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The Small Ruminant Magazine



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2020 KY

**Annual Producer Conference
October 24, 2020 • 9:30am-2pm_(EST)**

REGISTER

www.kysheepandgoat.org/annual-producer-conference



KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

An Peischel
Assistant Professor &
Small Ruminant
Extension Specialist,
College of Agriculture
Tennessee State
University

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PRESENTATIONS

Jason Wachter – KDA Small Ruminant Marketing Specialist
9:30am-10:00am – Current Market Trends

An Peischel – Assistant Professor & Small Ruminant Ext. Specialist
10:00am-10:45am – Low Stress Livestock Handling
1:00-1:45pm – Reproduction
2:00-2:45pm – LGD Management



Hoof Print Magazine

Published Quarterly

\$24 per year

Free with paid membership to one or more of our partner organizations.

HoofPrint: The Small Ruminant Magazine is a periodical to promote better animal health, husbandry, and knowledge among sheep and goat producers. **HoofPrint** is the joint effort of members of the sheep and goat industries and serves as a united voice for all small ruminant producers.

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Executive, Editorial & Advertising Sales directed by Kentucky Sheep & Goat Development Office: P.O. Box 4709 Frankfort, KY 40604-4709

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Letter from the President

Dear Producers,

I am still not sure what to think of the current times we are in, but I do know we still have sheep to raise with lambs and meat to sell. Not much has changed for me on the farm due to COVID, and I don't think it will anytime soon as I have no neighbors and very few visitors. I did have a local school 4H group visit planned at the end of the school year last year but they cancelled, and we are just waiting to plan for the next one. I always dread speaking engagements like that and panel discussions, but once I get started I can usually talk sheep all day!

This summer and fall is a great time to evaluate your future lambing dates. If you are raising lambs for ethnic markets, be sure to adjust your lambing dates to coordinate with them as they change every year by 11 days. So if you were marketing lamb for a holiday in mid March for example, 3 yrs later it may be at the end of February. Without making those adjustments to your breeding schedule, you will miss out on potential marketing opportunities. I know it is so hard to plan breeding groups for certain markets, but without planning for them you will miss them every time!

Hopefully you evaluated the condition of your ewes before breeding in September or later. You want them to be in body condition 3 at time of mating. If they have given everything to their previous lambing and dropped a score or two, then you want to put them on some feed to slowly get them into a gaining condition at breeding. Also important is to keep gaining some condition up to month after mating as well. I use forage as much as possible year around and really like to see my ewes fluctuate in condition after lambing. By fluctuation I mean I like to see them lose some condition as they give everything in their milk for their lambs. I personally think it is good for their system to go through those changes as they are designed to do. Therefore, most years my ewes will drop



condition after weaning. Then, during the summer when most pastures are not the most nutritional, I typically just use shell corn in my Advantage feeders that are designed to be self feeders. They consume about .5-.75 lbs/day while on forage to increase condition about 2-3 weeks prior to mating. Then I will leave it for about another 30 days depending on forage quality and body conditions. Corn is one of the cheapest and highest TDN feeds available to us to use in those type of situations. This year I did sudangrass as a summer annual and it worked great for maintenance on my ewes. But not hardly enough for adding body condition in my mind so I added the corn prior to breeding. If flushing my ewes, which I estimate will cost me about \$250 or so on 100 ewes, gains me an additional 5-10 lambs, that is a great return on investment.

This time of year is also one of my favorite times as I get to waste lots of brain power trying to match ewes to rams for the perfect combination for the perfect lambs! I love hearing how everyone determines the various ways to match ewes with rams and why they pick the mating. I am a member of NSIP, National Sheep Improvement Program, and with NSIP I get EBV data on each animal on my farm. Then, for example, I take a ewe that might be weak on a milking trait EBV (MWWT) and select a ram that is higher in traits. This combination compliments

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the traits she is lacking, in turn producing an offspring that is better than her. That is always my end goal to raise animals better than their parents, but without measuring genetic traits and only using phenotype, I will never know if I actually made any genetic progress. You can't manage what you don't measure. I like to have a very balanced EBV ram, a maternal heavy trait EBV ram and a growth heavy trait EBV ram. Then I can use those to help ewes that need one or the other. Another thing I like to do that I recommend to everyone who will listen, keep your best ram lamb you raise every so often as a backup. By keeping your best ram lamb every year, you have at least a backup option to use at the next breeding that is probably as good or better than what you will be able to find at the last minute.

