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AMERICAN NIGERIAN DWARF DAIRY ASSOCIATION

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Practical Biosecurity for Your Farm

By Michelle Schack, DVM

Biosecurity is an important part of owning livestock. Your herd of goats, whether it be 4 or 40 or 400 goats, should be protected against outside diseases. Biosecurity means taking precautions to prevent the introduction of harmful diseases into your farm. Biosecurity encompasses many factors, including animal health (such as vaccines and nutrition), exposure to new pathogens (such as movement of people, animals, and equipment), and cleaning and disinfection.

Bringing your animals to another person's farm or other animals onto your farm can carry risks. Even when you know the other person and the other person's farm, many goat diseases can go undetected. Some herds have immunity to the pathogens on their farm, but when introduced to a new pathogen they have never encountered before, an outbreak can occur.

At livestock shows, many different people and animals from many different farms are all combined together. Many diseases have an incubation period, meaning the animal does not show signs of sickness until after several days or weeks. Many diseases can be carried by animals with no symptoms. So even if the animals you came in contact with seemed healthy, or your animals seem healthy when you get home, there is a chance you may be introducing new pathogens to your farm.

Some steps you can take to prepare your goats for travel include: don't take your animals anywhere if they are exhibiting signs of illness (fever, coughing, abnormal appetite or feces) or very near kidding. Make sure your goats are fully vaccinated. Use your own clean and disinfected trailer, and do not mix goats from different farms in one trailer. Pack your own equipment (feeding, bedding, grooming) so you are not sharing across farms. Follow the biosecurity plan of the location you are visiting, whether it be another person's farm or a show.

Remember that stressed animals are more likely to shed and catch diseases, so keep your animals calm! When you arrive, ensure the pens you are unloading into

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Youth Page—Showanship	2
Easter Coloring Page	3
AGS Notes	4
Selection	5
Tattoo Pen	6
Etta's Story	8
Recipe	10

(Continued on page 4)

Showmanship 101

By Jessie Rymel, Wild Vine, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agent- Agriculture and Natural Resources

As a county agent, my weekend schedule stays pretty busy helping provide opportunities for the 4-H members in my county. This year I made it a priority to actually take my goats out to shows, as opposed to only milk testing and (hopefully) getting my herd appraised. I made it to a show this past weekend, which was my first since 2015.



Those in the showing are your competitors, but they should also be your friends.

There were two things I quickly noticed. First of all, there are a lot more Nigerian Dwarfs being shown now than 10 years ago and showmanship is always important for both youth and adults. Showmanship means being a good sport, supportive of other showmen, and exhibiting your animal to the best of your ability. It also means that you are respectful of the judges line up and you realize that this is one person's opinion on one day. Tomorrow, your goat who got cut from the class, might go in and place 3rd or even end up in the champion drive.

You must be a humble winner and a gracious loser, even when you disagree with the line up at the end of the class. Your showmanship is evidence of your character. If someone has good character they are trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring, and practice good citizenship.

Showmanship, and by default character, is evident both inside and outside of the show ring. How you speak to people, especially people

that are new to goats, on social media is evidence of your showmanship. How you treat the goat that won't walk in front of yours in the class line up is showmanship.

Why is showmanship so important aside from developing good character? Whether you are a youth or an adult in the show ring, you are marketing your farm's product. If I witness an exhibitor with poor showmanship, they will probably go on my "Let's not do business with them" list. Why would I want to purchase or even sell a goat to someone that might not be trustworthy or responsible? Or someone who isn't caring or kind to other showmen?

Stock shows can certainly be one of the best parts of owning animals, but they are super stressful, especially when we forget our "why." At the end of the day, each of us are doing two things- creating a breeding program that makes us smile when we look in our pastures and serving as diplomats for the breed we have chosen to raise. If we keep this in mind, showmanship should come naturally.



Showmanship isn't just inside the show ring. You are an Ambassador to your farm and dairy goats when you are in public.



Enjoy your animals and the opportunity to show off your hard work.

Happy Easter!



