

HOOFPRINTS



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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



ello Everyone. We had two feet of fluffy, blowing, drifting snow here a couple of weeks ago, so I wore my snowshoes to

do the chores. The snow was so light that I sank down close to a foot anyway, and, besides, the bucklings kept standing on the snowshoes to get a little purchase themselves. Hard slogging, limited visibility, somehow fun anyway. That is until I got about ten feet from the horse pasture and fell. Imagine me, older than I want to admit, trying to get up.

The snowshoes kept sinking, I couldn't fine the ground with my hands, the sled wouldn't move toward me to get some help...the thought of dialing 911 to help me get up and provide endless comments and entertainment for the local rescue squad got me back on my feet, much to the relief of the waiting horses. I ditched the snowshoes the next day, and things went better.

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Left: Wendy in the storm. Right: After the storm.

Anyway, hopefully your winter has been good, even with all the ups and downs of irregular, in-

tense weather patterns. The alewives that run up the rivers to spawn have started early; the lobsters, which usually shed in late spring, are shedding; I guess I shouldn't be surprised that several of the goats are already in full shed themselves.

The show season is approaching, be sure to save your best fleeces for the competition, and think about bringing some goats to the ECA shows. And if you don't have any goats, think about getting some!

Thanks,

Wendy ♦



ECA

Bringing together breeders, fiber artists and others interested in these charming animals and the luxurious fiber they grow.

Goats Available

Barbara Johnson from Timberwood Farm in Rhodesville, Virginia would like to sell her Cashmere goats to have more time for her other livestock.

Here is what she has to say:

I have 14 older does ranging in age from 2 years to 8 years of age, and I have fiber scores on most of those does. I also have 18 yearlings, most of which are covered from head to toe in fiber. I would prefer that they go to homes where someone will continue to breed them and harvest the fiber (ranges from pale gray to medium brown). If you, or anyone you know might be interested in acquiring some, or all of my does, and bucks (3 bucks - 2 black & 1 badger), I would be willing to work out a pretty good deal.

If anyone is interested, I can provide photos, pedigrees, and fiber scores. They can contact me either through my website - all 14 older does and bucks can be viewed on the website - at http://www.timberwoodfarmand-fiber.com/Cashmere_Goats.html or they can contact me via email: barbrafrilingjohnson@msn.com for information and photos on the almost yearling does.

Thanks,
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Full individual membership is \$25/year. Junior (youth under 18 years of age) membership is \$15/year (non-voting). If you have not filled out a membership application for a year or two, it would be helpful to the association for you to do that. The application can be found under contact information at our website: www.easterncashmereassociation.org.

ADVERTISING

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Business Card	---	\$22
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Half Page	\$43	\$130
Full page	\$75	\$220

FOR ADVERTISING

Please send name, farm name, address, website, phone number and indicate lines of business (breeding, fiber, bucks for lease, etc).

Website advertising \$25/year

Send membership and advertising information and checks to: Pamela Haendle, 10601 Merrill Road, West Edmeston, NY 13485. Make checks payable to Eastern Cashmere Association or ECA. Questions? Contact pamela.haendle@bnymellon.com or call 315-899-7792.

Potential Forage-Related Health Concerns Following a Drought Year

by Becky Bemus, Roving Winds Farm, Coldwater, Ontario



he following information is taken with permission as excerpts with editing for flow, from a presentation by J.D. Kleinschmidt BSc. (Agr), Msc. Entitled: "The Challenges of Feeding Your Goat Herd in 2012-2013 & Considerations When Feeding a Goat Herd a TMR".

In the last issue I talked about our experience with Listeriosis that was brought on by the feeding of forages grown and harvested during the extreme dry conditions we experienced here in Southern Ontario last summer. Recently a copy of a power point presentation was passed on to me by a friend who attended a goat day education event where Janet Kleinschmidt presented this information in person. She has been gracious enough to allow me to use her presentation as I see fit for this article and I hope it gives us all something more to think about as we head into kidding season and are perhaps still scrambling to be sure we have enough quality feed to get our furry friends, but especially our expectant moms, safely through the winter and onto summer pasture.