The Tennessee Ag Enhancement Program (TAEP) will be open October 1-15. This program is such a valuable resource for producers in our state. Now is a great time to look over what is available, do some planning, and see what you need to help your operation. Also great time to make sure your TAEP certification is still active. If you have never applied, contact your local TN Extension office and you will see the benefits of this program. Don't forget our 2020 Annual Meeting will be Dec 5th. Hopefully we will be able to attend in person, but if not, a backup plan is in the works. Stayed tuned to our website and Facebook page for announcements as we get closer to the event date.

Good luck and stay safe!

Robert D. Walker, President
Tennessee Sheep Producers



sheep producers association
www.tennesseesheep.org

2020 ANNUAL MEETING DECEMBER 5TH

**MORE DETAILS
AVAILABLE ON THE
WEBSITE**

TENNESSEESHEEP.ORG

Membership Application



sheep producers association
www.tennesseesheep.org

ANNUAL DUES: Adult: \$30.00 Junior \$10.00

If you are interested in a committee please select below:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wool | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jr. Expo | <input type="checkbox"/> Sale |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Production Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership/Revenue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity | <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Meeting |

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Breed(s) of Sheep: _____

Please enclose a check for amount made out to TSPA and mail to:
Tennessee Sheep Producer's Association
4233 Poplar Hill Road, Watertown, TN 37184

JOIN ONLINE TODAY!

Pay dues and join online at
www.tennesseesheep.org/joinonline.htm

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Greetings, fellow shepherds!

I hope this issue of HoofPrint finds you and your loved ones healthy, both physically and mentally. This year continues to challenge us, and we will rise to the challenge. Last year we overcame the drought, remember? Here are a few tips for staying balanced as 2020 grinds on:

1. Fewer opportunities to succeed at what we usually do means greater opportunities to try new things! Many extension programs and universities (Purdue, Yale, etc.) are offering free online classes right now.
2. Frame every day with two simple words: thank you. Practicing gratitude makes us more resilient, acts as a buffer between other's depression and your mental health, increases patience and managerial skills, and reduces blood pressure. Start small. If you have good boots, tell them thank you as you pull them on. Thank the grass for growing. Thank your autonomic nervous system for managing your body so you can think about breeding groups this fall.
3. Acknowledge that nothing is normal and it's not okay. It's ok to hold space for yourself, to take a mental health day, to be angry. Acknowledge your emotions, evaluate, and make a plan. There will be a future. There will be a sheep industry. What do you want your life to look like on the other side of this? What can you change about your operation to maximize your success a) if current situations prevail or b) when markets reopen?

The #1 most important thing you can do RIGHT NOW is call your FSA office and get your CFAP money. It's so easy. They'll walk you through the paperwork. The first round of funding was for wool held between Jan and April, ewes under 2 years of age, and lambs. The second round includes ALL sheep – rams, wethers, and older

ewes. This is easy money that can make overwintering stock easier.

Kentuckians are lucky; our market prices have remained steady throughout 2020, but if this year has taught us anything it's that situations can change in a moment. That's certainly the case with wool. Again, while it might not feel this way, we are lucky. Having small flocks has made us good niche marketers. Whereas the commercial market has collapsed leaving our Western colleagues ruined, we can afford to hang on to our clips until next year. Now is the time to really hone your marketing skills, and apply for every aid package. Groups such as FACT and the Livestock Conservancy offer micro grants. It may take some research to find all the possibilities that apply to your farm.

In new, exciting news, the 2020 Annual Producer's Conference will be online! Physical attendance has been a barrier in the past; hopefully more of our amazing producers will participate virtually for great networking and sheep knowledge! Check your email and mailbox for details and association business.

