



Wild & Woolly



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Until a new editor of the *Maryland Sheep News* is found, *Wild & Woolly* will serve as the official newsletter of the Maryland Sheep Breeders Association (MSBA).

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VOLUME 12

□ ISSUE 1

WINTER 2013

Periparturient Egg Rise

The periparturient egg rise is a well-documented phenomenon in small ruminants, whereby females suffer a temporary loss of naturally-acquired immunity to gastro-intestinal parasites. It starts approximately two weeks before lambing/kidding and continues for up to eight weeks after. During this period, the ewe or doe has a reduced ability to deal with worms.

The intensity and distribution of the periparturient egg rise varies by breed, individual, and season. While the exact mechanism is not fully understood, the periparturient egg rise is believed to be the result of various nutritional and hormonal factors.

When lambing and kidding occur in the spring, the eggs deposited (onto pasture) during the periparturient egg rise are largely responsible for the infections that lambs and



kids acquire during summer grazing. For this reason, the periparturient egg rise is also called the "spring rise."

Several strategies can be implemented to minimize the effects of the periparturient egg rise. The traditional approach has been to deworm ewes and does prior to parturition (within 1 month) or shortly thereafter (within 2 weeks). A pre-breeding treatment

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New Nutrient Management Regulations



The Maryland Department of Agriculture's (MDA) proposal to change nutrient management regulations was printed as "final" in the October 5th edition of the Maryland Register and became effective on October 15, 2012.

The new regulations alter nutrient management plans to require "fertilizer-free" buffer zones near streams, fencing of livestock out of streams, and incorporation of organic fertilizer. The regs also establish November 1st

(Eastern Shore) and November 15th (western shore) as the fall dates beyond which no fertilizer may be applied until March 1st.

The winter nutrient application ban applies to manures, commercial fertilizer and sewage sludge/biosolids. Finally, the new regs require testing prior to nitrogen application for fall seeded crops.

To read the Final Notice to Adopt, visit the Maryland Register. A copy of the final regulations is available on MDA's website.

Source: Maryland Farm Bureau.

Canary Islands



Highlights From The International Conference On Goats

The XI International Conference on Goats was held September 23-27, 2012, in Gran Canaria, Canary Islands (Spain). The conference featured 92 invited (oral) presentations and 332 scientific posters (including two from University of Maryland Extension). Scientists from all over the world presented their findings.

- Researchers in Saudi Arabia studied the effect of castration on 24 weaner male kids fed a high-energy diet. In their study, castration had no effect on slaughter weight, feed intake, gain, feed-to-gain ratio, carcass weight, and dressing percentage. However, castrated kids had significantly higher liver weight, more body fat thickness, and lighter head weight as compared to intact males.
- Mexican researchers divided 24 Creole kids into different groups for artificial rearing. For the first 30 days, the kids that were fed milk replacer with probiotics grew slightly faster (0.28 lb) than kids that suckled their dams (0.26 lb) and twice as fast as kids that were fed milk replacer without probiotics (0.13 lb). From 30 to 60 days, the kids fed milk replacer with probiotics grew faster than kids fed milk replacer without probiotics (0.58 vs. 0.25 g).
- Researchers in the French West Indies (Guadeloupe) conducted a trial to investigate the specificity of *Haemonchus contortus* for goats and cattle and to evaluate cross-infection between the two ruminant species. Their results showed a lack of cross-infection between goats and cattle, suggesting that integrated grazing using both species could be employed for pasture dilution and decontamination.
- French researchers conducted an experiment to compare pooled vs. individual fecal egg counts. They found significant

correlations between individual samples taken from 10 to 12 goats and pooled samples from the same animals, suggesting that pooled samples could be used instead of individual samples for monitoring parasitism in flocks.

