



National 4-H Curriculum  
BU-07910

# Growing with Meat Goats



**Level 2**

## Meat Goat Activity Guide

Name \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_





# Note to the Helper

If you were a project helper for one or more youth involved in completing Meat Goat 1, *Just Browsing*, you know what a great experience this important role is. As a helper, you are in a perfect position to help youth grow and develop in positive ways as they learn about meat goats and about themselves. You can nurture and cultivate their interest in this project by guiding their planning, helping them carry out their projects, and recognizing them for a job well done.

## Your Role

- Become familiar with the material in this activity guide and the *Meat Goat Helper's Guide*
- Support youth in their efforts to set goals and complete each Achievement Program
- Date and initial the activities on the Meat Goat Achievement Program as they are completed and the two of you discuss them
- Help youth to get to know themselves, including their strengths and weaknesses
- Encourage the use of the experiential learning cycle described on this page

## The Meat Goat "Skills for Life" Series



This guide, *Growing with Meat Goats*, is the second in the series of three for youth that also includes Meat Goat 1 *Just Browsing*, Meat Goat 3 *Meating the Future* and the *Meat Goat Helper's Guide*. The three youth guides have been designed to be developmentally appropriate for grades 3–5, 6–8 and 9–12 respectively, but may be used by youth in any grade based on their project skills and expertise.

All activities in the guides have several parts: a description of the skills to be practiced; discussion questions; suggestions for additional activities; and additional helpful information. The success indicator listed for each activity is an excellent way to evaluate the youth's success. Each of the guides also includes an Achievement Program to encourage youth to learn more about goats while developing important life skills. In the *Helper's Guide* you will find another evaluation piece titled "Evaluating the Impact." Complete this before the youth begins each level and after completing each level.

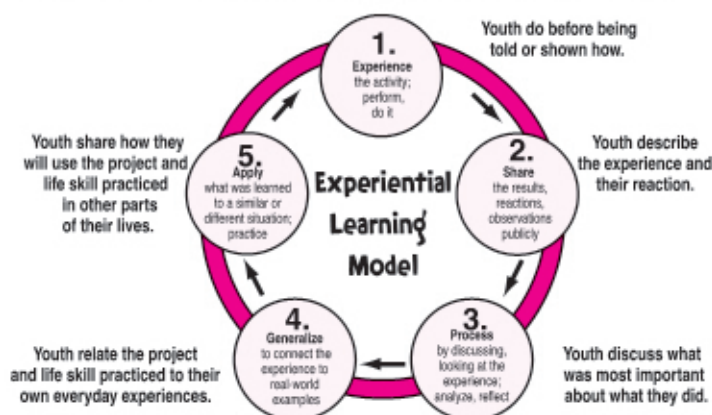
Each activity is designed so the young person has an opportunity to learn by doing before being told or shown how. Your challenge is to stay in the background while the youth explores the activity and learns from the experience, even when it doesn't

work the way it's expected to. You can most effectively help with the learning by listening as the young person considers the questions and draws conclusions. At times the activity may call for you to be a resource person for content or ideas.

The fourth publication in this series, *Meat Goat Helper's Guide*, provides additional learn-by-doing activities that can be adapted to the family, the classroom, after school programs, 4-H project groups, clubs or other groups. You'll also find helpful hints about characteristics of youth, life skill development, teaching experientially, meeting ideas as well answers to many of the activities in the youth guides.

## Experiential Learning Model

This five-step model is included in each activity in this series:



Pfeiffer, J.W., & Jones, J.E., "Reference Guide to Handbooks and Annuals" © 1983 John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Reprinted with permission of John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

As you can see, the youth first attempt the activity without assistance. After the youth do as much as they can, you then meet together and discuss what they did, what was important about what they did, how what they did relates to their lives, and how might they use the life and project skills practiced in the future. Sample questions are included following each experience. Your ability to ask additional thought-provoking questions and to clarify and expand the youth's ideas will add to the educational experience.

**Good luck in your role as Project Helper and thanks for contributing to the positive development of our youth!**

## Acknowledgements

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# What's Inside?

For more on meat goats,  
look for these other guides  
in this set.