The other important thing you can do for your farm is **register** and **vote**. Every elected position has an impact on our lives; more so because rural Americans are a minority. As your ASI representative, I've met with people from USDA, the Trade Department, Congress and the House of Representatives. The people holding office that don't care where their food comes from were put there the same way as those who are fighting for us. Talk to your friends and family about Ag issues. Start with the people who care about you and let



JOIN or RENEW TODAY!
 Visit www.kysheepandgoat.org

KSWPA Membership Benefits

- Quarterly issues of HoofPrint Magazine plus the newly designed 2021 Sheep and Goat Management Calendar
- A unified voice for the sheep industry and representation on important state and national committees
- Assistance with new marketing opportunities such as The Kentucky Sheep and Fiber Festival and HoofTrader.com
- Receive a membership to the American Sheep Industry, our national lobbying, marketing and promotional support system.
- Support of various educational and youth activities

Name: _____ Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please enclose a check for \$30.00 made out to KSWPA and mail to:
 Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office
 P.O. Box 4709, Frankfort, KY 40604-4709.

Breed: _____
 Dairy Club Lamb Fiber
 Commercial Purebred

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

them tell their network to vote for policies and people who will protect us.

I leave you with this poem, in the hopes it reconnects you with the life you love. Take a moment for yourself and just breathe.

Messenger by Mary Oliver

*My work is loving the world.
Here the sunflowers, there the hummingbird—
equal seekers of sweetness.
Here the quickening yeast; there the blue plums.
Here the clam deep in the speckled sand.
Are my boots old? Is my coat torn?
Am I no longer young, and still half-perfect? Let me
keep my mind on what matters,
which is my work,
which is mostly standing still and learning to be
astonished.
The phoebe, the delphinium.
The sheep in the pasture, and the pasture.
Which is mostly rejoicing, since all the ingredients are here,
which is gratitude, to be given a mind and a heart
and these body-clothes,
a mouth with which to give shouts of joy
to the moth and the wren, to the sleepy dug-up clam,
telling them all, over and over, how it is
that we live forever.*

Be well, shepherds. See you in October.

Madeline Rosenberg,
KSWPA President

Madeline Rosenberg raises heritage breed wool sheep in Shelby County. She hosts a sheep related podcast, *Ovinology*, and serves on the Shelby Co. Horticultural and Agricultural Advisory Council. Madeline runs a successful fiber business, *Ballyhoo Fiber Emporium* and is a freelance author, speaker, and instructor. She loves God, her husband, and sheep and she is passionate about ensuring the future of KY agriculture through public education and service to her fellow producers.

OCTOBER

- 8 graded sale Bowling Green
- 12 graded sale Richmond
- 17 graded sale Springfield
- 20 graded sale West KY
- 20 Barren County Sheep and Goat, 6pm,
Barren County Extension Office
- 22 graded sale Bowling Green
- 24 2020 KY Annual Producer Conference
- 26 graded sale Richmond
- 27 graded sale Paris
- 28-29 Mawlid al-Nabi

NOVEMBER

- 2-15 NAILE – Louisville, KY
- 9 graded sale Richmond
- 12 graded sale Bowling Green
- 17 graded sale West KY
- 17 Barren County Sheep and Goat, 6pm,
Barren County Extension Office
- 21 graded sale Springfield
- 23 graded sale Richmond
- 24 graded sale Paris
- 26 Thanksgiving

DECEMBER

- 10 graded sale Bowling Green
- 10-18 Chanukah
- 14 graded sale Richmond
- 15 graded sale West KY
- 19 graded sale Springfield
- 22 graded sale Paris
- 25 Christmas
- 28 graded sale Richmond

ALL DATES
ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE
DUE TO COVID-19

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2020 Champion Dairy Goat Showmanship - Hope Hitch



2020 Reserve Champion Dairy Goat Showmanship - Faith Hitch



2020 KSF Commercial Doe Grand Champion KY Proud-Logan Hollen



2020 KSF Commercial Doe Reserve Champion KY Proud - Taylor Graves



2020 KSF Grand Champion KY Proud Market Goat - Isabella Godman



2020 KY Proud Reserve Champion Market Goat - Avery Holman



JOIN or RENEW TODAY!

KGPA Membership Application

Your \$30 membership includes:

- 4 issues of the *HoofPrint* Magazine plus the newly designed 2021 Sheep and Goat Management Calendar
- A unified voice for the goat industry on the state and national level
- Representation on important committees such as the Check-Off and the Animal Care Standards boards
- Support of various educational and youth activities
- Youth Membership forms can be found at kysheepandgoat.org/KGPA.html
- **And much, much more!**

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Breed: _____

Club Lamb Fiber Dairy

Phone: _____ Commercial Purebred

E-Mail: _____

Please enclose a check for \$30 made out to KGPA and mail to:

Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office
P.O. Box 4709, Frankfort, KY 40604-4709.