- Preliminary results from a study in South Africa indicate a possible decrease in (coccidia) oocyst counts in goat kids fed *Sericea lespedeza*. Three-day old dairy kids separated from their dams and raised in elevated nursery pens were used in the study.
- Using two groups of goats selected for extreme breeding values for somatic cell scores (SCS), French scientists concluded that SCS is related to the infectious status of the udder and that SCS-based selection in goats will decrease the prevalence of intra-mammary infections and the amount of bacteria within infected milk samples.
- A study was conducted in India to determine the effect of probiotic cultures on the intestinal microflora and diarrhea incidence in stall-fed kids. Coccidia load was not affected by probiotic supplementation, but the diarrhea incidences were significantly higher in the group that did not receive probiotic supplementation.
- German scientists undertook an experiment to determine the importance of early colostrum intake in goat kids. Kids from 10 pluriparous Boer does were randomly divided into three groups and fed colostrum at 0, 4, and 8 hours after parturition. A 4-hour delay in colostrum intake did not seriously impair Ig intake, whereas an 8 hour delay negatively affected the IgA level. However, there was no impact of the time of first colostrum intake on the growth and health status of the kids.

Source: Book of Abstracts, XI International Conference on Goats

How To Eradicate The Remaining Scrapie Cases

According to Diane Sutton, DVM, National Scrapie Program Coordinator with USDA APHIS, "There has been a 96-percent decrease in the percentage of positive sheep sampled at slaughter (adjusted for face color) since the start of the Regulatory Scrapie Slaughter Surveillance (RSSS) in fiscal year 2003.



There were only eight newly identified infected and source flocks in fiscal year 2012, a 47-percent decrease from fiscal year 2011."

Even with these positive statistics, there is still work to be done. Producers can contribute significantly to finding and eliminating the remaining cases by:

1. Officially identifying sheep and goats per state and federal regulations;
2. Reporting clinically-suspect sheep and goats to a state, federal, or accredited veterinarian;
3. Submitting animals over 18 months of age that die from causes other than normal slaughter for scrapie testing.

Scrapie was first found in the United States in 1947.

In order to eradicate it, everyone in the sheep and goat industry has a responsibility.

Information on the scrapie program is available on the APHIS web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/scrapie. Questions can also be directed to the American Sheep Industry Association at (301) 771-3500.

Source: American Sheep Industry Association Quarterly Scrapie Newsletter, October 2012.

Submitting mature heads for scrapie testing

APHIS provides shipping boxes and labels for the submission of heads for scrapie testing at no cost to producers.

Many veterinary diagnostic laboratories also accept heads for scrapie testing. To request a box or more information on sample submission, contact the veterinary services area office for your state.

State contact information is available at www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/area_offices. Area offices can also be reached through the toll free number, 866-873-2824.

Save The Date For These Important 2013 Events

Thursday, August 1 – Twilight Goat Meeting

A Twilight Goat Meeting will be held Thursday, August 1 at the Western Maryland Research & Education Center (WMREC) in Keedysville. The meeting will feature a "goat roast" and tour of the enhanced small ruminant facilities at WMREC.

Saturday, September 14 – Annual Buck and Doe Sale

The top-performing bucks from the 2013 Western Maryland Pasture-Based Meat Goat Performance Test will be sold via public auction on Saturday, September 14 at the Western Maryland Research & Education Center in Keedysville. Does, of similar genetics, will be available for sale via private treaty.

Saturday, October 26 – Maryland Sheep Industry Day

The Maryland Sheep Breeders Association will be holding a Maryland Sheep Industry Day on Saturday, October 26 at the Howard County Fairgrounds in West Friendship. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Dan Morrical, a Professor of Animal Science from Iowa State University. Dr. Morrical is a ruminant nutritionist. In the evening, MSBA will hold its annual meeting and banquet.

Saturday, December 7 – Biennial Lambing & Kidding School

The Biennial 2013 Lambing & Kidding School will be held Saturday, December 7 in Washington County. Dr. Mara Mullinix, a small ruminant veterinarian in Maryland, will be the featured speaker. The school will have educational tracts for both youth and adults.

