



Snowden Family Farm



BASIC FEED & NUTRITION

(for meat goats)

WATER:

- The most important nutrient a goat can have. Clean, fresh water must be readily accessible at ALL times.

ROUGHAGE:

- As ruminants, goats require large quantities of quality roughage, whether in the form of hay, pasture, or browse.

- Familiarize yourself with toxic plants in your area. A good source is *Toxic Plants of Texas*, compiled by the scientists at the Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Lab in College Station, Texas, which can be ordered at <http://texnat.tamu.edu/cmplants/toxic/order.html>.

This resource is also available as an online database at <http://texnat.tamu.edu/cmplants/toxic/index.htm>.

- We feed quality coastal Bermuda hay, free choice, supplemented by a concentrate.

CONCENTRATES:

Your goat has been fed a ration formulated by animal nutrition specialists. While there are many feeds on the market available for use, the ration we have experienced success with is Sure-Fed's N-Timidator. This feed has been formulated specifically for goats' needs by a nutritionist who raises goats, and contains high quality bypass proteins (to assure freshness, it is dated to be used within 30 days). Because it contains Monensin, which helps to inhibit coccidia, it is imperative that this feed not be consumed by animals that produce milk or eggs for human consumption, or by any simple-stomached animals, such as horses, donkeys, cats, and dogs. Currently we feed Sheep & Goat Pellets, a ration formulated by Producer's Cooperative Association of Bryan, TX for sheep and goats, because we can obtain it at a much lower cost. Any feed formulated for sheep may be deficient in such nutrients as copper since the two species' requirements differ in this and other nutrient areas.

MINERAL SUPPLEMENTATION:

- Loose minerals are recommended by many. Use a mineral formulated for goats from a reputable manufacturer. Currently, we are using 16:8 Sweetlix Meat Maker™ Goat Supplement for our Boer goats (contains copper & proper calcium/phosphorous ratio), and have also used Purina Goat Minerals.

- Loose salt is also recommended free choice. Your goats have been accustomed to sulfur salt, which is reputed to also aid in the repulsion of ticks.

BAKING SODA (sodium bicarbonate):

- Many breeders recommend offering baking soda free choice for goats to maintain the correct pH in their rumen. The goats will consume this voluntarily. In goats that are being asked for top performance, such as show, breeding and lactating goats, the increased concentrates (grain ration high in energy and low in protein) can produce an imbalance in the rumen organisms leading to

indigestion & ruminal acidosis. Reduced roughage consumption (weather, bossy goat, change in hay, etc.) as well as ingestion of certain weeds can also create this imbalance. Acute, mild acidosis results in loose feces, diarrhea, reduced appetite, etc. At the first sign of “clumped”, too moist, fecal pellets, or “dog-stool” consistency feces from our goats, we drench with a warm water & baking soda mixture, remove access to grain (but offer good quality hay) until normal feces return, and the causative factor(s) is corrected. A dose of oral probiotics (e.g. Probios) is also a good idea to aid the rumen in repopulating the “good” organisms. Remember, in a ruminant, you feed the rumen organisms properly, and they help feed your animal!

Note: severe acidosis is life threatening - if your goat does not quickly respond to treatment, seek veterinary care.

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