♦ Green Cove Springs, FL 32043

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual Renewal \$10.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Family Renewal \$20.00

Membership Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_



# RECIPE

## GJETOST, PRIMOST, MYSOST

(All whey cheese, differing only in slight degrees.)  
Norway's brown goat cheese from saeter farms, made by the Gjetepige\* with strong, young arms!  
*This is in the form of a poem.....*

Take one gallon goat milk (preferably Norse)  
It must be sweet and fresh from it's source,  
Heat to 85 degrees Fahrenheit  
(test with thermometer to get it right)  
To dissolve one tablet of Hansen's rennet  
In a 1/4 cup of cold water takes but a minute.  
Add latter to former, stir well but not long,  
Following directions you shouldn't go wrong.

In about thirty minutes, a firm curd will form,  
Remove this white curd (but don't throw away)  
Return to the fire the strained, liquid whey  
Which is boiled very gently and stirred with great care,  
For scorching or burning will flavor impair.  
Skim off the albumin as it coagulates  
and rises to the surface as the whey evaporates.

When its boiled down to 1/4 and looks like brown syrup  
Return the albuminous matter and stir up.  
Remove from the fire. All lumps you must crush,  
Add some cream, pour in molds, (it may seem like mush)  
Press in forms, or long bars like brown laundry soap!  
Wrap in tin foil, or wax it. You'll like it, I hope.

- This will make a very small cheese. It is usually made in larger proportions. -

\* A Gjetepige is a young servant or goat herder, pronounced - yet-a-pee-gah.

# FUNDRAISING

We would like to thank everyone who submitted a photo to the OGC Calendar. We had a lot of great photos to choose from, and it was a hard decision. Below is a list of the photos that made it into the 2012 calendar. The rest of the pictures are being kept for the 2013 calendar. Members who would like to order a 2012 calendar can order one from the website [www.oberhalsi.us](http://www.oberhalsi.us) or contact Elsie Anderson at [rachelsie@yahoo.com](mailto:rachelsie@yahoo.com). Thank you all again for a great start to, hopefully, a wonderful new tradition.

### FRONT COVER

The girls from Haycreek Farm – “Tart”, “Rena”, “Dream” – Morgan Allen

### JANUARY

Coy's Lake Effect Flash April – “April” and Flash Uno “Uno” – Anne & Merlyn Coy

### FEBRUARY

Sparkling-Acres doeling with barn cat – Cindy Van Thun

### MARCH

The Espresso – “Espresso” – Addelaide Acres

### APRIL

Trinity Rose Isabeau – “Isabeau” – Arden Ward

### MAY

Ayrs Moss Sir Echo Sahreen –

“Sahreen”

– Lu Flaherty

### JUNE

Rachelsie Cardelia – “Delia” – Maria Iannucci

### JULY

Ludwigs Mohawk Hanz Viva Vada - “Viva” with “Bozo” – Denise Ludwig

### AUGUST

Coy's Lake Effect Flash PicPic – “Picpic” – Anne & Merlyn Coy

### SEPTEMBER

Aquila Ranch Bell-A' The Ball – “Bella” – Linda Wilmoth

### OCTOBER

The Addelaide Acres Macchiato – “Macchiato” – Eryn McGary

### NOVEMBER

Coy's Lake Effect Flash Uno – “Uno” – Anne & Merlyn Coy

### DECEMBER

Trinity Rose Odessa – “Odessa” – Arden Ward

### INSIDE BACK COVER

Rachelsie Adrianna – “Adrianna” – Rachelsie Farm, Inc

### BACK COVER

Suwali Magdalena Yoder – “Maggie” and Suwali Sookie Sackhouse – “Sookie” – Deb Schneider

Submissions to the newsletter can be sent either by mail:

P.O. Box 898 Green Cove Springs, FL 32043  
or email: [chaoskos@gmail.com](mailto:chaoskos@gmail.com)

Issue	Deadline
January	December 20
April	March 20
July	June 20
October	September 20

# CLASSIFIEDS

## FOR SALE OR TRADE

Foundation pure Zebu calves, excellent pets, companions, breeding stock. For hay, dairy goats, equipment. Ask we might!  
Mullins Croft Farm  
(813)653-3441  
[mullinsmules@aol.com](mailto:mullinsmules@aol.com)

Milking does, buck service and kids available for sale, trade, or barter depending on availability from a small herd. Call for more information (330) 729-9099  
The Michael Havener Family

Luv Your Mug!™  
Shaving Soap With Slip!  
His/Hers Gift Packs Available  
Got Sensitive Skin?  
Luv Your Mug!™  
You should too.  
Wild Branch Naturals  
(715) 696-3286  
[ljwis@uplogon.com](mailto:ljwis@uplogon.com)

Handmade Cold Process Goats Milk Soap - made with all natural products - essential oils and herbs.  
Fastrack@Distributor - First in direct fed microbials.  
Michelle Kuettner  
(229) 686-6863  
[kickinksoapcompany.com](http://kickinksoapcompany.com)

Registered ADGA Oberhasli buck. #AB1505703 DOB 2/27/10 \*B Vanjust Twyc Andrew. Andrew has excellent milking lines. He bred 6 does last year. Settled them on their first heat all producing lovely twins. I have his 1/2 sister & daughter so needed a new buck since I only have 3 does total. He is respectful, affectionate, and a very nice buck.  
\$250 or best offer.

SS: ++\*B SGCH Tonka-Tails Prince O The Lakes AR2005 ST2007 LA2005, 2002  
Sire: +\*B SG Udderly-Crazy Goinon-cegointwyc AR 2007 LA2009, 2005, 2005  
SD: AI 3\*M GCH Udderly-Crazy Parsons Cremepie AR2005 ST2003 LA2005  
DS: \*B Udderly-Crazy Wild Card LA2007  
Dam: 1\*M Vanjust WC Lastchance Yenda AR 2010 LA2010, 2009  
DD: Little-Sky-Ranch Mas Lastchance LA2006  
Located in Creswell, OR  
Tami Nikitins  
[tami.nikitins@yahoo.com](mailto:tami.nikitins@yahoo.com)  
(541)505-6855

The first 25 words are free for members with .10 per word after. Non members are .10 per word. Please include contact information when sending in classifieds.

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### Official Artist:

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### Volunteer Coordinator:

Ken Feaster-Eytchison

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Coming in June 3, 2012

East Coast Oberhasli Specialty Show

Location: Prince William County Fair Grounds, Manassas VA

For more info contact

Show Chair: Molly Crum @ [cherokeetears@comcast.net](mailto:cherokeetears@comcast.net)

Show Secretary: Carol Taylor

Oberhasli will be sanctioned separately on Sunday. Group classes will include: Dam & Daughter; Senior Get of Sire; Produce of Dam; Dairy Herd; Junior Produce of Dam; and Junior Get of Sire.

### Ad sizes and rates:

1 1/2" x 3"	\$10.00/issue	\$35.00/year
3" x 6"	\$25.00/issue	\$85.00/year
4 1/2" x 3"	\$35.00/issue	\$120.00/year
4 1/2" x 9"	\$50.00/issue	\$350.00/year

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