Shepherd of the Year

by Emily Chamelin

This year has certainly been quite a whirlwind for me. I have enjoyed the opportunity of shearing in New Zealand, competing in the Golden Shears World Championships, shearing my first 200, surviving the hectic spring schedule here in Maryland, doing a bit of feed lot shearing this summer in Iowa and South Dakota and then having the honor of being selected as the "shepherd of the year" for the Maryland sheep breeders.



I am so blessed to have many opportunities to shear, travel and meet many wonderful sheep breeders. It seems that everywhere I go people mention seeing me written up in some article or another, but here is one more! I remember my first Maryland Sheep Breeders Banquet I attended several years back. I remember seeing the list for the shepherds of the year and thinking that one day I would like to be on that list. It is very humbling to know I made it there and I look forward to many more years helping out our wonderful organization.

My first connection to the organization was taking my first sheep shearing class around 1999 through the Maryland Shearing school taught by another notable Maryland shepherd, David Green. That kicked off my shearing career and I began shearing part time for anyone who would let me. From there I had a few years to continue to shear while I graduated high school, went to college and traveled a bit.

When I was finally back home I decided that I wanted to shear more and get even more involved so I began to stalk some folks who have since become some of my best friends and confidants. Gwen Handler saw enthusiasm and youth in me and after a few wonderful conversations around her dining room table we plotted getting a shearing competition going again at the Sheep and Wool Festival.

I was put in charge of pulling all of this together and took over the sheep shearing department from another dear mentor of mine, Dave Delamater. I give Dave full credit for making me switch from shearing in boots by buying me a pair of official shearing moccasins, his small gift has probably saved my back and his encouragement has always pushed me to be a better shearer. I miss the days where I would shear the sheep at the festival demo and Dave would critique me! He believed in what I was doing and he was so supportive. I miss shearing with him at the festival but look forward to seeing him on occasion when I am out and about shearing.

Another important person to my shearing career has been Linda (and Phil) Shane. About the time I started to muscle my way into the organization I met Linda at any number of random meetings, it might have been at one of the shearing schools I attended (I was a chronic reoffender!) I expressed interest in learning more about the wool end of the process and it was at that point that I attended my first Maryland Wool Pool. I can't remember having so much fun working so hard and getting so dirty as I did that day.

For anyone who has never attended a wool pool day, they are a lot fun and I haven't missed a year since. But ever since then Linda has taken me under her wing, fed me really well, taught me as much as she can get through my thick skull and has become one of my dearest friends.

Since those early days when I was just getting started I have had the pleasure of getting to know many people in the organization and with the Frederick County Sheep Breeders where I'm also involved. I had attended a fundraiser with the FCSBA helping to sell lamb sausage at a community event. It was during this event that I was asked to be Vice President of the organization and while this terrified me at first it has since proven to be an enjoyable position for me as I can help in planning programs and educating about sheep and assist when I can.

Peter Vorac who is president of the organization has been quite an inspiration to me at getting things done and always striving to provide opportunities for

(Continued on page 5)

Recipe

Cinnamon Skewered Lamb Kabobs

Ingredients

1 lb ground lamb
2 Tbsp chives chopped finely
1/2 tsp cumin
1/2 tsp coriander
1/2 tsp ginger powder
1/2 tsp granulated garlic
1 tsp sea salt
1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
8 6" cinnamon sticks



Sprinkle seasonings on top of lamb and stir with a spoon to break up the meat. Then mix with your hand until it is soft and sticks together. With one hand grab a meatball size piece and work onto your cinnamon stick. Dampen your hand to help the meat move better.

Grill meat to desired degree of doneness, turning from side-to-side. You can cover the ends of the cinnamon sticks in foil to keep them from burning. Either way, the cinnamon will be nicely infused into the lamb.

Source: For the Love of Food Blog
(byebyegluten.blogspot.com)

Shepherd Of The Year Continued from page 4

sheep breeders in the area to learn. If he reads about something he thinks our members might be interested in, he makes it happen. Groups always need someone like Peter and I am so glad for the opportunity to know him and work with him.