This past summer parts of Canada and the United States experienced the worst drought in more than half a century. In Canada the hardest hit areas included most of southern Ontario, Quebec and parts of the Maritimes and Manitoba. In the US the Mississippi River approached record lows, as far as 20 feet below normal. Throughout the Midwest, meager corn harvests began on some of the earliest dates ever recorded. Corn and Soybean farms produced far smaller yields, which is affecting livestock production and impacting food prices worldwide. Kleinschmidt suggests most of us will see these conditions again in our farming lifetimes so we should be well aware that adverse

weather conditions like drought present the goat producer with some major challenges. The biggest and most stressing of which is simply finding enough forage to feed all our animals. The second significant problem is the quality of the forage obtained and the third issue is the cost of feeding our animals.

In this article, I want to focus on the potential health concerns created by "forage quality" during and following a drought year as outlined by Kleinschmidt in her presentation. She warns specifically about the increased incidence of listeriosis, nitrate poisoning, molds and mycotoxin problems when crops are grown or harvested under extreme weather conditions like this past growing season.

"In this article, I want to focus on the potential health concerns created by 'forage quality' during and following a drought year..."

Listeriosis in Goats:

As a brief review, Listeriosis is a brain-stem disease caused by the bacteria *Listeria monocytogenes*, which is found in soil, water, plant litter, silage and even in the goat's digestive tract. It is brought on by feeding moldy silage, suddenly changing the type and kind of feed (grain or hay), dusty moldy hay, dramatic weather changes, parasitism and late stages of pregnancy.

There are two forms listeriosis can take. The first form results in abortions. The second is the more commonly seen encephalitis. Symptoms include depression, decreased appetite, fever, leaning or stumbling or moving in one direction only, head pulled to the flank with rigid neck, facial paralysis on one side, blindness, slack jaw and drooling. Diarrhea is only present in the strain that causes abortions and pregnancy toxemia. Treatment must be administered swiftly to save the animals life.

“Forage-related health concerns...” from page 3...

[As an aside, I attended a research day at the University of Guelph, Veterinary College recently and one of their studies looked at parasite load in pregnant sheep and goats. The research indicated there is a pre-kidding/lambing rise in the fecal egg counts and they are recommending we all worm our pregnant animals approximately one month prior to kidding to minimize the number of eggs present in the environment at kidding. This rise was not seen in non pregnant animals in the same herd groups and was consistently associated with late stage pregnancy, independent of the time of year the animals were kidded/lambed out, ie: it is not just a spring phenomenon.]

Nitrate Poisoning in Goats:

The potential for high nitrate levels occurs when crops such as corn, sorghum, and grasses are exposed to stress situations including drought, hail, frost, cloudy weather and fertility imbalance. The potential for nitrate poisoning is exacerbated in crops that have been heavily fertilized with manure or nitrogen. Nitrogen levels generally decrease somewhat during ensiling, as dangerous nitrogen gas is formed. However, nitrate levels may increase in hay if it undergoes heating and molding in the bale. Nitrate poisoning in goats may result when animals suddenly consume large amounts of forages containing 2-3% or more nitrate ion on a DM basis. Forages with lower nitrate levels may adversely affect reproduction or become toxic if animals are nutritionally stressed and suddenly eat large amounts of forage.

Symptoms of nitrate poisoning include the development of blue mucous membranes from a lack of oxygen in the blood, rumen paralysis, laboured



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or difficulty breathing may be observed and/or goats may go down and die suddenly. Subacute or chronic nitrate poisoning may result in more than usual reproductive problems including abortions. Although reproductive problems can generally be prevented if feeds are introduced gradually and the nitrate level in the total ration DM is kept below 0.40%. Never feed suspect feed sources to hungry animals as they are likely to over indulge. Milk production and appetite generally are not affected by subacute nitrate intake. It is recommended that all forage sources be tested prior to feeding as a matter of routine, but especially in a questionable quality year.

