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## UTILIZING TEASER BUCKS

by Dr. Beth Johnson

In the goat world, it is common to utilize artificial insemination and hand breeding. Both of these require effective methods of heat detection. Why would one want to maintain an infertile buck for use in detecting does in heat and stimulating does to cycle stronger and earlier than normal? The answer is simple, to achieve better reproductive rates and successes in heat detection.

Many embryo transfer programs also utilize a teaser buck to stimulate the recipient does after the vaginal cidrs are removed. This appears to trigger better reproductive rates and receptiveness to the transferred embryo.

How is a teaser buck created? There are several ways to produce teasers. The easiest way is to take a young buck around 5 months to a year of age and perform a bilateral vasectomy on it. This is a surgical technique performed by veterinarians. Other ways that have

been utilized involve castrating a buck at an older age (after he knew what being a male was all about) or administering testosterone to wethers to stimulate buck behavior. I have even heard of castrating a cryptorchid male which had one testicle retained in the abdomen and utilizing them as teasers. The testicle that is retained will continue to produce hormones and sperm but due to the animals body temperature all of the sperm is killed. One important reminder is to have your teaser buck semen checked prior to use on an annual basis just to be sure there are no viable sperm in the ejaculate. I have experienced those oops! Another hint is to use a buck with plenty of libido such as a Pygmy, Kiko or Dairy breed and to keep them in good but lean body condition.

With regards to the teaser buck, be sure he is healthy with no evidence of reproductive diseases such as chlamydia, coxiella (Q-fever), toxoplasmosis and does not appear to have a urinary tract

infection or abnormal discharge present in the sheath area. Most of these can be detected by a good physical examination and a thorough Breeding Soundness Exam performed by your veterinarian.

I have also heard of using a teaser buck to synchronize does prior to breeding early in the breeding season. If the teaser is placed into a pen of does for this purpose, try to do it at least 2-3 weeks prior to the planned breeding date. By doing this, all of the exposed does have had time to cycle at least once prior to breeding. This should increase conception rates.

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*Dr. Beth Johnson is a Staff Veterinarian in the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and has 40 years of experience raising and treating small ruminants. Her family farm is in Parksville, KY where she raises Gelbvieh cattle and Boer goats.*