The list just goes on and on of people who have impacted my life and my career in such positive ways. Kevin Ford for teaching me the blades, Doug Rathke for inspiring me and showing me that shearing can be a career.

Jerry Frock for being my first true client and letting me sweat, cry, and fight my way through your sheep every year, you really gave me the opportunity to become a shearer.

John Bradfield for teaching me how to use the shaft machine and shearing in spite of difficulties, you inspired me. Lisa and Bill Check for being my first goat clients and bearing with me through that learning curve.

The Bosteks and Mary Bare for being my biggest fans, the list just goes on and on. I am humbled by the honor of being your shepherd of the year for 2012 and look forward to many more years of working for you all.

Emily Chamelin: www.chamelinshearing.com

Spreadsheets For Evaluating Feed Rations

UME Sheep Ration Evaluator and UME Meat Goat Ration Evaluator are Excel spreadsheets that can be used to evaluate feed rations for sheep and meat goats, respectively. The spreadsheets utilize the most recent nutrient requirements from the National Research Council (NRC).

There are two versions of each spreadsheet. A spreadsheet with the extension .xlsx is for use with Microsoft Excel 2007 (or later versions). A spreadsheet with the extension .xls is for use with Microsoft Excel 2003 (or earlier versions). The spreadsheets can also be opened in Open Office.



The spreadsheets can be used to evaluate rations that are being fed to sheep and/or goats. The rations can then be adjusted to meet the nutrient requirements of the animals.

In order to use the spreadsheets (and balance rations), the following information is needed: weight of animals, stage and level of production, and weight and nutritive value of feedstuffs. "Book values" can be used for concentrates, but forages should be analyzed to determine nutritive content.

<http://www.sheepandgoat.com/spreadsheets.html>.

Featured Breed: Lacaune

The Lacaune is a French breed of dairy sheep, famous for its milk production which is processed into Roquefort cheese. The breed originated in the Lacaune region of South Central France. It is one of the most numerous breeds in France.

In France, the Lacaune has been selected for increased milk production under a sophisticated selection program that incorporates artificial insemination, milk recording, and progeny testing of sires. There are three selection lines of Lacuane: dairy, meat, and prolific. The French have also infused the MyoMAX© Texel gene into some Lacaunes.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison imported the first Lacaune genetics into the United States in 1998; via semen from three rams in the United Kingdom and two Lacaune rams from a Canadian breeder. In the United States, it is common to cross the Lacaune with the East Friesian for dairy production.



The East Friesian and Lacaune are the only two breeds of dairy sheep available in the United States. As compared to the East Friesian (the world's most productive dairy sheep), the Lacaune produces less milk, but with more butter fat. They are less prolific (0.2 lambs less), but are a hardier animal, with numerous production advantages, including only a light covering of wool, mostly on their backs.



Based on the results of a multi-year study (1998-2004), researchers from the University of Wisconsin's Spooner Research Center proposed a $\frac{3}{4}$ East Friesian x $\frac{1}{4}$ Lacuane breeding scheme for commercial U.S. dairy sheep producers. A higher proportion of Lacaune genetics would be advised for farmstead cheese production and component-based milk sales.

In more recent years, the Wisconsin researchers have been evaluating the performance of Katahdin-Lacaune crossbred ewes. The motivation behind the research is to create a dairy hair sheep, which would be more desirable for the sanitary collection of milk. Another reason would be to create a dairy sheep that would be more adaptable to hot, humid climates.

The researchers concluded that the crossbred Katahdin-Lacaune ewe could be acceptable in a low-input, easy care system where maximum milk production is not the goal. Due to the heat and parasite resistance, the crosses would also be suitable for dairy producers in the South and Southeast.

There is a strong need for new Lacuane genetics in the U.S., not only for the fledgling dairy sheep industry, but for use in other sheep production systems. Unfortunately, the current regulatory environment makes it difficult to import semen, embryos, and/or live animals.