Mail form or Visit www.kysheepandgoat.org to join today!

Letter from the President

Dear Goat Producers,

Is Covid 2020 over yet?! I am sure all of you would agree that the events that have happened locally, in our state, nationally and globally have been anything but Incredible! As producers of the number one globally consumed meat animal, we have much to be thankful for. Goat production continues to be profitable for those of us who have figured out how to raise them in the southeastern United States. I want to thank all of the producers who volunteered their time and animals for the 2019-20 NAHMS Goat Study. Much data was generated which will be used to assess goat production in the United States for years to come.

Yes, we did successfully have a 2020 Kentucky State Fair, and I got to visit with many exhibitors at the Dairy Goat and Market Goat Shows in Louisville! Although the pictures will demonstrate mask wearing by spectators and exhibitors, there were smiles underneath those masks. The shows were limited to just youth exhibitors under CoVid 19 restrictions, which limited the turnout, but those that exhibited were very appreciative of the fact that a show was held. As President of KGPA, I would like to thank the officials and staff of the Ky Fair And Exhibition Center, KY Department of Agriculture and the many KY 4-H/Extension Agents that volunteered their time and energy to make this happen! Without their diligence this show would not have occurred!

Above all, I want to thank the members of the KGPA for providing beautiful belt buckles to the Kentucky State Fair Grand Champion and Reserve Champion winners of the Dairy Goat Showmanship, the Grand Champion and Reserve Champion KY Proud Commercial Doe (Wether Dam), and Grand Champion and Reserve Champion KY Proud Market Goat Show. Hopefully there is a light at the end of this long tunnel and everyone stays safe in their social distancing (easy to do on the farm) life style.

As always let us know if there is anything we can do for you!

Beth Johnson, DVM
President, KGPA



Beth Johnson, DVM

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER

- 8 graded sale Bowling Green
- 12 graded sale Richmond
- 15 KSU Goat Field Day, no registration required
- 17 graded sale Springfield
- 20 graded sale West KY
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- 25 Christmas
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All dates are subject to change due to Covid-19.



Producer Resources

by Christina Morris, Blessed Acres Farm

Starting or expanding a farm may seem like a daunting task; however, there are many resources that exist that may be able to help both the new and existing farmers. The Farm Service Agency (FSA), the Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) and Kentucky Proud offer several programs that help provide funding for farmers. We at Blessed Acres Farm have utilized programs from all three of these and have found it to be very beneficial.



FSA is part of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). FSA offers low interest loans to farmers that cannot obtain financing elsewhere. According to FSA, they offer many

different types of loans to “family-sized farmers and ranchers who cannot obtain commercial credit from a bank” (n.d.). Farm Credit System institution, or other lender.” FSA offers loans such as farm ownership loans, operating loans, microloans, emergency loans, and conservation loans. These loans can be used to purchase land, livestock, equipment, buildings and improvements, as well as needed supplies. Each year, there is money set aside by FSA to provide loans for beginning farmers, those farming less than ten years, as well as those individuals that are identified as being subject to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice. Individuals that fit into this group include American Indian, Asian, African American, Pacific Islander, Hispanic or female. Direct loans are made and serviced by FSA. FSA is responsible for providing the borrower with credit counseling as well as helping applicants “evaluate the adequacy of their real estate and facilities, machinery and equipment, financial and production management, and goals” (FSA, n.d.). Borrowers must be able to show proof of farming 3 out of the last 10 years and have a written business plan. If considering a loan through FSA, be prepared for a lot of paperwork. We applied for the farm ownership loan in March and finally completed all the steps and closed on the farm in August. It is a long process that requires an understanding, patient seller. Livestock and operating loans are not as tedious of



a process, but, depending on the location of your property, adding additional buildings to your property can require several steps such as an archaeological site check. We had to have an archaeological site check when we applied for a loan to build a barn because there were noted Native American findings within so many miles of our property. Even though the process can be exhaustive, the low interest rate and financing for those that cannot obtain it elsewhere, is well worth it. The typical FSA loan payment is made once a year; however, recently they have provided the option for automatic monthly bank draft. Contact your local FSA office for more information about these and other programs they offer.



Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is also part of the USDA. NRCS focuses on conservation improvements. Several different programs are offered through them, one being the Environmental Quality Incentives Plan (EQIP). According to the NRCS Kentucky website, EQIP “provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and



surface water, increased soil health and reduced soil erosion and sedimentation, improved or created wildlife habitat, and mitigation against increasing weather volatility” (2020). This program is based on conservation practices that the land owner is willing to implement on their farm. The EQIP program allows NRCS to provide financial assistance, which they refer to as co-investing, and mentoring to plan and implement improvements that will help improve the land and agricultural practices. There is an application process that is point based. Signup for the program is year round and at certain times throughout the year, NRCS ranks applications and begins a funding cycle in which applications are approved for the year. Field visits are made after an application has been received and NRCS helps the producer write a required conservation plan for their farm based on the resource concerns on the land and any that the applicant may have as well. EQIP can provide planning and financial assistance for measures such as:

- grazing management which includes fencing, water systems, planting pasture and prescribed grazing;
- nutrient and pest management which includes manure storage, nutrient application and management plans and crop and pest control;
- erosion control, including controlled grazing on waterways;
- and many other practices such as wildlife habitat enhancement, forest management, and energy conservation.



We applied for the EQIP program and were awarded co-investing from NRCS that enabled us to put up cross-fencing along our creek and pond, allowing us to add eight additional rotational fields to our property, three automatic waterers, and to plant a small field of gamma grass. All of these additions allow us to better conserve our pasture and our waterways. Creek beds and around ponds are still able to be grazed, but must be done intentionally and in moderation. It is important to understand that the amount of money awarded is based on each of the projects that you agree to implement on your farm, the more you plan to do, the more points toward your application. It is also important to understand that the money that is

❖ USEFUL WEBSITES ❖

www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/equip/

www.kyagr.com/marketing/documents/KYP_GrantApplication_Fillable.pdf

www.fsa.usda.gov/about-fsa/structure-and-organization/farm-loans/index



awarded is based on specific amounts for specific projects. For example, if putting up cross fencing, NRCS will pay a certain amount per foot no matter what the actual cost. Typically, you have to pay or make arrangements to pay for the products and/or services you are implementing before NRCS provides the funding; however, recently historically underfunded applicants have been given the opportunity to receive an advance for at least 50% of the amount being awarded. NRCS is very helpful and willing to come out at any time to walk over your farm and help write a conservation plan, whether you apply for funding or not. This is a free service.

Kentucky Proud offers 50% cost share funding for advertisement of KY Proud products, including livestock, through its Promotional Grant. We utilized this program to help pay for farm shirts and hats, farm decals for our vehicles, and a farm sign. It can also be used for television and radio advertisements, and web expenses. The nine

page Kentucky Proud Promotional Grant application can be found online and is accepted all year long. To receive the grant, you must be a KY Proud Member. Maximum grant amount is \$8000, with a \$36,000 lifetime maximum.

I have heard from several goat producers throughout the United States that say they were everything but laughed at by FSA and/or NRCS when they went to apply for loans for grants and informed them that they raised goats. This was not our case; however, we were the first goat producers in our county to apply for FSA loans. Don't give up! Be persistent.

Christina Morris, along with her husband, Jason, own and operate Blessed Acres Farm in Crofton, KY. With the help of their two teenage boys, Micah and Eli, they raise registered and commercial Kiko goats and Akbash livestock guardian dogs.



Become a Mentor

Remember your first couple of years in your sheep or goat operation? Ever have some nerve wracking experiences and times when you just really needed to talk to someone? Or, maybe you did have a mentor available that helped make the nerve wracking moments much easier to handle with just a simple phone call or email?



KSWPA and KGPA need your help! With the increasing population of goats and sheep in our state, there are lots of people who could benefit from your knowledge. Consider becoming a mentor so that we can continue to strengthen and grow our industries.

MENTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

A KSWPA and KGPA Mentor is a person who:

- ◆ has a passion for the sheep and goat industries in the nation, and more specifically in Kentucky
- ◆ be a person that is willing to help other producers become successful in their operations
- ◆ will give time and talent to new producers to help the new producer implement management practices into his/her operation that will ultimately benefit the new producer

Qualifications:

- ◆ Mentors must be a KSWPA or KGPA member
- ◆ Mentors must have been in the sheep or goat industries for a minimum of 5 years
- ◆ Mentors can have backgrounds in meat, dairy and fiber operations
- ◆ Mentors must be willing to provide contact information to new members seeking a mentor

To become a Mentor, complete the application below and mail to KSGDO, PO Box 4709 Frankfort, KY 40604, or go to www.kysheepandgoat.org/become-a-mentor



Mentorship Application

Name: _____ Farm Name: _____

County: _____ Years in Business: _____

Type of Operation (commercial, purebred, dairy, fiber, etc.): _____

Breeds: _____

Email: _____ Phone: (____) _____ - _____

Comments (anything else you want people to know): _____



The Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development

GUIDING YOU THROUGH BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

by Kati Bowman,

The Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development (KCARD) is a non-profit organization that facilitates agricultural and rural business development in Kentucky. We provide educational opportunities, technical assistance, and business support services to new and existing agribusinesses.

A major part of what we do is assist producers and agribusinesses in developing a business plan. Your business plan is the roadmap for your business and can help you reassess business ideas and enterprises each year. The business plan answers the key questions about the business: who, what, where, when, why, and



how. They help an owner of a business think through key elements essential to the business's success, capture those pieces in a written document, and help make the case for a business to receive financial support from potential investors, lenders, or grant sources. For existing businesses, a business plan may be specific to an expansion or new enterprise that the business wants to pursue. Most importantly, going through the process of planning forces business

owners and/or managers to think key questions.

You can find many business plan templates online, but KCARD has a Business Plan Development Guide we routinely use that lists all of the questions we run through when we work on a business plan. You can find that document here:

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b3e51bc9772ae7a7f66d05f/t/5ba93aeaec212d6aelacd1b8/1537817322553/2_Business+Plan+Development+Guide+FINAL.pdf

The most important thing to remember if you are starting to write a business plan: Just start. Many people starting a new business struggle to find the time to write the whole document at once when each new section poses a new question for them to have to consider. That's okay. Just start with one section and write it down. Then tackle another part of it and write it down. Keep going and you will make progress.

Another service KCARD offers is marketing plan assistance. A well-defined marketing plan helps

businesses make the most of their marketing dollars. KCARD can assist businesses develop a marketing plan that addresses specific goals of the business and provides marketing strategies that fit your targeted customer groups to achieve those goals, and update marketing plans and perform the necessary market research.

Your marketing plan can help you figure out how to reach your customers, including wholesale customers. Connecting with wholesale accounts can present a whole new challenge. Chefs and restaurateurs have varied hours based on food service times, institutions can present food safety and procurement challenges, and selling to a distributor can present lots of hoops with barcodes, food safety, and others. Luckily, KCARD has partnered with several other organizations to launch the Local Food Expansion Initiative. With this program, KCARD has hired a Local Food Coordinator to connect



farmers with buyers. To learn more about the Local Food Expansion Initiative, visit our blog post at <https://www.kcard.info/news2/localfoodexpansioninitiative>

KCARD's goal is to provide the best information and assistance to

our clients, no matter the stage of their business, and make sure that information is tailored to their needs. We are able to provide the majority of our services, including business plan development, at no cost to you as much of our work is supported through grants provided by USDA and the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board. Additional support is provided through our work with partners around the state and through fees charged for select client services. For more information on KCARD and how to develop a business plan, contact KCARD at 859-550-3972 or via email at kcard@kcard.info.

Kati Bowman, brings over 8 years of experience in direct to consumer marketing to her role as Marketing and Communications Specialist with KCARD. Kati provides marketing and communications assistance to businesses and organizations, assists with business planning and recordkeeping assistance, and provides support for KCARD's external communications.

The Kentucky Sheep and Goat Check-Off Program began

in 2010 and collects \$.50 for every \$100 worth of sheep and goats sold in the Commonwealth. According to Kentucky law, Check-Off funds must be used for the purpose of promoting the increased use and sale of sheep and goats.