## Level 1 Just Browsing

- Chapter 1 Selection**
  - Name That Part!
  - Choosing Wisely
  - Kikos and Pygmies and Boers—Oh My!
- Chapter 2 Marketing and Products**
  - We Can't Have Quality Without "U"!
  - Meat or Milk?
  - There's No Business Like Show Business!
  - Be a Sport
- Chapter 3 Health and Disease**
  - Ding Dong Bell, Is That Kid Feeling Well?
- Chapter 4 Feeds and Nutrition**
  - I'm Stuffed
  - Ruminate on This!
- Chapter 5 Husbandry of Animals and Resources**
  - Goat Cries
  - Making Kid Cents into Big Bucks
  - Learning the Ropes
- Meat Goat Talk 1 (Glossary)
- Meat Goat Resources



## Level 3 Meating the Future

- Chapter 1 Health and Disease**
  - As the Worm Turns
  - The War on Germs
- Chapter 2 Selection**
  - Behind the Scenes
  - Talk the Talk
  - Who's Your Daddy?
- Chapter 3 Feeds and Nutrition**
  - It's a Balancing Act
  - In Search of Greener Pastures
- Chapter 4 Husbandry of Animals and Resources**
  - Is That Ethical?
  - This Land is Your Land
  - Be-i-Be-i-Oh!
- Chapter 5 Reproduction**
  - Four for Dinner, Please
- Chapter 6 Marketing and Products**
  - Getting Market Savvy
  - Meat, Milk, and More
- Meat Goat Talk 3 (Glossary)
- Meat Goat Resources



## Helper's Guide

- Youth Learning Characteristics
- Developing Life Skills
- Teaching and Learning Experientially
- Chapter 1 Planning and Organizing**
  - Looking Ahead
  - For the Record
- Chapter 2 Project Skills**
  - What's On Your Calendar?
  - All Goats Are Not Created Equal
  - Plate It Safe
- Chapter 3 Games and Activities**
  - Learning Doesn't Have to Be "Boor-ing!"
  - Skillathon Time!
  - Going On the Road
  - Let Me Tell You All About It!
- Chapter 4 Time to Think**
  - Believe It or Not?
  - Better Living with a Couple of Bucks and Lots of Doe
  - On the Path to a Career
- Chapter 5 Developing Character**
  - Helping Animals Fare Well
  - Accepting the End
- Glossary
- Meat Goat Meeting Ideas
- Answer Key: Meat Goat 1, 2 and 3
- Evaluating the Impact
- Meat Goat Resources



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# Having Fun As You Learn About Meat Goats

## Let's Get Started!

This guide is an important part of the meat goat project. Meat Goat 2 offers you new challenges and opportunities to explore a wide range of activities related to goats. You'll also have fun meeting new people, becoming better acquainted with your community, and expanding your interests and goals. Like Meat Goat 1, an Achievement Program is included to guide your efforts and provide you with an opportunity to be recognized for meeting your goals. Here are some of the many activities you can choose to do:

- Select a veterinarian
- Create flashcards about goat diseases
- Learn about body condition scoring
- Inventory the types of plants on your property
- Develop a predator control program
- Determine breeding dates
- Design a manure management program
- Devise a record keeping system for kidding
- Create a Web page or poster about goat reproduction
- Fit a goat for a show
- Conduct goat meat market research
- Create a weight tape
- Construct a model of a soil profile
- Select breeding animals
- Travel with a veterinarian for a day
- Make a scrapbook of toxic plants

## Meat Goat 2 Project Guidelines

- Set your goals and record project highlights.
- Do a minimum of seven activities in Level 2 of the *Growing with Meat Goats* Achievement Program each year and complete the program within three years.
- Participate in a minimum of three learning experiences listed on the planning guide each year.
- Practice and develop the life skills of keeping records, making decisions, self responsibility, marketable skills, and others.
- Increase your goat knowledge and skills.

## Achievement Program

While you are having fun doing the activities, you'll also be completing Level 2 of the *Growing with Meat Goats* Achievement Program. A level is included in each of the goat project activity guides. This program will help you set goals, record your successes and be recognized for your hard work.

## Your Project Helper

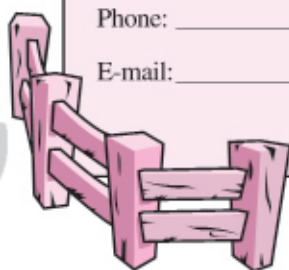
On your team supporting you and making learning more fun is your project helper. This person may be a parent, goat breeder, project leader or advisor, a neighbor, or an older friend who knows about goats. The choice is yours. As you do the activities, discuss with your helper what you did and answer the questions in the "Ruminations" part of each activity. Sometimes your helper will work with you to identify resources, including people, Internet sites, organizations, events, magazines, and books necessary to complete an activity. Once you have successfully completed each activity, your helper will date and initial your Achievement Program.