Periparturient Egg Rise (Continued from page 1)

(before the first hard frost) to eliminate hypobiotic larvae is another commonly-used strategy.

When implementing these strategies, it is important to use an anthelmintic (dewormer) that is effective against hypobiotic larvae. While most of the commonly-used anthelmintics are considered to be effective against hypobiotic larvae, the macrocyclic lactones (Ivomec® and Cydectin®) are the most effective. Morantel (various trade names) is not effective against arrested larvae.



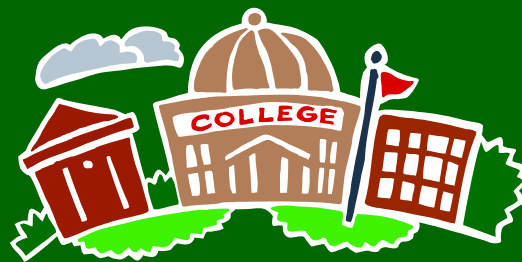
Strategic nutritional supplementation, especially protein, is another way to counteract the effect of the periparturient egg rise. Feeds rich in (rumen) by-pass protein are especially advantageous. Nutritional supplementation makes sense, since the loss of resistance is occurring at the same time the female's nutrient requirements are increasing.

Current NRC requirements may encompass an influence of low levels of parasitism (all recommendations are for confined animals), but unfortunately there are no clear recommendations available for the effects of subclinical levels of parasitism on metabolizable protein requirements of sheep and goats.

In an indoor lambing and kidding environment (zero grazing), the effect of the periparturient egg rise is minimal because the eggs are not being deposited onto pasture and females are not continuously ingesting new larvae.

From www.wormx.org

Scholarship Opportunity



The Maryland Sheep Breeders Association (MSBA) is offering at least one \$500 scholarship to students who are currently high school seniors, college freshmen or sophomores under the age of 21, whose parents are members of MSBA.

Applicants must be attending or have been accepted to a technical, vocational, community college, or university. All academic majors will be considered. Preference will be given to those with agricultural career goals. Scholarship will be awarded in September 2013 at the Maryland State Fair. The winning applicant will also be honored at the MSBA Annual Banquet in October 2013.

Selection Criteria:

1. Experience and involvement in the sheep industry (4H, FFA, family business)
2. Career goals
3. Community service and leadership
4. Academic record (Current High School or College Transcript)
5. Essay (500 words)
6. Two letters of recommendation

For applications and information, please contact Victor Loun at vloun@msn.com.

**The deadline for submission:
June 1, 2013.**

Toxoplasmosis: Common Cause of Abortion In Sheep And Goats

By Dr. Dahlia J. O'Brien
Small Ruminant Specialist
Delaware State University

Toxoplasmosis is a disease that causes abortion in sheep and goats. The agent is a common parasitic infection, the protozoan organism known as *Toxoplasma gondii*.

Both sheep and goats can get toxoplasmosis and experience abortions, stillbirth, fetal mummification, and the birth of weak lambs and kids. Goats seem to be more vulnerable to *Toxoplasma* infection than sheep. Cats that have eaten infected rodents or birds are a common carrier, with kittens (infected in the womb) spreading the organism in the environment, which is then consumed by sheep or goats.



Signs of toxoplasmosis vary depending on when the female gets exposed. *Toxoplasma* commonly invades the placenta and fetus approximately two weeks after initial infection of the doe. Fetuses infected in the first half of pregnancy are more apt to die than fetuses infected in the second half. If infected during the second half of pregnancy, stillborns or weak lambs/kids usually are the only indications of this disease. The incidence of abortion in a flock is usually low, varying between 1 and 5%, so if levels occur above this, an infectious abortive agent might be the cause.

Diagnosis of toxoplasmosis is possible by the detection of high antibody titers in the blood. The most conclusive diagnosis requires the isolation of organisms from the placenta or body of a stillborn lamb (store on ice – not frozen- until you can get it to the nearest animal health lab).