Thank you Alanna Renstrom for the graphic! YOUTH—color and post as a comment on our Discussion page for End of Year Points!

Notes from AGS

- The AGS National Show will be held in conjunction with the Arbuckle/HNDGA show June 4-6 in Norman, OK. We will be offering Classification on site with Tim Flickinger. National Show judge is Denice Hasty.
- The payment page has been temporarily disabled. It is an issue with PayPal's link and they are working on fixing it. If you need to send payments on account please send directly to agsgoat@live.com please list your membership # or name in the memo section.
- Make sure to check the deadline for your area for Classification and get your applications in- the email for Classification is agsclassification@gmail.com



(Continued from page 1)

are clean and sanitized and do not have nose to nose contact with animals from other farms. Keep an eye on your goats while you are there. Make sure they are not displaying signs of illness and are only visiting with people who have washed their hands.

When you get back home, change clothes and disinfect your truck, trailer, boots, and equipment immediately. Have an isolation area for the unloaded goats where they will not come in contact with your animals that stayed home, with separate equipment. Consider the goats that traveled and the animals that stayed home as two separate “herds” and maintain biosecurity on your own farm as well, for at least 2-4 weeks. Ideally this isolation period would be longer but it is not always practical to do so.

Maintaining biosecurity is not always easy. Remember the purpose: you are protecting the animals in your herd from outside diseases that they may not have immunity to, and ensuring they don't pass on anything to other herds. There are many factors that contribute to disease spread so make sure that you are working with your veterinarian on a biosecurity program that works for your farm!

Selection Based on Goals

By Karen Goodchild, [OK Doe K Dairy Goats](#)

Tamara Taylor had a wonderful presentation at ADGA National Convention on animal selection. The first question to ask yourself when choosing to own a dairy animal is “What is its purpose?”

There are many reasons people choose to own livestock, but defining the primary reason will help you determine goals. For many of us, it is either milk production or show potential.

Once you have outlined your purpose, you can then obtain animals that will help you meet your goal.

The first objective is to learn what an ideal animal will look like. Learn to see the differences between animals, and learn what you value. This can be accomplished by visiting several local herds or by attending shows.

Once you get an idea of what you like, select 2 to 4 traits for which to breed. Be aware a “mammary system” is composed of many parts; are you breeding for medial, rear udder height, fore? (ADGA has a small chart here: <https://adga.org/seeing-a-dairy-goat-by-the-numbers/>) Sometime breeding for one trait can diminish another, so plan carefully.

Next, learn the correlation of parts. This comes down to understanding the trait you think you want.

Some lines of Nigerian Dwarf are known for “toeing out.” At one of my first Linear Appraisal sessions I was taught whether it was due from the knee down or structure of the shoulder assembly. These small details can save you years in a breeding program when you know how the parts fit together. There is no sense breeding for better shoulder assembly if the problem lies with a knee issue.

Learn to verbalize what you see and what you like. Attending shows and listening to a judge give reasons can help you develop this skill. It comes down to knowing what your ideal animal looks like.

Lastly, prioritize your conformational goals. I was taught early on that judges tend to make an initial decision on General Appearance when an animal walks through the gate. The general parts of front end, legs, and topline fall under General Appearance which overall are one-third on senior does to half the scorecard on junior does and bucks.

The Mammary System is one-third the scorecard on senior does. Capacity, Support, Rear Udder and Fore all fall under this category and are separate traits. To go along with this is production. It is little use having an outstanding animal without the ability or will to milk. Ask to see barn milk records or look up on CDCB.

So...the ADGA [scorecard](#) or the AGS [scorecard](#) are very similar and can help you visualize your ideal animal. Remember: not everyone has the same goals. Stay focused on your herd and how to improve the traits you have selected. Good luck in reaching your ideal!

Tattoo Pen—Review

By Karen Goodchild, [OK Doe K Dairy](#)

I heard about the rabbit tattoo pens as a viable option to the tattoo clamp and a way to touch up tattoos that were fading. I thought I'd give it a whirl.