Molds and Mycotoxins in Goats:

Weather conditions during the growing and harvesting seasons may appreciably increase the incidence and degree of moldy feed and mycotoxin problems from year to year. Fusarium toxins are more likely to occur under cool wet conditions during growth, harvesting and storage. Hot humid conditions favour the development of aflatoxins.

The most common mycotoxins are as follows. Aflatoxins, which are extremely toxic, mutagenic, and carcinogenic compounds. Deoxynivalenol (DON) or Vomitoxin is another mycotoxin commonly detected in feed. T-2 toxin, is a very potent mycotoxin that occurs in a low proportion of feed samples. Zearalenone is a mycotoxin that has a chemical structure similar to estrogen and can produce an estrogenic response in cows and likely in other ruminant livestock. Fumonsisin is much less potent in ruminants than in hogs, but it is still toxic in ruminants.

Mycotoxins may develop in almost any feedstuff

“Forage-related health concerns...” from page 4...

during the growing season, at harvest, or during storage. While grains receive the most attention, by-product feeds, protein concentrates, finished feeds, oilseeds, wet brewers grains, food wastes, and forages may also contain mycotoxins. Whole-plant corn silage and haylage are more likely to be contaminated than hays. Heat-processing and ensiling do not destroy mycotoxins.

Moldy feed won't always contain mycotoxins, but the presence of considerable mold in itself is a huge concern. Under some conditions, molds may produce potent mycotoxins at levels that may adversely affect goat production and health, especially when the immune system is suppressed during stressful periods. These ill effects can manifest as a higher incidence of disease, poor reproductive performance or suboptimal milk production. The effect of high mold loads can manifest in locations such as the lungs, mammary gland, uterus, or the intestine. There is also potential public health concern when milk contains a level of aflaxatoxin, a potent carcinogen. The effects of mycotoxins are cumulative over a period of time and the presence of more than one mycotoxin may increase these effects.

It is important to note that signs of mycotoxin toxicity mimic those of other metabolic and infectious diseases. Symptoms include reduced intake or feed refusal, reduced nutrient absorption and impaired metabolism, altered endocrine and exocrine systems, suppressed immune function and altered microbial growth. Testing for mycotoxins should be considered when signs of potential effects on performance and health exist and cannot be readily explained. This is particularly important when moldy feeds are being fed or when

marked changes in production or health have occurred among a relatively large proportion of animals. Analytical techniques for mycotoxins are improving and costs are lowering so this is certainly a viable option for some producers. Keep in mind that animals a few weeks to several months of age are more susceptible to mold and mycotoxin problems. Likewise animals close to parturbation or in early lactation are more sensitive to mold and mycotoxins so these two groups

should be fed the highest quality forage available, with dry or low production animals receiving the next best quality forages where feeding everyone the best is not a viable option.

Hopefully we are not going to see too many drought years like the last one but we need to keep in mind that not only can it bring with it concerns over finding and affording adequate forages for our goats, but that it also has the potential for significant underlying effects on our herds' health, now and in the future. ♦



**Fall 2012 Turnbridge, Vermont Show:
Judges Becky and Phil Bemus**



**Fall 2012 Turnbridge, Vermont Show:
“In the Ring”**

Starting Out With Cashmere Goats

by Joann Gwozdz, Muddy Rivers Meadow Farm, Naples, Maine



I've always had animals. I grew up with ponies and horses and always dreamed of living on the side of a mountain, and as much off the land as we could. Well, reality and practicality stepped in after we got married and had two children. We raised our own pork, poultry, turkeys, vegees, and herbs, but it took ten years before we were able to get a barn up. With my husband and me working full time and scouts, sports, music lessons and other family obligations there wasn't much time for anything else.

