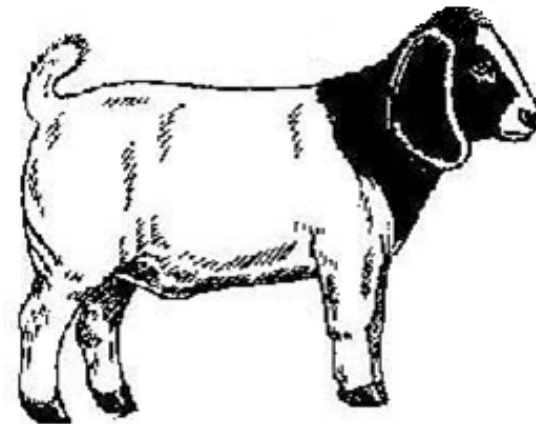




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# The Market Goat Guide to Success



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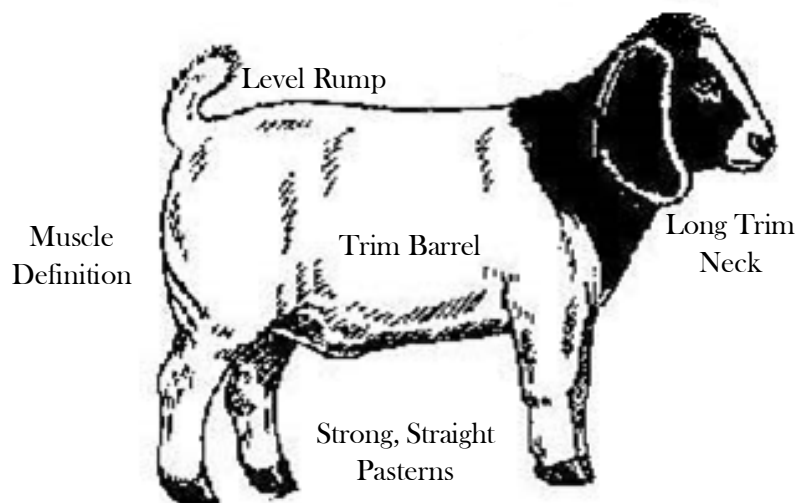
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## Considerations for Selecting a Goat

Choosing the right meat goat will help you to have a successful project. There are several breeds to choose from, the most popular being the Boer. Other breeds are Spanish, Kiko and Tennessee Fainting Goat.

Goats for a market project are usually purchased after they are weaned from their mothers and then kept till they are sold for market.

Traits to look for are rounded shoulders, thick forelegs, deepness of twist and a soft feel over the ribs. Look for an animal that sets their feet and legs correctly both at rest and on the move. The goat should have a strong back with muscle through the top, behind the shoulders and in front of the hips as well as through brisket, forearm and hindquarters. Look for strong breed characteristics for the head with a straight jaw that is not overshot (parrot mouth) or undershot (monkey jaw).



## Clipping

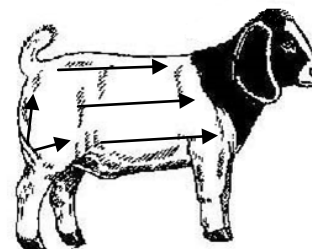
Body clipping or shaving should follow breed standards and the show guidelines. No matter your personal preference be sure to follow the guidelines put in place by the show that you are attending.

### *Trimming Your Goat*

Trimming your goat will help enhance its appearance for the show day. You want to trim around the hooves, uneven hairs along the belly, inside the ears, the bottom of the tail and even-up the goatee.

### *Body Shaving*

If you choose to body shave your market goat do it two weeks before the show to be sure that there are no clipper marks. Use a blade that will leave the hair 1/4 -1/2 inch long and shave against the natural direction of the hair growth. Do not shave the hair below the hocks or the knees.



## Show Day Preparation

The day before the show wash your goat. On the show day just spot clean any dirty spots and clean your goat's ears. Be sure that your goat is completely dry when you enter the show ring. Most importantly have fun!

# Preparing a Market Goat for Show

## Preparing at Home

It is important to work with your goat at home to train them for the show day. Work with your goat everyday to help it get use to being handled and showing. A collar or chain collar should be used for showing your goat. Use the collar to hold the head up high. When leading correctly, your goats shoulders will be even with your leg and its head will be in front of your body. Learn to square up the goat's legs while keeping its head high with your knee or leg braced into the chest. Practice showing your lamb every day to help ensure that your lamb will handle properly in the show ring.

