

# Small Ruminant Program

## 2010 Western Maryland Pasture Based Meat Goat Test

No significant changes are planned for the 2010 Western Maryland Pasture-Based Meat Goat Performance Test. The test will be conducted from June 4 until October 2, 2010, at the University of Maryland's Western Maryland Research & Education Center (WMREC) in Keedysville, Maryland.

The test is open to weanling male goats of any breed or breed cross, with or without registration papers or registration eligibility. The goats must be born between December 15, 2009, and March 20, 2010 (inclusive) and weigh from 35 to 70 lbs. upon delivery to the test site on June 4. They must have been weaned for at least two weeks and received two vaccinations for *clostridium perfringens* type D (overeating disease) and tetanus prior to their arrival at the test site. Hooves must be free from excess growth.

The test is open to breeders from any state. A breeder may consign up to five goats. At least two is recommended. It is suggested that breeders consign half-sibs, i.e. goats with the same sire. Data from five progeny is much more repeatable than data from a single animal.

A maximum of 70 goats will be accepted for the 2010 test. Preference will be given to Maryland residents and previous consigners. If 70 goats have not been nominated by May 15, consigners may nominate additional goats to the test.

The fee for testing a goat will remain the same at \$85 per goat. A \$20 nomination fee must accompany each nomination. Nomination forms and other documents pertinent to the test may be downloaded from the blog (<http://mdgoatstest.blogspot.com>) after the first of the year. Nomination packets may also be requested via mail from Pam Thomas at (301) 432-2767 x315 or [pthomas@umd.edu](mailto:pthomas@umd.edu). The nomination period will be the same as last year, April 1-May 15.

The goats must be delivered to the test site on Friday, June 4, unless prior approval is granted for an earlier drop-off. Upon arrival to the test site, the goats will be inspected by a committee of at least three people. Any goat showing signs of disease or ill thrift will be refused entry to the test. There will be a 13-day adjustment period. Starting weights will be recorded on Thursday, June 17. The goats will be worked bi-weekly on Thursdays, so that fecal samples can be sent promptly via overnite mail to Delaware State University and the University Georgia, for fecal egg count determination and fecal coproculture, respectively.

The Western Maryland Field Day & Sale will be held on Saturday, October 2 at the Washington County Agricultural Education Center near Boonsboro, MD. The field day will include a goat skillathon for youth ages 8-18. Bucks meeting Gold, Silver, and Bronze standards of performance and minimum standards for reproductive soundness and structural correctness will be eligible to sell via public auction. Consigners to the test may nominate does for the sale. It is recommended that sale does be contemporaries to the bucks on test and have performance data. Potential buck and doe consigners should record data on their new kid crop.

The Western Maryland Pasture-Based Meat Goat Performance Test is sponsored by University of Maryland Extension. The 2010 goat test committee consists of Susan Schoenian, Jeff Semler, Dr. Jeanne Dietz-Band, Dr. Mary Beth Bennett, Willie Lantz, David Gordon, Shannon Uzelac, Dr. Scott Updike, and Dr. Dahlia-O'Brien. Dr. Kevin Pelzer from the VA-MD Regional College of Veterinary Medicine serves as the consulting veterinarian. Input from consigners and producers is highly valued. You can provide input by sending an e-mail to Susan Schoenian at [sschoen@umd.edu](mailto:sschoen@umd.edu) or by completing the online meat goat test survey at <http://www.surveymshare.com/survey/take/?sid=95954>.

The Western Maryland Pasture-Based Meat Goat Performance Test is most suitable for breeders who raise their goats mostly on pasture, with little or no grain supplementation. It is recommended that the goats be adjusted to a pasture-only diet prior to their arrival at the test site.

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**<http://mdgoatstest.blogspot.com>**