Write the name, phone number and E-mail address of your project helper here:

My Project Helper: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_



Good Luck with Meat Goat 2 —  
**Growing with  
Meat Goats**





## Achievement Program

### Directions

1. Do at least seven of the *Growing with Meat Goats* and *Udder Ideas* activities each year.
2. Complete at least 21 of the *Growing with Meat Goats* and *Udder Ideas* activities within three years to complete this Achievement Program.
3. Have your project helper date and initial the activities as you complete them and discuss them.

## Growing' with Meat Goats Activities

Date completed

Helper's  
initials

Chapter 1 Health and Disease

## Is Your Wether Under the Weather?

## Put Your Veterinarian on Speed Dial!

## Chapter 2 Selection

## Choosing Your Genes

## Chapter 3 Feeds and Nutrition

## Mares Eat Oats and Does Eat Oats ...and Sometimes Toxic Plants!

## Through Thick & Thin

Chapter 4 Husbandry of Animals and Resources

## The Scoop on Poop

## Being Water Wise

## What You Don't Know...

Chapter 5 Reproduction

And...ACTION!

## The Birds and the Bees

## No Kidding Around!

## I Kid You Not

Chapter 6 Marketing and Products

## 'Round the Ring and Back Again

Holy Cabrito!



## Udder Ideas

Select and do any of the *Udder Ideas* activities in *Growing with Meat Goats* or make up your own. Record the page and number of each one you complete and have your helper initial.

[illegible]

Write your own activity here.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Helper's initials \_\_\_\_\_

Write your own activity here.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Helper's initials \_\_\_\_\_



## Health and Disease

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Project skill:</b>      | Recognizing market goat diseases                              |
| <b>Life skill:</b>         | Learning to learn   |
| <b>What youth will do:</b> | Create a set of flashcards to learn about market kid diseases |
| <b>Success indicator:</b>  | Names and describes five diseases of market kids              |

## Is Your Wether Under the Weather?

**Y**ou have a lot invested in your market goat, so you'll want to be able to tell if and when he is sick. There are many diseases of goats; many are more common in market animals and others are more common in older animals. The first activity in this book will help you learn how to recognize and prevent market kid diseases so your animal can stay healthy and grow well.

## Start Capering

Everyone participating in this activity should have twenty 3 x 5-index cards and a marker. Create a set of flashcards about diseases of market kids. The name of the disease should go on the front of the card. On the back, include the cause, signs of illness, and ways to prevent the disease. Finally, in pairs, teams, or as a large group, have fun playing a game using the flashcards.

Fill in the chart with name of disease, cause, signs of illness, and prevention. These topics will also go on the set of flashcards you make.

### Disclaimer:

*Always consult your veterinarian if you have a question about your goat's health.*



- *People can catch orf from goats. If your animal has this disease, make sure to wear gloves when handling it until it is fully recovered!*
- *Dark skin pigmentation protects people and animals from skin cancer caused by the sun's ultraviolet rays.*

- Anaerobic
- Antibodies

- Abscess
- Diarrhea
- Recumbency
- Calculi
- Carrier
- Coccidiostats

- Colostrum
- Arthritis
- Caprine
- Deficient
- Fatal
- Founder
- Inflammat

- Necropsy
- Nematode
- pH
- Encephalitis
- Modified live vaccine
- Syndrome
- Toxin
- Urolithiasis



*This messy  
tail could  
indicate  
diarrhea.*



*A nematode  
egg in manure  
at 250x  
magnification*

Photo from "Veterinary Parasitology Reference Manual" by William J. Forst. Used with permission.

Disease	Cause	Signs of Illness	Prevention

5

## Ruminations Discuss the answers to these questions with your helper.

### Chew Your Cud (Share)

- Did using flashcards help you learn about these diseases? Why or why not?
- Where did you find the information you needed?

### Gain Ground (Process)

- Why is learning in a group sometimes helpful?
- Why is it important to be able to tell when your animal is sick?

### Forage for More (Generalize)

- If you wanted to learn more about diseases of goats, what would you do next?
- Besides flashcards, what other tools can you use to learn new information?

### Wattle You Do Next? (Apply)

- How can you teach others about diseases of goats?
- How will you change your management practices now that you have learned more about these diseases?