To avoid *Toxoplasma* infection (and other problems), cleanliness is important, especially around feeding areas. It is especially important to try to prevent cats from defecating in hay, bedding, grain, or water that will be fed to pregnant animals. Any fetal membranes and dead fetuses should be disposed of properly (burned or buried) to prevent transmission of infection to more animals, and aborted females should always be separated from the flock.

A successful prevention/treatment of toxoplasmosis can be achieved by adding coccidiostats such as Decoquate (Deccox®), lasalocid (Bovatec®) or monensin (Rumensin®) to the diets of sheep and goats (with a veterinarian's guidance if not labeled for such use).

Does and ewes previously infected with the organism *Toxoplasma gondii* are likely to be resistant to exposure in subsequent pregnancies; therefore, the highest risk will be in younger females.

Please note that Toxoplasmosis is transmissible to humans. Pregnant women should be especially careful in handling aborted fetal membranes and fetuses (along with cat litter, of course). Infection with *Toxoplasma gondii* during pregnancy can result in encephalitis or blindness in human fetuses. It can also be transmitted to humans via the consumption of sheep and goats milk so care should be taken by pasteurizing or boiling milk before consumption.

Subscribe To Listservs

The University of Maryland Extension Small Ruminant Program has created four new listservs to communicate with producers and disseminate information.

Program	Name of listserv
Wild & Woolly newsletter	sheepandgoatnews
Shepherd's Notebook blog	shepherdsnotebook
Meat Goat Test blog	meatgoatatest
Webinars	sheepgoatwebinars

Wild & Woolly newsletter

If you subscribe to the Wild & Woolly listserv, you will receive an e-mail message when a new issue of the newsletter has been posted to the web. During the year, you may receive a few additional e-mails about upcoming programs or other important issues. E-mails from the Wild & Woolly listserv are not very frequent, since there are only four newsletter issues per year.

Blogs

If you subscribe to the Shepherd's Notebook blog listserv, you will automatically receive Shepherd's Notebook blog entries via e-mail. Shepherd's Notebook Blog entries are frequent. If you subscribe to the Meat Goat Test blog listserv, you will automatically receive Meat Goat Test blog entries via e-mail. The

Meat Goat Test blog is most active during the period of the goat test (June-September); fewer posts are made the rest of the year.



Webinars

If you subscribe to the webinar listserv, you will receive e-mail messages about upcoming webinars. The listserv will also be used to communicate with webinar participants. Webinars are held mostly in the winter months.

To subscribe to a listserv, send an e-mail message to listserv@listserv.umd.edu. In the body of the message, write: subscribe nameoflistserv. To unsubscribe, send an e-mail to the same e-mail address, but in the body of the message, write unsubscribe nameoflistserv.

If your e-mail address changes or you wish to use a different e-mail address for a listserv, you will need to un-subscribe, then re-subscribe from your new address.

The listservs replace the e-mail reflector lists which were previously in use. If your e-mail address was on an e-mail reflector list, it was automatically added to the appropriate listserv(s).

Calendar Of Events



January 15, 16, and 17

Regional Hay and Pasture Conferences

Harrington, DE – Brandywine, MD – Oakland, MD

Info: <http://www.mdforages.umd.edu/>

UpcomingEvents.htm

January 18-19

Future Harvest CASA "Farming for Profit and Stewardship" Conference

National Conference Center, Lansdowne, Virginia

Info: <http://www.futureharvestcasa.org/>

January 23-26

ASI Annual Convention

Hyatt Regency, San Antonio, Texas

Info: www.sheepusa.org

February 6-9

PASA "Farming for the Future" Conference

State College, Pennsylvania

Info: www.pasafarming.com/events/conference

March 8-9

2013 Appalachian Grazing Conference

Waterfront Place Hotel, Morgantown, West Virginia

Info: www.grazeappalachia.org

May 3

Integrated Parasite Management Workshop

Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival, Howard County

Fairgrounds, West Friendship, Maryland

Info: www.sheepandwool.org

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2013 Winter Webinar Series

A 2013 Winter Webinar Series, entitled "Breeding Better Sheep and Goats" will be held on consecutive Tuesdays in January and February.