I finally bought a couple of horses but never had time to ride them. I was looking for something to fill our barn that was less demanding but rewarding. I'm not really sure what made me look toward goats, but after one "farm day" touring a number of farms in Maine and one Fiber Frolic Fair, I was the proud owner of 2 Cashmere bucks, and 2 yearling does from Jodie Richards of Cashmere Cabins. I chose Cashmere after doing a lot of research on the type of goat I wanted. I was looking for a goat that would give me fiber and one that was easy to handle. I almost went with Angora goats but after reading that their fiber quality declines considerably after a few years I chose the Cashmere. When I bought my goats from Jodie she reassured me that it was not the end of our relationship. Any questions or any problems, her line was always open. If she didn't know the answer she had a wealth of cashmere people to refer to. She would say you could try calling Yvonne Taylor (who is like the matriarch of our group) or call Wendy Pieh.

There was (and still is) so much to learn. How to clip their feet, how to comb their cashmere, how to keep them well or heal them when they aren't well, who to mate with whom, and I could go on for pages on questions I had. I went to my first Cashmere goat meeting and was amazed at how far people came and how willing everyone was to help. One woman, Anne, came from as far away as Massachusetts while a couple of other people

were in Maine but traveled about 2 ½ hours to get there.

My husband and I took an animal husbandry class at Springtide Farm with Wendy Pieh and Peter Goth. The information was so overwhelming at first but so useful. I had no idea how in depth we would get into goat health and wellness. They had excellent instruction and there was a lot of hands on training which I found very helpful. I would recommend this course to anyone!

The internet has also been a very helpful tool in problem solving and videos of anything from birthing to clipping feet.

I got back my first batch of cashmere this fall (it took almost 6 months to process). I purchased an Ashford spinning wheel and can't wait for some time to spin my own cashmere.

My next big venture is to get a couple of bucks from out west and getting involved with the fairs.

I'm so glad I chose Cashmere goats. The group of people who own Cashmere goats seem to be such a close knit group with so much willingness to help each other. I have five pregnant does right now and can't wait for spring. ♦



2013 ECA Goat & Fleece Competition at the Shenandoah Valley Fiber Festival September 28-29, 2013



The Eastern Cashmere Association will be returning to the Shenandoah Valley Fiber Festival in Berryville, Virginia! Pack your goats and fleeces up and join us for a fun-filled weekend in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains! There will be fiber vendors, sheep and goats and plenty of activities for the whole family.

The Eastern Cashmere Association Goat and Fleece Competition at The Shenandoah Valley Fiber Festival September 28-29, 2013 Berryville, VA (Just a few miles east of Winchester) Judge: To be determined!

Back by popular demand! We are grateful to have Ginny Nichols serve as our show registrar, Liz Pack serving as our fleece secretary and Jane McKinney will serve as the overall superintendent! We look forward to the opportunity to get together as fellow cashmere enthusiasts. Please let other farms know of this opportunity to show their goats and fiber. We want to increase our numbers! We will have more details regarding registration and show schedule available on our website as they become available.

If you are interested in selling your raw cashmere or roving please contact the SVFF directly via their website to register for the fleece table sales. This is a great opportunity to sell your product and help pay for your flock! Just ask Anne Repaske about her sales in past years!

So, comb away and keep in mind those Champions that are just waiting to be discovered!

**For more information on the Shenandoah Valley Fiber Festival go to their website at:
www.shenandoahvalleyfiberfestival.com**

Goats, Gadgets, and Gizmos

by Linda Singley, Shippensburg, Pennsylvania



etween the recent snowstorms, the vet was out at our farm to recheck the progress of one doe with a skin condition. We first noticed the problem last June with little blisters on the tips of her ears. I looked at it, put on gloves and felt it, checked the temperature of her ears, applied some antibiotic and noted it in the herd's "Book of Notes."