I bought both the [KBTatts](#) and the [TBTatt](#) to compare. I like the TBatt that All Things Bunnies offers due to the extra supplies available. Not only do they have a numbing agent, but they also have a myriad of ink colors and inkwell supplies.

I use the numbing spray, which seems to help deaden the pain. The sound of the pen is still a bit scary so it really needs two people. The first time I tried it, I used a disbudding box and was alone; I don't recommend that option.

Goats are definitely not bunnies and will not stay still while buzzing their ear. While it appears I am strangling the goat on the photos while Miranda Brown of B13 Ranch, tattoos, I was simply trying to keep her head still for a legible tattoo.

I purchased the Danger Zone orange and Apple Blossom green. I planned to use orange for new tattoos and green for touch, but haven't been brave enough to try that pop of color until I can write more legibly.

All Things Bunnies has an excellent video on how to tattoo bunnies. It was trial and error for me to determine how far out the needle should extend. There is a set screw to adjust the height of the stainless steel tip to expose the needle length

As with a clamp, the ear should be cleaned before starting. Rubbing alcohol on a cotton ball is a good way to get out dirt, debris, and wax. Fill the reservoir with ink to avoid touching the needle to the bottom and bending it.

Place the bottom of the ear over your finger so there is a flat surface underneath.



This helps have a more rigid surface when writing.

The first time I tried the tattoo pen, it made me extremely glad I also microchipped. A judge once commented that it looked like “a kindergartener wrote it with a crayon.” To say there is a learning curve would be a fair assessment. The younger they are, the easier they are to hold.

When I was learning, I tried to “write” the full letter. Miranda suggested making short, quick strokes for a cleaner image. This will also avoid having mistakes when an animal jerks their head.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

While I have not attempted to touch up a tattoo on a full grown animal, I have seen it accomplished by scissoring the goat between your legs to keep them still.

After tattooing, gently wipe off the excess ink and clean the pen. I clean by drawing up water into the pen then wiping dry.

All Things Bunnies also has replacement parts for the clamps.



*Photos courtesy of Paul Goodchild,
Youth Member*



All Things Bunnies

SUPPLIES FOR RABBITS, CAVIES, & SMALL ANIMALS

**10 percent
OFF in
April**

**Use Code
ANDDA**

Etta's Story

By Caroline Lawson, TLC Farms

It was the end of May, 2015, and I was making the final decisions of which does I wanted to keep in the herd, and which ones I wanted to sell. Stacey and Jay Roussel, dear friends of ours who were opening a dairy south of Houston, needed a couple of extra milkers, and since I knew and trusted them to care for the girls with the same attention Tom and I would, I decided to let Etta go. She had earned her milk star, and even though, as a four-year-old, had placed in the top half of her classes at several shows, I just didn't feel she would finish her championship. So off she went to All We Need Farm, along with Rosemary, her niece, the last weekend in May. The following week, Stacey called to say that Etta was limping on a hind leg, and sent a photo that seemed to show an injury to her hock. Since she was being integrated into a new herd, I didn't think it was too serious, and told Stacey to keep an eye on it, and see if her vet thought Banamine might be a good idea. As the week progressed, so did the lameness. When Stacey sent me the second photo of Etta



Etta went down on her backend and it was originally attributed to soft-tissue injury.

down on both her hind legs, I realized it was something quite a bit more serious than just a soft-tissue injury. She was beginning to show classic symptoms of meningeal worm damage to her spinal column.

Here in warm, humid south-central Texas, where white-tail deer outnumber humans, a nasty little creature called ***Parelaphostrongylus tenuis*** (p. tenuis or meningeal worm) often causes undiagnosed neurological symptoms in goats. The worm's life cycle begins in the infected brain tissue of white-tail deer where the adult worms lay their eggs. The eggs are dislodged from the central nervous system and pass into the lungs where they hatch. The larvae are then coughed up, swallowed, and continue through the gastrointestinal tract until deposited in the feces of the deer. Snails and slugs then serve as intermediate hosts, and then eaten by ruminants grazing infected pastures. Over the years, deer have developed a good resistance to these parasites and seldom show any noticeable problem; however, goats and llamas have a very low resistance to p. tenuis, and as the parasite (usually just one) travels out of the stomach and into the spinal column, a number of symptoms are seen, varying from the hind-limb paralysis shown by Etta, all the way up to loss of hair in vertical strips along the animal's neck following the course of nerve endings, and ultimately death. If a goat has shown neurological damage, conventional wisdom says it can't be undone, but my personal experience has shown that not to be true in all cases.