## Udder Ideas

*Complete one or more of these activities and share the results with your helper.*

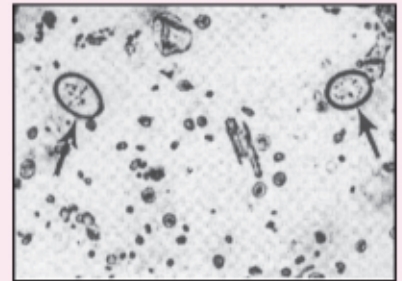
1. Interview a veterinarian about diseases of market goats.
2. Watch a *necropsy* of a goat.
3. Create an educational poster about a disease of market goats.
4. Sponsor a fun competition with another club using your flashcards.

## Meat of the Matter

Here is a list and short explanation of most of the major diseases of market goats. There are many other diseases of goats, but some (like ketosis, mastitis, milk fever, Johne's Disease, etc.) do not affect young animals such as market kids. Some diseases are more common in some areas than in others. Your vet can help you learn how to recognize and treat these diseases if they ever occur in your herd. Remember, prevention is the key!

**Acidosis:** low rumen and body *pH* usually caused by ingestion of high levels of carbohydrates such as grain, fruit, molasses, etc. Animals go off feed, stop chewing their cud, are depressed, can be bloated and have *diarrhea*. Severely ill animals may *founder* or die. Prevent by insuring adequate levels of fiber (hay or browse) in the diet, making ration changes gradually, using probiotics and sodium bicarbonate, and keeping grain safely locked away from goats.

**Coccidiosis:** very common disease caused by one of several protozoal parasites of the intestinal tract of goats. Very contagious and very hardy in the environment. Affected animals may have diarrhea, often have a rough coat, don't gain well, have a pot belly, and may die. Prevent by buying quality animals from a herd without coccidiosis and/or feeding specific feed additives (*coccidiostats*) to all growing animals. Practice good manure management and do not feed animals on the ground.



*Coccidia egg in manure*

Photo courtesy Dr. William Foreyt.  
Used with permission.

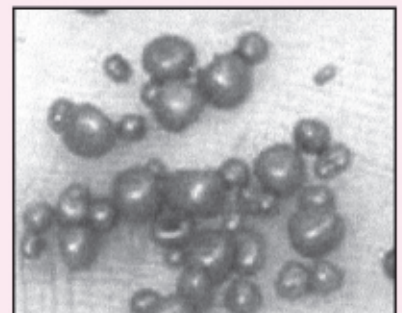
**Parasites:** there are internal and external parasites. Many types affect young goats, including *nematodes* ("stomach worms" or "round worms"), flukes ("flat worms"), tapeworms, protozoa, bots, lice, and more. The most serious and common are stomach worms; heavy infestations can kill young animals. Prevent by practicing good manure management, avoid feeding on the ground, and deworming young animals with a high-quality wormer every two months, starting at two months of age (or as determined by fecal examinations or recommended by your vet). External parasites include lice, keds, ticks, flies, bots and fleas.



*A louse.*

Photo courtesy Dr. William Foreyt.  
Used with permission.

**Urolithiasis (urinary stones or calculi):** minerals in the urinary tract form into stones that block the tract, especially in males on high grain diets. Signs include pain when urinating, bloody urine, frequent attempts at urination, or no urine. The urethra can rupture ("water belly") and the animal may die. Prevent by adding ammonium chloride to the diet, providing at least two parts calcium to every one part of phosphorus in the ration, and feeding as little grain as possible for the desired rate of gain.

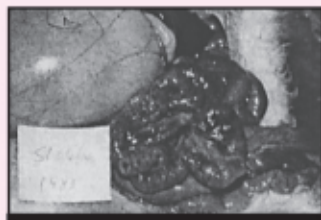


*Stones removed from the urinary tract of a blocked goat.*

Photo courtesy Dr. Ahmed Tibary.  
Used with permission.



**Overeating Disease:** caused by toxins produced by the bacteria *Clostridium perfringens* types C and D. Most common in large, rapidly growing animals on high grain or milk diets. Signs include bloat, poor appetite, fever, diarrhea, or sudden death. Prevent by vaccinating does with CD&T during the last 2–3 weeks of pregnancy, making sure kids get colostrum within 12 hours of birth, and vaccinating kids with CD&T at 6, 9 and 12 weeks of age (or as recommended by your vet).



*Overeating disease. Note discolored intestines.*

Photo courtesy Dr. Clive Gay. Used with permission.



*Goat with tetanus*

**Tetanus:** a fatal disease caused by toxins produced by *Clostridium tetani*. Signs include generalized rigid stiffness of muscles. Animals die from the inability to breathe. Prevent as above with vaccinations of CD&T.