When I went inside, I looked on the internet to find any pictures or descriptions of any similar conditions. Over the next week, I watched it pretty closely, saw no large changes, applied some bag balm to see if that had any effect and looked for any other goat with the same condition. I checked her general behavior and soundness, at night putting on my headlight and bifocals to see the ears up close. She and her daughter were brought into the barn to be separated from the herd.

A month later on worming those who needed it, I looked her over and saw that she now had some little patches of itchy spots on the poll area. She would scratch with her back leg, but didn't seem too upset by the itchiness. I dosed her with Cydectin drench hoping that if it were caused by external parasites, that would take care of it. I cruised the web again to see if any other thing had slipped by that might look like this. I bought more antibiotic cream to smear on her ears and kept watching. I thought of taking a picture.

When the first vet came out to do a herd check for goat and sheep sales at the end of summer I had her look over the ears and the itches. We talked. Later that month the vet I routinely use from the same practice did a skin scraping to check for any external bugs and gave her an injection of long acting oxytetracycline. She did some research

later that day where vets have access. She emailed me the results. Treat it like a fungal infection. I added some antifungal treatment in the form of Lotrimin cream at the vet's recommendation at this point.

The report came back as having no "critters" riding piggyback. So we continued to treat this as a fungal infection and got more aggressive on the treatment moving to antifungal shampoo, Bluecoat, antifungal cream, antifungal spray conveniently ordered from an equine sales site on Ebay (price compared for me from pricecheck.com and delivered to the door).

I gave her another dose of oxytet, and made sure she had the best of hay, grain and minerals with occasional fresh veggies and some apples. I also administered penG and antibiotic cream to battle any infections she may have gotten from the itching to open wound stage. I again emailed the ruminant (second) vet. I got a return phone call from a third vet. Fungal problem. Keep applying antifungals. My Tinactin bill was on the rise.

The goat was starting to look like a casualty case—lumpy crusty ear edges, bumps that wept like poison ivy on her eyelids and lips, no hair from point of hip to tail base and on her withers, and lastly hair falling out on her hocks accompanied by rawness where she could reach with horn or hoof or rubbing. I bought her a foal coat after measuring the goat and comparing her dimensions to a handy blanket sizing chart I could access by just one click on the vendor's website. I bought cosmetic pads and more fungal creams, lotions and potions to apply around her face and on her other parts. Most of her was covered to keep her from itching the skin. The rest was slathered in goo. I should've taken a picture.

"The goat was starting to look like a casualty case...I should've taken a picture"

Somewhere in December I upgraded my phone to an iPhone 5. The old one was being phased out. I had had it for nearly 10 years. So now while waiting to pick up my daughter at school I could research goat skin conditions on this new device. I could take pictures, upload and send to the vet with minimal thought. Someone told me that some of the new ones come with Swiss Army knife kits. I think they meant that the cell phone can be considered the Swiss Army Knife of the digital age.

At this point it was taking two people to do the job, one to hold the goat, the other to administer the treatments using a headlight, gloves and a bin to hold it all! She seemed to be resigned, but objected all the way to the daily attention. My husband was in favor of shipping the goat. I was determined to not let this situation go unresolved.

Throughout this story we had been through warm fall weather, a hurricane in October, several freeze thaws and some crazily erratic cold snaps with ice and snow. Meanwhile one other distantly related yearling doe started to show crusty ear tips... Freeze, thaw, dark by 4 PM, freeze, thaw, mud, slop....and yet another yearling starts to lose hair around her pasterns.

I called the ruminant vet again. This is now February. She came out along with a second vet student in the internship phase of vet school, several years in, from Cornell. These ladies are crisp from vet school, sharp on ruminants and upscale in the new techniques. This visit they came armed with cell phone, biopsy kit and email communications from other vets. We talked of allergies, feed and hay changes, autoimmune response. We pho-



**Fall 2012 Turnbridge, Vermont Show:
Reserve Champion Buck “Paul”
owned by Maryanne Reynolds &
Jana Dangler**

tographed, took tissue samples, sutured, uploaded, emailed and injected. Now in one fell swoop not only are two vets in our barn, but the information is transmitted three states away and the tissues will be cultured close to home and also shipped away for analysis. I made notes in the “Book of Notes” once again.