TO DATE, CHECK-OFF HAS PROVIDED:

- **\$50,000 in New Farmer Recruitment loans** have been given to 25 new/beginning producers in Kentucky since 2012
- **\$50,000** given for special projects to help producers increase marketing efforts throughout the state since 2012
- **\$10,000** spent in promotion of sheep & goat products in 2018

KY Sheep & Goat Check-Off Sponsors the Try Something Different Tonight marketing campaign

- # of people who tasted lamb and goat products: **26,000**
- # of people who have learned about products and cooking techniques: **5 million**



To learn more about the Kentucky Sheep and Goat Check-off Program visit

www.kysheepandgoat.org/Check_Off.html

KY Sheep & Goat
CHECK-OFF



by *Joni Nelson*

The Kentucky State University (KYSU) Center for the Sustainability of Farms and Families (CSFF) works to develop resources to provide assistance to small-scale farms. In partnership with the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund (KADF) and the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board (KADB), KYSU is able to provide mini grants to small ruminant farmers in Kentucky. This program helps small scale farmers (\$1,000-\$250,000 annual sales) who want to improve their farming operations and who can demonstrate the ability to document their successes.



The maximum funds available per farm, household or business is \$5,000 per application with a lifetime maximum of \$10,000. Applicants may also be eligible for up to \$500 for educational trainings or materials. Educational assistance

has a lifetime limit of \$500. The program offers grants in six categories, including farmer education. Grant funds cannot be used for the following:

- Motorized vehicles such as trucks, tractors, walk-behinds
- Labor costs paid to the applicant or
- Consumables or expendables such as jars, livestock, feed, trees, or plant materials
- Partial funding or equipment greater than \$10,000. Up to \$10,000 on a single piece of equipment requires verified matching funds up to \$5,000

The categories associated with small ruminant are as follows:

Value-added products

This category includes refinement or change of raw agricultural products to a new product of increased market value, such as grains to bread, or milk to cheese, soap, and

lotions. No production-related equipment will be approved under this category.

Food-insecure area production

This category addresses one or more of the following: hydroponics, poultry/eggs, meats, small ruminants (excluding cattle and dairy cattle), or another unique project that will be evaluated on an individual basis. This category can approve some production-related equipment such as feeders, waters, kidding pens, etc. Applicant must produce or sale in one or more of the 77 eligible counties (see application).

Ruminant sales must be into a food-insecure county that enters the food market in Kentucky and not only stockyard sales.



Agroforestry

Agroforestry producers that are interested in better utilizing their forestlands are eligible to apply for this new category, which can provide production-related equipment and non-disposable supplies and materials related to the production, harvesting/collection, processing, storage and packaging of non-timber forest products, including silvopasture ruminant production (excluding cattle or dairy cattle production). Products may also include sap syrup, mushrooms, honey, medicinal herbs, black cohosh, goldenseal, fruits, and nuts.

Organic

This area can provide production-related implements, equipment, and supplies, including broadfork, walk-behind implements, hand tools, etc. Applicant must provide proof of organic status (exempt, transitional or fully certified).

Farmer education assistance

This includes workshops, conferences, online trainings, and reference materials. Allowable costs are lodging, mileage, and registration fees. Educational assistance has a lifetime limit of \$500.

On the application, please:

- Describe plans for improving your business. Please note that your budget plan should overestimate expected expenses.
- Describe who will do the work, when the work will be done, and the expected outcome.

Education assistance applications must be submitted at least 30-90 days in advance of the conference/workshop and you must secure your registration and lodging beforehand. If funded, receipts for your purchases must be submitted with detailed reports of the project results.

Applications are available online at www.kysu.edu/ssfg or you can request an application from:

- **Joni Nelson** joni.nelson@kysu.edu or (502) 783-6814
- **Kevin Gurtowski** kevin.gurtowski@kysu.edu or (606) 568-7406.



KYSU.EDU/AG | @KYSUAG

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability. Kentucky State University, University of Kentucky, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.

Small Ruminant Profit School

Successful goat and sheep operations come down to good management and production of consistent, healthy animals.



SRPS consists of 15 online modules and one on-site classes.