Photo courtesy Dr. James Thompson, Somerset Animal Hospital. Used with permission.

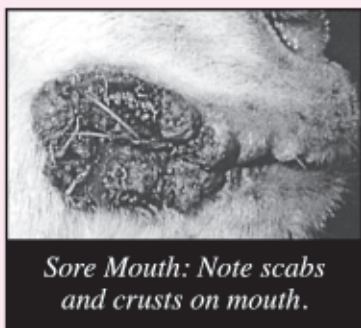
**White Muscle Disease:** caused by lack of adequate Vitamin E and/or Selenium in the diet. Signs include weakness, stiff gait, frequent *recumbency* and/or death. Prevent by giving pregnant does an injection of Vitamin E/Selenium in the last month of pregnancy and injections to kids at birth, one month of age and even monthly in some areas of the country, on the recommendation of a veterinarian. Also include Selenium in free choice trace-mineralized salt.

*White Muscle Disease: Note normal, dark red areas of muscle and abnormal, pale areas of muscle in this hind leg.*



Photo courtesy Dr. Clive Gay. Used with permission.

**Orf (sore mouth):** ulcers of the mouth and muzzle caused by a very hardy and contagious virus. Affected animals go off feed due to pain. Most common in young animals; can spread to does' udder and cause mastitis. Often picked up at shows. If it appears in your herd, prevent by using a *modified live vaccine* in all kids in the future.



*Sore Mouth: Note scabs and crusts on mouth.*

Photo courtesy Keith Thompson, Massey University, New Zealand. Used with permission.

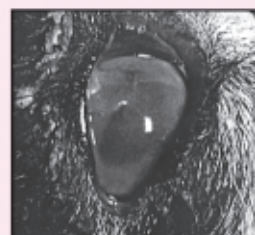
**Caprine arthritis and encephalitis (C.A.E.):** two different *syndromes* caused by the C.A.E. virus., which is most often spread from doe to kid through *colostrum* and milk. In kids less than six months old, the virus often causes fatal *inflammation* of the brain. Adults get arthritis and have swollen and painful joints, and/or hard udders and weight loss. No vaccine is available. Control by working with your vet to test animals and create a negative herd.



• Many of the organisms that cause goat diseases can live a long time in the environment, so it is best not to let them get introduced onto your property!

**Caseous lymphadenitis (C.L. or abscesses):** contagious disease of sheep and goats caused by bacteria called *Corynebacterium pseudotuberculosis*. Abscesses usually form around the head and neck; they break and drain and contaminate the environment for a long time. Rarely fatal but is a concern due to unsightliness of abscesses and contagious nature of the disease. The disease is very difficult to rid from a herd; avoid purchasing animals from herds with a history of abscesses.

**Pinkeye (infectious keratoconjunctivitis):** contagious disease of the eyes caused by several kinds of bacteria. Most common during summer months when flies are active. Some animals in a herd can be *carriers*. Affected animals tear, blink, avoid light, and may eat poorly; Surface of eye can turn bluish-white and surrounding tissues are often bright reddish pink. Without treatment, severely affected eyes can go blind. Ask your veterinarian about what medications can be legally used to treat this condition.



*Pinkeye: Note cloudy eye and discharge.*

Photo courtesy Keith Thompson, Massey University, New Zealand. Used with permission.

**Polioencephalomalacia (pole-E-oh-en-seff-allo-mal-A-sha):** softening of the brain caused by lack of Thiamin, also called Vitamin B-1. Normally, rumen micro-organisms make B-Vitamins in the rumen. If these micro-organisms are killed off or otherwise disturbed, as in a case of acidosis, ruminants can become *deficient* in Thiamin and develop polio. Affected animals may act blind, walk in circles, press their head against a wall, twist their heads backwards onto their spines, or display other signs of brain abnormality. Treatment involves restoring normal rumen micro-organisms and supplementing B-Vitamins.

**Blackleg:** disease of muscles caused by an *anaerobic* bacterium called *Clostridium chauvoei*, which is found in some parts of the country. Bacteria enter the muscles through a tiny wound and kill surrounding tissues with toxins they produce. Affected animals are very lame and often die. Prevent with an eight-way Clostridial vaccination.

Photo courtesy Dr. Clive Gay. Used with permission.