### *Exercise*

Exercise is essential for a successful market goat project. Exercise will help condition and tone your market goat for the show. An exercise program should start two to three months before the show. Start slow and gradually work up to a more intense exercise schedule. Methods such as the using a bicycle or running with your goat are effective. Walking your goat daily will help as well. You can also use jumps as an exercise tool.

Be sure that you do not over heat your goat. Try to exercise in the cooler part of the day. Also pay attention to the weight and fat deposition of your goat. If your goat is not going to meet the minimum weight requirements an exercise program might not be beneficial. You also do not want to lose fat by over exercising.

# Meat Quality Assurance

A quality assurance program is a program designed to help livestock producers raise their animals in a way that will provide a safe and wholesome product for the consumer.

As a 4-H livestock producer it is your responsibility to produce a safe food product while caring for your animals in an ethical manner. Proper handling and management of your livestock project is essential to the quality of the final product. Be consistent in your feeding regiment and handle animals in a quiet, gentle manner. Keep accurate and complete records and maintain a healthy animal. When treatment or injections are necessary for animal health read the label, administer properly, adhere to withdrawal times, give injects in the neck and keep accurate records. Be sure to consult your veterinarian for vaccination and treatment options.

A high-quality, safe, wholesome food product is the goal of every livestock producer. Make sure you are doing your part by raising your 4-H market project in a safe and ethical manner. Below are some examples of humane and inhumane practices.

## Humane Practices

- Feed a balanced ration
- Provide plenty of clean water
- Follow a planned health and vaccination program
- Keep animal in a warm dry place that is adequately ventilated and well bedded
- Start training animals at a young age

## Inhumane Practices

- Lack of animal grooming
- Failure to feed and water animals regularly
- Failure to keep pen and stalls clean and dry
- Kicking, kneeling, beating, jerking, or slapping an animal in ring
- Improper medicating of animals

## How to Feed a Market Goat

Proper feeding of your market goat is essential for a successful project. Hand feeding or feeding a limited amount of feed multiple times throughout the day is recommended for goats. This will help prevent overeating and allow you to monitor the growth of your goat. You will need to feed your goat both roughages (hay) and concentrates (grains). It is also important to establish a feeding routine twice a day for your goat at the same time every day. Sudden changes in feed or feeding can damage the rumen.

### Feeding Roughages

Forages are pasture, hay and brush. These are important for the proper function of the rumen. Avoid feeding large quantities of alfalfa, as it may contain too high of protein when fed with grains. Roughages can be offered free choice up until about two weeks before your show when they should be limited as to avoid a large belly for the show.

### Feeding Concentrates

Grains provide energy. A variety of grains are available but the commercial premixed feeds are usually the best option. Meat goats can consume 1-2 lbs of grain per day divided between two feedings. When buying feed check the protein amount. It should not be less than 12% or exceed 16%.

#### *Starting Your Goat on Concentrates*

Start feeding your goat concentrates in small portions. The portions should be approximately 1/8 to 1/4 lb per day. Your goat should consume the grain in 15-20 minutes. After 20 minutes remove any excess grain and reduce the amount of grain fed the next feeding by the amount that was not consumed. You want your goat to eat all of the

grain that is provided. Gradually increase the amount of grain being fed until you have reached 1-2 lbs per day. This should be accomplished over a two week period.

#### *Determining How Much Grain to Feed*

Take the time to evaluate how much your goat will need to gain from the time of purchase until your show date to be sure you start feeding grain at the most appropriate time and amount. As an example you purchase a 40 lb goat, your goat must weigh a minimum of 60 lbs for the show and you have 100 days until your show. Your goat needs to gain 20 lbs or 1/4 lb per day.

$$60 \text{ lbs} - 40 \text{ lbs} = 20 \text{ lbs}$$

$$20 \text{ lbs} / 100 \text{ Days} = 0.25 \text{ lbs/day}$$

Goats typically need to eat 7 lbs of grain for every 1 lb of gain. Your goat will need to eat between 1.75 and 2 lbs of grain to ensure a gain of 1/4 lb per day.

### Example Diets

	Grass Hay	Alfalfa	16% Protein Concentrate
Example #1	Free Choice		1.0 lb
Example #2		1.5 lb	1.0 lb

### Water and Minerals

Always provide plenty of clean water and have free choice loose salt, and loose trace minerals available at all times. Be sure your minerals include selenium because there is a selenium deficiency in the Northwest. Feed your goat on a regular schedule and weigh your goats feed at least once a week so that you know how much your goat is eating.