I await the results. The goat is still alive and kicking...and itching. The second goat is progressing right through the same symptoms. The third goat’s hair loss and itching seems to have stopped with the feet. She has no ear bumps and no itches- except the feet. I am using antifungal sprays and creams, hoping for

some easy cure like a feed through antifungal to stop this progression.

If it were warmer, I might just run them all through a herd bath to expose all the possible places where fungus could hide and destroy all the critters in hiding. With this cold weather, I have had enough of blow drying goats and can’t imagine doing the herd!

So I bet you are wondering about the point of this story? How does it relate to the title?

In a little known children’s movie released near the end of the 20th century, man of the present day is warned against the pervasiveness of technology into life and how, if left unchecked, we may do ourselves in inadvertently. The movie was “The Last Mimzy”. The warning came in the form of a little rabbit run by sophisticated Intel chips from scientists in the future who sent the rabbit back to warn us- and to get some much needed healthy DNA. It all sounds a little wild, but if you look

“Goats, Gadgets, and Gizmos” from page 9...

closely in your own operation, you may see that technology is creeping into the nooks and crannies. Good, bad, nuisance or necessity?

Advertising goats is becoming more frequently an online affair. The Cashmere Goat Sale page is up and running. Potential customers for goats and fiber contact first by email, request pictures and ask for website referrals, even fiber reports and samples. Online orders for supplies and services are quick and efficient, provided you do your research and have no returns to negotiate. What you want can be delivered to your door, or the nearest shipping dock for large items. Fiber processing is routinely shipped out and returned. All discussion is online, some even using uploaded photos to determine yarn or roving types. QR codes are appearing in journals routinely. Cell phone sending of USDA information requested is commonplace and direct payment to your bank account for any government payments is required.

Has anyone ever had a potential buyer just show up out of the blue? If they know your phone number, Googling it will give them a map to your farm! We have even had one assertive family show up when we were not home, give itself a farm tour and email us pictures of the event! I digress.

In the home, software is available for herd management, genetic tracking, tax figuring and sales reports. In the field the sky is the limit, literally. You can use GIS (Geographic Information Systems) programs to verify land borders, herd location and seeding/fertilizer application rates all giving aerial photos and geographic coordinates. You can even hook up the coordinates to your tractor and have it disperse seeds and fertilizers at preprogrammed rates to each pasture and field.

In the barn, you can perform surveillance with cameras that link to your computer monitor or cell phone. They can be hard wired or wireless. You can even chip your goats and train them to use the

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automatic robotic milkers. For large cattle herds this is becoming state of the art. For a herd of 25 goats, it may be cost prohibitive.

Pregnancy testing, registering for conferences, shows and competitions are all conducted or reported through a computer. Digital photography is commonplace and online newsletters save paper costs and postage (to the demise of the U.S. Postal Service).

My other thoughts have turned to fiber diameter testing. Why couldn't a visual scan of fiber be uploaded, scanned against a calibration file and analyzed remotely? It would be virtually seamless from hide to bag with no downtime for shipping and analysis. The reports already come back via email. This would be a shortcut on fleece analysis. I called ASTM International, formerly the American Society for Testing and Materials, asking whether such a service existed. They will sell you the methods for determination of coarse wool in cashmere for \$12/page of a three page document: ASTM D2816 - 05(2009) Standard Test Method for Cashmere Coarse-Hair Content in Cashmere. I found no conclusive answer, but they did refer me to the AATCC, the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists. I sent an email to their technical support team and am still awaiting an answer. It will probably happen. (Using certain apps right now you can take a photo in a city, type in the city's name and you will be provided with the map of your location simply by photo recognition.)

