



**Mid Valley**  
Large Animal Service

# GOAT CARE GUIDELINES

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## Vaccination

The only necessary vaccine for goats is a *Clostridium C & D* vaccine with Tetanus, also called a CD&T vaccine. Give 2cc under the skin behind the shoulder.

- Kids should be vaccinated at 3 and 6 weeks of age, then once a year after that
- Does should get their annual vaccination 4-6 weeks before kidding to provide the kids with some tetanus protection through the doe's colostrum
- Bucks and wethers should be vaccinated annually

## Coccidiosis

Coccidia are sulfa-sensitive parasites that cause scours and poor condition in kids 3 weeks to 6 months old. Kids pick up the parasites in muddy or dirty condition from adult feces. Treatment is sulfadimethoxine (Sulmet) by mouth at 5cc/animal/day for 5 days. Do not use Corid, as it can cause thiamine deficiency and blindness. Pick up manure to prevent disease!



## Nutrition

### Does

The Central Valley is deficient in selenium, which is an important mineral for immune and reproductive function. Give does (and bucks!) an injection of Bo-Se (selenium supplement) prior to breeding, and again at 4-6 weeks prior to kidding. The dose for an adult goat is 2.5cc per 100 pounds under the skin. Kids should receive Bo-Se under the skin soon after birth (within the first three days of life) at a dose of 0.5cc per kid. This injection may be repeated annually, but keep in mind that selenium toxicity from overdose is possible, so accurate weight estimates and marking the calendar are both excellent ideas. Also note that Bo-Se is NOT the same as Mu-Se, a more concentrated selenium product. Mu-Se should not be used in goats.

Does 4-6 weeks away from kidding can get 1-1.5 pounds of grain (Goat Chow or other doe brand) daily with hay or pasture to maintain body condition. Does that are too fat or too thin just prior to kidding are at risk for pregnancy toxemia, also known as ketosis. Pregnancy toxemia usually occurs in does with multiples and within two weeks of kidding. It is a result of the doe not being able to consume enough energy to meet both her and her kids nutritional needs. Look for lethargy, going off feed, and



## Parasites & Deworming

Goats should be dewormed every 4-6 months depending on housing conditions and crowding. Kids do not need to be dewormed until 2 months of age or until they have pasture access. Does should be dewormed 4-6 weeks before kidding to reduce fecal egg shedding at time of kidding. Fecal egg counts can be performed by your vet to determine necessity of deworming and classification of parasites. FAMACHA scoring can also give you an idea of when to deworm. The most common and damaging parasite is *Haemonchus contortus*, also called the barber pole worm, which sucks blood from the stomach lining, causing anemia, weakness, and death in heavy infestations.

There are three families of dewormers:

- Oral Ivomec (ivermectin labeled for sheep, double the sheep dose for goats), oral Cydectin (moxidectin) labeled for goats
- Oral Safeguard (fenbendazole) labeled for goats, Valbazen (albendazole) labeled for cattle (not safe for early pregnant does!!!)
- Oral Prohibit (levamisole, must get from vet), Morantel pellets in feedstore

If you haven't purchased anything yet, start with oral Ivomec. A typical schedule includes Ivomec and Valbazen, rotating back and forth at each 6 month deworming if no major problems crop up in the mean time.

unwillingness to get up, and call your vet if you see these signs. After kidding, as kids are creeping on grain, free choice baking soda in a shallow dish should be available. They will eat what they need.

## Wethers

Wethers have special nutritional considerations to prevent urinary blockage, in which stones form in the bladder and block the urethra, making urination difficult or impossible, and can lead to bladder rupture and death. Dietary management in wethers relies on reducing stone-forming minerals.

Alfalfa is high in calcium and should not be given to wethers. In addition, wethers should eat a different grain from does. The ideal wether grain has the following characteristics: ammonium chloride in the ingredients section AND a Calcium to Phosphorus ratio of 2 to 1 (for example, the listed ingredients read Ca 1%, P 0.5%). Lactating doe and growing doe grains usually have a Ca/P ratio of 1/1, which is too high for wethers and can encourage stone formation.

Fresh, clean water should be available to all animals at all times, but this is especially important for wethers to encourage drinking and "flushing" of the bladder.

## General Considerations

Like other animals, goats have specific nutritional needs. Goats are not sheep, and have different requirements for certain minerals, most notable of which is copper. A mineral block specifically formulated for goats should be available at all times. These blocks can be found at any feed store. I especially like the Purina Goat Block, as finicky goats really like this block and good loose mineral often goes to waste if goats aren't eating it. Placing the block in a bucket or dish will catch crumbles and reduce waste.