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

After consulting a friend at Texas A&M University who worked for many years as a veterinary pathobiologist specializing in goat parasites, I passed along his treatment recommendation to Stacey, who updated her vet (who had originally seen Etta for the hind-leg lameness) and received the necessary prescriptions, along with liquid Safeguard dewormer. Etta was treated with the Safeguard, Banamine (later changed to Dexamethasone), Vitamin B complex and penicillin (to guard against infection as the worm began to break down in her spine). Stacey worked with Etta for several weeks after completion of her treatments, but she progressed no further than being able to drag herself around for short distances before laying down once again. Her appetite and attitude remained good, but she continued to have very little use of her hindquarters, and at the end of June I offered to buy Etta back from Stacey and bring her home.

Once home, we made her comfortable in the middle of our large goat barn, where she could see the other mature does but couldn't get jostled around by them. I gave her a shot of Bo-Se with the idea that it was often helpful for treatment of white-muscle disease in newborns, so might be of some use to Etta's deteriorating muscles. Then I began doing some research on treatment of spinal-cord injuries in humans, and what supplements might be of use. I found a number of articles that showed positive results from treatments that combined Vitamin B 12 methylcobalamin (not cyano-balamin, the most common form found in over the counter B vitamins) with other drugs. Heading over to my local health food store, I purchased a small bottle of liquid



Meningeal worm can be reversed in some cases if caught quickly enough. SGCH TLC-Farms KV Etta Place scoring 90 VEEE with ADGA after recovery.

methylcobalamin, and began treating Etta. Whether it was from the vitamin treatments, or returning home to the place where she had been born and raised, within a week, Etta was beginning to stand up on her hind legs. By September, she was able to return to the herd full-time, and at the beginning of October, she had made such a good recovery we decided to go ahead and breed her to our new herdsire, Wingwood Farm MT Aristotle. She produced triplets at the end of February 2016, and went on to finish her championship, earn a final linear appraisal score of VEEE 90 in May, and be awarded her Superior Genetics designation later in the year. Not a bad recovery for a doe that 12 months before could hardly stagger down the middle of the barn!

Further Reading on Meningeal Worm:

<https://www.sheepandgoat.com/deerworm>

<https://www.wormx.info/.../07/24/meningeal-worm-fact-sheet>

<https://www.vet.upenn.edu/.../fact-sheet-detail/brain-worm>

Have you taken our first quarter Youth [quiz?](#) Points given for participation and count toward end-of-year awards.

We're on the web
www.ANDDA.org



**PROMOTING THE
NIGERIAN DWARF
BREED SINCE 1996**

Editor:
Karen Goodchild
OK Doe K Dairy Goats

Please let us know if you have a
comment or article idea!

Recipe of the Month –*Brie Tart*

By Karen Goodchild, [OK Doe K Dairy Goats](#), courtesy of *Fabulous Feasts Medieval Cookery and Ceremony*

1 8 inch unbaked pastry pie shell
1 pound brie with rind
6 egg yolks
1/4 teaspoon ginger
1 teaspoon brown sugar
1/8 teaspoon saffron
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon white vinegar
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

1. Bake pastry shell "blind" to harden for 10 minutes at 425, Cool. Reset oven to 375.
2. Remove rind from chilled cheese and cut the rind into small pieces with a moistened knife. Reserve.
3. Beat softened brie cheese, yolks, ginger, brown sugar, saffron, and salt until smooth.
4. Pour into pastry shell.
5. Strew cut rind evenly over the surface of the pie.
6. Combine cinnamon with white sugar and sprinkle around pastry edge.
7. Bake until set and golden brown, about 30 minutes at 375.

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