It is possible to track your animals' lineage by looking at the genome activity in ruminants- for a

“Goats, Gadgets, and Gizmos” from page 10...

price. You can also find the genetic ancestors of your goat from a feral population if a study happened to have been done from that area. Articles are “out there” in the e-space for genetic research in about every animal in every corner of the world where researchers can travel sample DNA and remotely sense their movement. Populations are tagged and followed and uploaded to master DNA files that even track the probable species of plant forage and the DNA sequences of those specific plants in that area. If you know where the best fiber producing buck initially was bred in the wild, you could theoretically find his long lost cousin as your next herdsire!

Back to the original story- I have hooked up to a few social media sites where goat herders are welcome and inquired about skin conditions they may have experienced. I have ruled out orf, poisoning by plants, autoimmune disease and attack by biting insects. I am still awaiting the report from the University vet and my own vet who are collaborating on growing the tissue culture to find any identifiable culprits, fungal or otherwise. I am



**Fall 2012 Turnbridge, Vermont Show:
Becky and Phil Bemus (center);
Goats Darla and Belinde with
Owners Jana and Maryanne**

still treating with antifungals and waiting for a good warm day to do another bath and blow dry for the goats affected.

Does anyone out there have any experience with this type of problem? Please email me and I can upload pics for you. Meanwhile I'll be looking to see if I can find any apps that tell my cell phone how to trim goat hooves. ♦

**New England
Cashmere Goats**
Hay

***Muddy River Meadows
Farm***

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Vermont Goat Meat Industry Looks to Grow

Findings show it is possible

by Shirley Richardson, Tannery Farm Cashmeres, Danville, Vermont



In November 27, 2012, Vermont Chevon along with co-sponsors (VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets, Farm Viability Program, Farm to Plate, Newport Fresh by Nature, Northeastern Vermont Development Association, and the Center for an Agricultural Economy) held the first No Kid Left Behind Symposium. Paul Costello, executive director of the Vermont Council on Rural Development, moderated the symposium which brought together producers, processors, representatives from Vermont's congressional delegation, marketers, chefs, and consumers to talk about how to create a new market for the large number of kid goats from the state's growing dairy farms.

The gathering drew about 40 attendees from Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, and New York. The morning agenda featured speakers from every step along the production chain: On the Farm, Growing, Processing & Distribution, and Marketing to assess the current state of the industry and engage in a discussion about how to turn the current marginal industry into a viable and sustainable goat-meat industry.

State of the Industry

Goat is the most widely-consumed meat in the world, making up nearly 70 percent of the red meat eaten worldwide. In the U.S. alone, the number of goats slaughtered for food has doubled every ten years for the past three decades, and in 2011 Americans were consuming about one million goats per year. Goat has also become an attractive, healthy meat option for those concerned

about the obesity epidemic this country faces. It has one-half fewer fat calories than beef, pork or lamb and even less fat than chicken. Goat production also provides an ecologically-sound form of vegetation and pest control.

In Vermont alone, the goat industry has grown, adding 167 goat farms since 2007. Today there are 421 statewide. One unfortunate side effect of all of

this good news is the 6,800 male and female kids that are a by-product of dairying. Each year, about 80% of the annual crop of kids born in Vermont is sold as a commodity product at birth or raised through the fall and sold at 50 to 70 pounds. Shirley Richardson and Jan Westervelt of Vermont Chevon have asked the question: Can these goats become a more viable part of the dairy

goat economy if they are raised for value-added meat? At present, the answer is no, but it does not have to be.

The No Kid Left Behind Symposium participants talked about the many hurdles to overcome. In the case of raising dairy goats for meat, the animals' small size makes transportation and processing costs essentially fixed. Thus, the scale of the system becomes even more of a critical factor in determining profitability.

