

**Sarah M. Smith**

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### **Market Goats**

#### The Ideal Market Goat

- A lamb that will produce a high quality carcass and a good eating experience for our goat consumers.
- Ideal goat will be between 85-120 pounds, however each animal is different as it is more important to go towards an ideal fat thickness than weight. Small framed goats might be finished at lower weights, while large frame goats might require additional weight to be finished.
- Blue ribbon market goats will be goats that are market ready (ready to go to harvest).
- Red ribbon goats will be goats that are not market ready or past market prime.
- White ribbon goats will be unthrifty goats that should not be put on a truck/shipped to packing plant
- Goats should have above average muscle
- Goats should be less than 12 months of age.
- Goats should be structurally correct and able to travel smoothly in motion.
- Goats should be free of defects/disease.

### **Showmanship**

As a showmanship judge, I think there are many different ways to present a goat. And the best way is the way that makes your goat look its best. I like goats that look naturally thick, not in a power brace—I'm looking for the best goat, not the best showed goat in quality. The best showed goat is one that shows out the faults and highlights the good qualities of a goat. Goats should be showed the same way in showmanship as in quality. I have 3 basic rules:

- 1) Watch the classes before you—I will run each ring very similar to the last—I am not out there to trick you. I am out there to evaluate your goat and showmanship to help find a good quality goat that represents our meat industry, that our consumer wants to eat; and showmen that I feel are good stockman/women, can take care of the goat both inside (showmanship/presentation) and outside (knowledge—I will ask questions) the showing. I like classes and my showing to be organized and to run efficiently.
- 2) Do not pick the goat up off the ground by its neck. I will give you one warning to keep the goat's feet on the ground. After the second warning I will stop evaluating your goat or showmanship skills. Pick your goat's feet up to set them up. Do not drag your goat by its collar—the goat should be trained to walk beside exhibitor.
- 3) Do not slap your goats to get them to brace harder. Not only is this an animal care issue of not how to properly care for your goat, but I want a goat in a natural brace (not one when they are pushing so hard that it looks unnatural or the humped up in the back).