



## SHOW SOLUTIONS

### How to get your show wether off to a great start

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There's no doubt about it: the biggest challenge facing most goat feeders today is getting their young projects off to an excellent start. These finicky, small ruminants have challenged many a great veterinarian and livestock genius alike. It seems they almost always bring the guarantee of snotty noses, fevers and feed consumption issues.

I believe that the first line of defense against a bad start is a great relationship with a competent veterinarian, as they provide service, support and answers in a timely manner. So, your first step is to reach out to a reputable local vet and build a relationship with them. Let them know that you're bringing home a goat project and are interested in retaining their services. Tell them that you're not only interested in being competitive with this project, but that its overall health is your first priority.

#### **New arrivals**

At our house, the first thing we do upon the arrival of a new wether involves giving fresh CD-T and thiamine injections. The CD-T injection helps prevent clostridial infection and the dreaded enterotoxemia, or overeating, as it is commonly called. Thiamine is necessary to aid in the prevention of caprine polio (the onset of blindness), which is induced by thiamine deficiency. We also deworm the new project with Safe-Guard® and, following this, drench it with 10 cc of Gut Candy paste. Safe-Guard is a good general dewormer that is effective on a variety of internal parasites but is also relatively gentle on the gastrointestinal tract. Gut Candy paste is a proven, time-tested probiotic that stimulates microbial activity and helps improve appetite and the consumption of feed/hay. We follow this procedure every time we receive a new goat — no exceptions!

#### **Housing**

The housing for your project should be clean, dry and comfortable. It is necessary for this facility to promote general good health and the consumption of feed and water. Dusty, damp environments, extreme heat or cold and the opportunity to free-graze or forage on grass, weeds or hay will adversely affect the introduction of your new project into an unfamiliar environment. The stress of no longer being around the other animals they were raised with will haunt even the bloomiest wethers — and, in turn, the best caretakers. We use Attitude Adjustment™ paste to help reduce stress and to encourage new projects to acclimate to their new surroundings.

#### **Feed**

It's always good to maintain a supply of the feed that your new goat project has been consuming so that it can be mixed into your desired ration. We get at least half a bag of whatever the new wether was

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eating at his previous home and blend a small amount of it with our Show-Rite® Advancer Plus to initiate the transition to the best goat feed in America. This complete conversion may take as little as a few days or as long as a few weeks; it just depends on how your project is handling the shift. Keep a watchful eye for bloat, disinterest in feed or any other change in behavior during this transitional stage.

### Water

Proper water intake is paramount to the success of your new project. We provide fresh water in 2-gallon buckets to encourage consumption. Make sure that the water is not too hot or cold and be sure to change the water in the buckets 2–3 times a day. The more water the young goat consumes, the healthier it will be. We like to feed wethers of similar sizes and demeanors together in troughs to promote consumption at a comfortable height and from all sides. As long as none of them are bullies, group-feeding wethers stimulates a communal feeding response and encourages newcomers to eat with their pals. Occasionally, appetites can be stimulated by providing a rough, stemmy sudan hay that offers a significant fiber source to encourage an appetite for nutrient-dense, concentrated feeds.

### Keep a watchful eye

Should you notice a lack of appetite or listless behavior from your new project, check their temperature with a plastic, digital rectal thermometer. The accepted range is generally 102.5–103 degrees. Be sure to note whether your project has been peeing properly, as well. Urinary calculi is a very common issue in goats and can often be attributed to improper feeding. This condition can make or break your project if it is not caught in time. This data will also help to keep your vet informed about any potential issues in the formative stages with your new projects.

Finally, remember that goats are like people. They are mostly group animals and can be easily stressed by numerous environmental and man-made factors. Do your best to promote a great environment in order to successfully acclimate your project to their new home. If you've already made the investment into good genetics, the only thing you have control over now is their environment — so make it a great one, and you'll see great results!

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