*Blackleg: Note blackened areas where toxin has caused severe muscle damage.*

**Floppy Kid Disease:** only affects kids that are about three to ten days old. Cause is unknown but could be bacterial toxins. Kids are not dehydrated, but they are weak and may not be able to stand. The belly may seem enlarged and they may drool and/or cough. The kid may feel cold and the temperature can be lowered or elevated. Without treatment, many kids die within two days. If you see these signs of illness in a young kid, call your vet at once. If Floppy Kid Disease is diagnosed, your vet may recommend that you give the kid a half-teaspoon of baking soda (dissolved in a small amount of water) by mouth to counteract lowered body pH; improvement should be noted within two hours.

Some other diseases of market kids include pneumonia, foot rot and ringworm.

• Colostrum is the first milk produced by a doe after she kids. It contains vitamins, fat for energy, and antibodies to protect the kid against diseases.

**Project skill:** Selecting and working with a veterinarian

**Life skill:** Communication

<b>What youth will do:</b>	Select and get acquainted with the veterinarian who will care for their animals
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<b>Success indicator:</b>	Selects an appropriate veterinarian and knows how to work with him/her to care for goats
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## Put Your Veterinarian on Speed Dial!

**I**t was a dark and stormy night. Jorge the goat had gotten out and fallen into Dawson's Creek. Billy Bob, his owner, found him coughing, weak, and running a fever the next morning. This is one of many scenarios you could encounter while raising goats. Do you have a veterinarian you could call and ask for advice? This lesson will help you select a veterinarian and find out how he/she would like to work with you to care for your animals.



*Vets are an excellent source of information about goat health and care.*

## Start Capering

Call at least two veterinarians and interview them over the phone about their background and experience with goats. Following the phone interview, schedule an appointment with one veterinarian and meet them in person for additional questions.

Vet #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Background/Experience:** \_\_\_\_\_

Vet #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Background/Experience:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Appointment Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Things to know about your goat when you call the vet:

- Temperature, heart rate and respiration rate
- Appetite
- Any swellings, wounds or lameness
- Is the animal bloated?
- Body condition
- Quality and quantity of manure and urine
- Odd odors
- Recent changes in diet or environment
- Date of last deworming
- Vaccination history
- Age, breed, gender
- Kidding history
- Udder health



About 900 veterinarians are members of the American Association of Small Ruminant Practitioners.



# Ruminations

## Chew Your Cud *(Share)*

- How did you find the veterinarians you interviewed?
- Which did you prefer, interviewing veterinarians over the phone or in person? Why?

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## Gain Ground *(Process)*

- Why is it important to have a good working relationship with a veterinarian?
- Why is it a good idea to do some research and select the veterinarian who is the best fit with you and your goats BEFORE an emergency?

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## Forage for More *(Generalize)*

- What are some other situations where you may need to interview and select someone?
- What other goat-related professionals might you need to select to work with your herd?

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## Wattle You Do Next? *(Apply)*

- How will conducting these interviews help you when you are interviewed in the future?

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## Meat of the Matter

## Choosing a Vet

Veterinarians are people who have studied a long time to learn how to prevent, diagnose, and treat disease and illness in animals. Also, they care about animals! Not all veterinarians treat goats; you may have to do quite a bit of research to find a goat veterinarian in your area. Goat veterinarians in your area can also be found on lists on the Internet. Try a search for “goat veterinarian.”

Veterinarians are busy people, so be sure to set up an appointment for your interview. They will need to block out time to devote to answering your questions without interruptions!

Once they have established a working relationship with you and your goats, many veterinarians are willing to give advice over the phone when you call with a question or problem. As required by federal law, a valid client-patient-veterinarian relationship must exist before your veterinarian can write any prescriptions for your animals or recommend any medications that are not specifically approved for use in goats.

When you are looking for a veterinarian for your goats, here are some questions you may want to ask during an interview:

- Please describe your background and experience with goats.
- How can I tell when something is wrong with my goat, and when should I call you about it?
- What are some of the things you might ask when I call, so I can check on it before I contact you?
- How do I contact you after office hours or during an emergency?
- Is there an additional fee for emergencies or services after office hours?
- Will you come out to my farm or do I have to bring my goats to your office? Is there a difference in fees?
- Do you allow youth to observe your work at your office or on farm calls?
- How can you help me prevent disease and illness in my animals?
- Are you willing to write prescriptions for syringes, needles, and medications for my herd if I need them?
- Are you willing to give educational presentations about goat health and disease to my goat group?
- If I incur a large bill from something that happens to my goats, do you accept payments over time? May I work off part of the bill by helping in your clinic?
- After your interview, remember to thank the veterinarians for their time both in person and with a card.

## Udder Ideas

1. Research and learn about five veterinary colleges.
2. Travel with a goat veterinarian for a day.