

New Goat Information

Congratulations on your new goat! At Goat Milk Stuff, we take great pride in raising goats that are healthy, happy, and a great start or addition to your goat herd.

Stability. When it comes to goats, stability and prevention are key. Goats hate change. They are creatures of habit. If you keep their routine steady, you will have happier goats. Changes to a goat's diet must be made very carefully. Rapid changes can cause the goat to bloat which can lead to death. If you are switching to a new feed, make the change slowly over time.

Coccidia Prevention. Coccidia (kawk-SID-ee-ah) prevention is key to keeping your baby goat healthy. There are several different medications available for coccidia prevention. You must come up with a plan and medication and stick to it. If your goat becomes overburdened with coccidia, it may lead to death if not treated in time. But even after successful treatment, your goat will most likely not thrive the way they would have had coccidia been prevented.

More information available at: <https://goatmilkstuff.com/coccidia>

Worm Prevention. You also need to determine a program to prevent worms from building up in your goat's system. All goats will have some worms, that is normal. But if they get too many worms, it can negatively affect the health of your goat.

More information available at: <https://goatmilkstuff.com/worming>

Moving to a new home is stressful on a goat. We recommend keeping a close eye on your goat over the first two weeks to make sure he/she has settled in well. We also **recommend giving both your chosen coccidia prevention and worm prevention treatments within 48 hours of bringing your baby goat home.** If you do not do this, you run the risk of your goat getting very sick and losing your goat. For your goat's health, please do not ignore this.

If you are bringing home an adult goat, they most likely don't need coccidia prevention but they will still need to be wormed within 48 hours.

You can weigh your baby goat every few days to make sure they are gaining weight. We like to see Alpine baby goats gain at least ten pounds a month for their first 5-6 months. Nigerian Dwarf baby goats should gain at least three pounds a month for their first 5-6 months.

Your goat needs:

- A shelter out of prevailing winds and rain (give as much space as you have and can afford but know that they will cuddle up and sleep together in a small space)
- Dry bedding that doesn't smell like ammonia
- A full belly
- A companion
- An exercise yard with proper fencing (give as much space as you have and can afford)

Bottle feeding baby goats. If you are getting a baby goat on a bottle, it was fed colostrum from his/her dam at birth and needs milk until weaning. You need to feed warm milk from a bottle (be sure to ask how often your baby goat is currently being fed). If you do not have access to goat milk, we recommend whole cow milk from the grocery store. We never recommend milk replacer.

We free choice the amount of milk given at each feeding. This often leads to diarrhea (think of a newborn human baby with loose stools). This excess milk helps our babies grow big and strong and is not a concern for us. A target amount if you don't want to free-choice is:

Alpine baby goat:

- 10 pound goat: 8-10 oz per feeding
- 15 pound goat: 10-12 oz per feeding
- 20 pound goat: 12-16 oz per feeding
- 25 pound goat: 16-20 oz per feeding

We bottle feed Alpines with the following approximate schedule:

- 4 times per day for the first 3 days
- 3 times per day for first 4-6 weeks
- 2 times per day for next 4-6 weeks
- 1 time per day for next 4-6 weeks

This is just a suggestion. Feed what works for you and your goats. If not feeding free-choice milk, you need to judge how much to feed your baby goat based on how well they are growing.

Never feed a baby goat water from a bottle. You can offer clean water in a container that is drown-proof once your baby goat is a few weeks old. Your baby goat will start to eat the food and water you provide when he/she needs it. But the milk is essential. Feel the kid's belly (right behind the umbilical cord) before and after feeding so you get to know what a full belly feels like.

Weaning. At Goat Milk Stuff, we give milk to our goats until they are 4 to 6 months old because we have the milk. But you need to do what works for you and your goats. Many goats are weaned at 8 weeks for males and 12 weeks for females. The females get more milk because they have higher calcium needs since they'll be making milk themselves someday.

To wean your goat, simply decrease the number of bottles of milk and the amount of milk in the bottle over time until both are at zero. Make sure your goat is eating other food well and monitor their growth weekly after weaning. Your baby goat will mostly likely not want to be weaned and may cry for their bottle. This is normal.

Feeding adult goats. There is no correct amount to feed a goat. Each goat is individual and you should adjust their feed accordingly. You should be able to feel the ribs on your goat, but not see them.