January 22 - Part 1: Principles of genetics

January 29 - Part 2: Breeding Systems

February 5 - Part 3: Selection

February 12 - Part 4: Performance evaluation

February 19 - Part 5: Advanced genetic improvement

A webinar is a seminar that is presented on the worldwide web. Anyone with an internet connection can participate. A high speed connection is recommended. Interaction is via a chat box.

Pre-registration is not necessary to participate in the webinars. The webinars are free and open to the first 100 people who sign-on.

On the day and time of the webinar, go to <https://connect.moo.umd.edu/sschoen/> and sign-on as a guest. Provide a name and in parenthesis, put where you are from (county, state, or country). Example: John Doe (Calvert County) or Jane Doe (Montana).

If you are interested but unable to participate in one of the webinars, you can listen to the webinar recording and download the associated PowerPoint presentation. Webinar recordings for all past webinars are available at www.sheepandgoat.com/recordings.html.

If you plan to participate in any of the webinars, please subscribe to the webinar listserv. If your e-mail address was on the webinar e-mail reflector list, it has been automatically added to the new listserv.

To subscribe to the webinar listserv, send an e-mail to listserv@listserv.umd.edu. In the body of the message, write: subscribe sheepgoatwebinars.

By subscribing to the webinar listserv, you will receive information about upcoming webinars. The listserv will also be used solicit input from webinar participants.

Consign Bucks To The 2013 Test

2013 will be the 8th year of the Western Maryland Pasture-Based Meat Goat Performance Test. In 2012, 49 bucks participated in the annual test, whose purpose is to evaluate the post-weaning performance of bucklings consuming a pasture-only diet, with natural exposure to internal parasites, primarily the barber pole worm.



While on test, the goats are managed as a single group on pasture, with no feed supplementation, other than free choice minerals. They are handled every two weeks to determine body weights, FAMACHA® eye anemia scores, body condition, coat condition, and dagginess. Individual fecal samples are collected bi-weekly to determine fecal egg counts. Pooled fecal samples are collected every four weeks for larvae ID.

The test will conclude on September 5. Bucks that meet Gold, Silver, or Bronze standards of performance for growth, parasite resistance, and parasite resilience and

minimum standards for structural correctness and reproductive soundness will be eligible to sell for breeding. The 2013 buck sale will be held on Saturday, September 14 (at the test site).

Male goats of any breed or breed cross, with or without registration eligibility, may be consigned to the test. Producers from any state may consign up to five bucks to the 2013 test. If nominations exceed the capacity of the test, preference will be given to Maryland residents and previous consigners.

Eligible goats must be born between December 20, 2012, and March 20, 2013, and weigh between 35 and 70 lbs. upon delivery to the test site on June 1. They must have been weaned for at least two weeks prior to the test and have received two vaccinations for enterotoxemia (type C and D) and tetanus. Hooves must be properly trimmed for scoring and foot soaking.

Health papers are required for admission to the test. Any buck showing signs of contagious disease will be refused entry to the test. The test has a zero tolerance for abscesses.

Consign Bucks to the 2013 Test *(continued from page 10)*

A nomination form and \$20 per goat nomination fee is required to nominate a goat to the test. The nomination period for the 2013 goat test is April 1- May 15. It is not necessary to identify specific bucks at the time of nomination. A balance of \$80 is due for each goat, upon delivery to the test site.

Information and documents pertaining to the 2013 test are available at the Meat Goat Test Blog at <https://mdgoatstest.blogspot.com>. Questions can be directed to Susan Schoenian at (301) 432-2767 x343 or sschoen@umd.edu.

