

Goat Tending Supplies

OMGP Education Article October 2006

Hi goat folks. This is my first article as the Education Chair. Having spent the last year as Area 4 representative, I know that this newsletter is read by farmers of varying levels of experience. For this reason, I feel that is important not only to include the basics but also to provide information that brings us to a higher level of knowledge. The information that I put forth to you is not meant to replace the experience and knowledge of an accredited veterinarian. My resources will include personal experience provided by other goat keepers as well as veterinary texts. What works for one may not be applicable in other situations. I welcome any suggestions and will attempt to give the next month's topic at the end of an article so that you have an opportunity to contact me with your input.

This first article is to provide members with a beginning list of supplies to keep on hand for all aspects of goat keeping. I have found that the old motto 'be prepared' is so very true. To be able to take care of situations without having to run to the feed store or vet office can sometimes be the difference between success or losing an animal.

General supplies: Needles and syringes. It's important to have a variety of syringes on hand. They can be used for immunizations, antibiotics, giving oral medications or getting fluids into a goat that can't drink on it's own. I suggest 3-5cc syringes for shots and worming solution. You should also have several 10-30cc syringes for giving fluids or larger doses of wormer. Buy the smaller with the tip that accommodates a needle. There is a 60cc syringe that you can buy with a 'cath tip'. This works best with feeding tubes. Don't buy any needles that are less than 20 gauge as they are too small for the thicker fluids and a royal pain when it is cold. Medications, wormers and vaccinations: For the farmer with just a few goats, it might not make sense to buy by the bottle. The problem is that when you need it, you really need it now. For those that need to be thrifty, small amounts that are usually ready to administer can be obtained from your vet. The other option is to find someone to co-op buy with. Watch for expiration dates! I will discuss individual wormers, antibiotics and vaccinations in a future newsletter. Hoof trimmers and your choice of treatments for scald and hoof rot are a must in our area! It is wise to keep on hand some sort of disinfectant for cuts, umbilical cords and the like. I have a general first aid kit for the humans on the farm so if I need dressing material, that's what I use. Gloves are a good thing and relatively inexpensive. I like to have a tube of Pro-Bio at hand. It provides good bacteria for an animal that is stressed or requires antibiotics. A source of quick energy in the form of molasses or one of the glycol's is invaluable with a very stressed animal. Just like us they can get hypoglycemic. It is very important to have a space set aside for sick animals where they can be warm, dry and easily accessible for treatment. I have purchased a veterinary text book. There are a few books on the market for the average goat farmer but these tend to be rather simplistic and do not offer enough information about each disease process. Knowledge is good. A veterinarian that understands goats is invaluable. But a farmer and vet that can work as a team is what makes the difference. This is a very basic list of must have supplies. As we

move through the month's I hope to cover the topics of kidding, hoof care, feeding, immune system, parasite management and whatever else seems to be of interest to the membership. This will lead to a longer list of must haves, I am sure.

There are many topics to be explored and I am very open to hearing from you what is hot and what is not. My experience has been by trial and error but the OMGP has been invaluable in providing me with knowledge and support. It's my turn to try and give back. My plan is to do an article on care of the pregnant doe and kidding for the April newsletter. Could probably take up the whole newsletter if the herdmaster would allow it!! May your goats stay healthy!! Linda Dehart