We recommend that all goats should have access to:

- Free choice hay
- Free choice loose minerals designed for goats
- Free choice alfalfa pellets (girls only)
- Grain such as barley, wheat, or oats on the milk stand (milkers only)

More information available at: <https://goatmilkstuff.com/feeding>

A good quality hay should be sufficient for your bucks and wethers. You may choose to feed a small amount of grain or goat feed if they are getting too skinny or if you want to train them to come to you. If you have a very active buck, you will want to feed him extra before he goes into rut since many males in rut lose a large amount of weight and aren't very interested in food.

Medicated feed. You can feed growing baby goats medicated feed with a coccidiostat in it to help prevent coccidia. But your baby goat will not consume enough to prevent coccidia until they are 3-6 months old. So please don't rely on this as your prevention. Do not feed it to adults.

Feeding treats. If you wish to feed your goats treats such as animal crackers or garden produce, remember that you have to make any feeding change slowly. If you give them too much of a new food, you will make them sick. If you want to feed a treat, keep it small and keep it frequent. An animal cracker once a day every day is fine. But 20 animal crackers once a month is a recipe for disaster. And giving your goats that have never before had pumpkins, all your leftover Fall pumpkin decorations will cause problems as well. Any healthy food that your goat is not used to can make your goat sick.

Vaccinating. At Goat Milk Stuff, goats are given a CD/T vaccine at 6 weeks, 9 weeks, and 12 weeks. They are then boosted annually. Some people choose to continue vaccinating. Others choose not to vaccinate. Do your homework and make an informed decision. If you choose to vaccinate, we recommend starting the series over with your baby goat and giving the series of 3 shots at your home.

Common Concerns. If you are new to goats, it can be a little bit scary as you learn all there is to learn about taking care of your goats. Here are some common concerns that we often hear.

If your bottle baby does not want to drink their bottle, you need to persevere. They are stressed from the move and the switch to a different system. At Goat Milk Stuff, they are fed on a lambar and you are most likely using a different nipple. You need to try feeding the baby goat in different positions - standing, sitting, feeding from in front, feeding from behind. Try the nipple in their mouth in different positions. See if the opening in your nipple is too tiny and needs to be widened. Make sure the milk is warm. Just keep going and don't give up.

Once the baby goat makes the switch to your farm and has settled in, a young baby goat that won't drink her bottle is a sick baby goat. You need to figure out the reason why. Sometimes they are moving to more solid food and naturally drinking less. Taking your goat's temperature is always a great place to start. If there is a problem, you need to figure it out or contact your vet.

An older goat will start to decrease the amount of milk consumed as she begins eating more hay, pasture, and feed. This is not a cause for concern.

Diarrhea in a baby goat is often caused by too much milk. It is also very common for a goat to experience diarrhea from the stress of moving to a new home. Coccidia and worms can also cause diarrhea. We always recommend that you give your goat a dewormer and coccidia treatment within 48 hours of arriving at your home. If diarrhea does not clear up after this and if you are concerned, do a fecal test. We do NOT recommend pedalyte be given to baby goats. We recommend MILK ONLY.

Your baby goat has been disbudded. Sometimes the scab will fall off the disbudding site and will bleed. This particularly happens when goats are head-butting each other. This is normal and should heal right up.

If your goats are "fighting", they are simply determining the herd "pecking" order. Do not interrupt them. We've never had goats seriously injure each other. But they do need to determine which goat is the boss.

If your goat is listless or not acting right, always start with taking their temperature. We like to see it in the 102's - 103's. (Specifically, 101.5 - 103.5) Take the temperature of a herd mate as well to compare. Low temperature can be just as dangerous as high temperatures. Keeping an antibiotic on hand is always good practice, but consult a vet before ever giving antibiotics. Consistency and prevention is always the key to raising goats so you don't end up with one that is sick.

We hope you love your baby goats and wish you many happy years with goats!
The Jonas Family

Checklist of Items you should have on hand and in place for your new goat

- Coccidia prevention medication (for goats under 6 months)
- Dewormer (chemical or herbal or both)
- Antibiotic
- Tetanus antitoxin (for injuries)
- CD/T vaccine
- Vitamin B Complex
- Bo-Se (for when older)
- Gauze
- Vet wrap (for if they have an injury)
- Iodine
- Hoof Trimmers
- Blood stop powder for hoof problems or disbudding scabs that fall off
- Hay
- Feed
- Loose minerals
- Bottles (for goats under 4 months)
- Nipples (for goats under 4 months)
- Scale (for babies) or weight tape for when older
- Syringes
- Needles
- Shelter
- Bedding
- Water source that prevents drowning
- Heat lamp (safety and only for urgent cases)
- A vet to call or visit
- Thermometer for taking temperature rectally