2012 Pen vs. Pasture Study

By Susan Schoenian

For the past several years, we have been comparing goats fed a hay-grain diet (in a pen) vs. those raised on pasture. The lack of market-readiness of many pasture-raised goats is the rationale behind our studies, as there are significant price differences among Selection 1, 2, and 3 slaughter kids (according to New Holland PA sale reports).



In 2011, we fed nine weanling bucks in dry lot. They were hand-fed grain (commercial meat goat pellet) once per day, based on appetite, the amount they would clean up in 20 minutes. They also had free choice access to grass hay and minerals. The pen-fed goats were compared to nine bucklings, of similar genetics, that grazed alongside the bucks in the Western Maryland Pasture-Based Meat Goat Performance Test. They had free choice minerals, but no supplemental feed.

The pen-fed goats grew almost twice as fast as the pasture-fed goats (0.232 vs. 0.128 lbs/day) and produced superior carcasses (24.5 vs. 19.8 percent boneless yield). The fatty acid profile was similar between the two groups, though the meat from the pen-fed goats had a lower percentage of less-desirable saturated fatty acid.

This year, we conducted a similar study. It was funded by the Maryland Grain Producers Utilization Board. We fed 15 bucklings in the same dry lot. The bucks were fed all the grass hay they could eat, plus a more economical grain

ration composed of 4 parts whole barley to 1 part protein (38%) pellet. These bucks were compared to 15 bucks, of similar genetics, that grazed with the bucks in our pasture-based performance test.

In contrast with last year's study, the pasture-fed goats had a higher rate-of-gain than those fed in the pen (0.183 vs. 0.149 lbs/day). Carcass data was similar for the goats in both groups (18.8 percent boneless yield). The meat is being analyzed for fatty acid composition.

While the economics of different production systems will vary by farm, the pen-fed goats in this year's study failed to perform at a level necessary to compensate for their higher feed costs. This year, pasture-rearing proved to be more economical, though neither group had many goats that would have been deemed market-ready (Selection 1 or 2).

On the other hand, the pen-fed goats had lower worm burdens and did not require any anthelmintic treatments. Internal parasitism is a major obstacle to the profitable rearing of goat kids on pasture.

Pending funding, we hope to repeat our study in 2013, with some important changes. Instead of grass hay, we plan to feed a good quality mixed hay. The grain ration will be whole barley. The goats will be obtained from a single source. Treatment groups will be better balanced.

We will be looking to purchase thirty male kids that will weigh approximately 40 lbs. on June 1.



Group	Start Wt.	End Wt.	ADG	Avg. FEC	Avg. FAM	# Tx
Pasture	45.1	60.5	0.183	1163	1.8	11
Pen	45.9	58.4	0.149	565	1.6	0

Calendar of Events (continued from page 9)

May 4-5

40th Anniversary of the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival
Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, Maryland
Info: www.sheepandwool.org

May 5

Junior Sheep & Wool Skillathon
Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival
Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, Maryland
Info: Susan Schoenian at sschoen@umd.edu

June 1

Buck delivery date - Western Maryland Pasture-Based Meat Goat Performance Test Western Maryland Research & Education Center, Keedysville, Maryland
Info: Susan Schoenian at sschoen@umd.edu



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Wild & Woolly, is published quarterly by the University of Maryland Extension. It is written and edited by Susan Schoenian, Sheep and Goat Specialist, at the Western Maryland Research & Education Center (WMREC), 18330 Keedysville Road, Keedysville, MD, tel. (301) 432-2767 x343 or 315, fax (301) 432-4089; e-mail: sschoen@umd.edu or Pamela Thomas, Administrative Assistant, pthomas@umd.edu. The cost of receiving the newsletter by mail is \$10 per year, payable to the University of Maryland. The newsletter can be accessed for free on the Internet at <http://www.sheepandgoat.com/news/index.html>. Internet users can ask to be added to a list to receive an e-mail message when a new newsletter has been posted to the web.

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More information on sheep, goats, and upcoming events can be accessed at:

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