The Meat-Goat Production Chain

On the Farm

Rene De Leewu, manager of Ayers Brook Goat Dairy in Randolph, led the On the Farm discus-



Fall 2012 Turnbridge, Vermont Show:
Grand Champion Doe "CSM Imbirani"
with Sister Mary Elizabeth

sion. This session addressed the myriad of issues that dairy-goat farmers face on a daily basis on the farm, including crossbreeding and breeding out of season, artificial insemination, meningeal and barber's pole worm, biosecurity and fecal testing.

- **Conclusion:** a year-round, steady supply of goats is possible

Growing

Leonard Bull, PhD and Professional Animal Scientist, led the Growing discussion. Dr. Bull honed in on the specific factors that can affect the growth of a healthy goat herd. This session focused on the following issues related to growing: feeding the goats, silage and hay needs for growth, goat-grade examples, use of whey, vitamins and minerals and carcass traits.

- **Conclusion:** Raising goats to a market weight of 110 pounds in 12-16 months is possible

Processing & Distribution

Sean Buchanan, Business Development Manager for Black River Produce and former executive chef, led the discussions on Processing and Distribution. This discussion included the following key processes: transportation from farm to slaughter, transportation to the customer, space and time for slaughter of small ruminants in Vermont's existing processing facilities, cost of processing and storage.

- **Conclusion:** Meat processing systems are in place and need to be efficiently utilized

Marketing

Nicole L'Huillier Fenton and Steve Redmond, co-founders of Skillet Design & Marketing, led the Marketing discussion. The pair focused on the use of branding principles to dissect the strength of a chevon-industry concept and its introduction to the consumer. Although goat meat is the most widely-consumed meat in the world, it is in the early stages of market development in the United States. The challenge facing goat-meat producers is how to brand and market chevon as a high-quality, high-value product.

- **Conclusion:** Taking advantage of the growing market is a viable possibility

Vermont Chevon's Transitional Vision

New goat farms needed

Richardson put out a call for farmers to consider operating a "finishing school" with Vermont Chevon. In order to assure a chef or consumer of a consistent quality and size of animals, and a reliable, year-round supply, Richardson reports that, "Vermont Chevon will support the producer by providing a set of standards and protocols for raising the goats, maintain contact through regular visits, and sponsor training events on specific issues related to growing. There's a lot of opportunity here."

The Burlington Free Press reports from the symposium that "Westervelt and Richardson have concluded that a new type of farm is needed to maximize the goat meat opportunity, what they are calling a 'finishing schools for kids'." ♦

Stoneycrest Farm

Cashmere Goats

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Announcements

Welcome to new ECA members:

Marlene Hays and Carol Cox

WANTED: Quality Cashmere Fleece.

Looking to purchase quality, combed, clean, raw Cashmere fiber from members' herds. Please contact:

Norma Bromley, c/o Boreas Farm Cashmere

For more information 802-467-3222 or email boreasfarm@gmail.com

Judge for ECA Show at SVFF

This year we are pleased to welcome **Mickey Nielsen** from Yakima, Washington as our judge at the 2013 Eastern Cashmere Association Goat Show at the Shenandoah Valley Fiber Festival. Mickey and her husband Cliff have been involved in raising quality show and breeding animals since high school where they were both active in FFA.


In 1994, the Nielsen family began purchasing and breeding cashmere goats. Being trained in showing, breeding and judging livestock Mickey knows the importance and value of good conformation in livestock and how to look for these qualities. Her herd of cashmere goats has taken many top awards over the years both in live goat shows and in fleece competitions judged by a variety of cashmere judges. She has trained under Cynthia Heeren, Kris McGuire, Joe David Ross and Terry Sim. Mickey judged the Virginia State Fair Goat Show in 2010 and is a past President of the Northwest Cashmere Association.



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Tannery Farm

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Meat Goats • Kids

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Timberwood Farm

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We welcome input from
readers. Please send us
letters, pictures or news
from your farm.

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