- Module 1: Welcome to SRPS
- Module 2: Industry Overview
- Module 3: Breeds of Goats & Sheep (including pros & cons for the most popular breeds in KY)
- Module 4: Market Trends & Niche Marketing
- Module 5: Facilities and Fencing
- Module 6: Guardian Animals
- Module 7: Health Management
- Module 8: Foot Care and Hoof Trimming (accompanied by an on-site workshop)
- Module 9: Nutrition (on-site class at the KSU Research Farm)
- Module 10: Quality Assurance
- Module 11: Parasite Management
- Module 12: Reproduction, Genetics & Selection, Birthing Difficulties, and Care of Newborns
- Module 13: Record Keeping
- Module 14: Mating Systems
- Module 15: Annual Production Plans

Plus:

- FAMACHA Training
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- Numerous additional resources on rotational grazing, pasture management, handling, and much more!

Use the Small Scale Farm grant to cover your registration costs!"

With SRPS, you will have access to video modules, as well as a treasure trove of downloadable materials. Save and/or print the materials that you need.

- **For current KGPA/KSWPA members, \$75.**
- **For non-members of KGPA/KSPWA, \$105.** (You will receive a membership to either KGPA or KSWPA with your registration.)

Register at www.kysheepandgoat.org/srps.html



Collaboration between Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office, Kentucky Agriculture Development Fund, University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, and the ky Department of Agriculture.



Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program

Cost share dollars to agricultural producers

The Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program (TAEP) was established in 2005 to provide cost share dollars to agricultural producers for the purpose of making long-term investments on Tennessee farms and in rural communities. Participation allows producers to maximize farm profits, adapt to changing market situations, improve operation safety, increase farm efficiency, and make a positive economic impact in their communities. The details for the 2020-2021 year can be picked up at any local Tennessee Extension office or online at <http://tn.gov/taep>. Application is typically available on Oct 1st and only open for a few days, so be sure and get with your local agent for details.

Items of particular interest to most small ruminant farmers are:

- Genetics: Bucks, Rams, Semen, Semen Tanks, BSE and Preg Exams.
- Hay Equipment: Hay mower, Mower-Conditioner, Hay Tedder, Hay Rake, Hay Baler.
- Livestock Equipment: Scales, Feeders, EID Equipment, Feed Bin, Hay Unroller, Pasture Sprayer, Sheep Shear, Fitting Stand, Ultrasound, Alleyway, Corral Panels, Crowding/sweep Tub, Head gate, Loading chute, Tilt Table.



- Working Facility Cover and Permanent Working Pen.

Following are several anticipated changes for the upcoming 2020-21 TAEP Program which may pertain most to Small Ruminant producers.

- Updated University of Tennessee Agri-Industry Modeling & Analysis Group shows that each TAEP dollar generates \$6.09 in local communities
- October 1 – 7, 2020 – 1 week application period – TAEP Online or mail accepted
- April 1, 2021 – Livestock Equipment – Reimbursement deadline
- June 1, 2021 – Genetics – Reimbursement deadline
 - Prepaid AI Technician fees for August, 2021 will be accepted as it is understood that many producers breed back their herds in August.

- Genetics producers should submit pre-paid AI Technician invoice for the anticipated number of females to be bred.
- TAEP may verify AI breeding record of actual AI breeding fees prior to reimbursement.
- Synchronization, supplies, and frozen semen, bucks or rams must be purchased prior to June 1, 2021.

- August 1, 2021 – Hay Storage, Working Facility, Livestock Solutions, Dairy Solutions, Herd Health, Row Crop Solutions, Poultry Grower, and Producer Diversification – Reimbursement deadline
- Only one cost-share program request will be received (due to anticipated demand and budget limitations, 1st and 2nd priority selections were removed)
- Sheep/Goat Automatic Milk Feeding Machine is added as an eligible item to the Livestock Equipment program
- Hay Storage program is added back for 2020-21 – Hay Storage and Hay Equipment will be offered in alternating years going forward



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For More Information Contact:
Craig Taylor, (859) 771-0146 or Sara Evans, (859) 987-9945

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tales from Kentucky Sheep & Fiber



Kentucky Natural Fiber Center Goes Virtu-WOOL

by Sarabeth Parido

In these times of limited public gatherings, the challenges facing a new Fiber Center project have proved steep, but not impossible. Our Kentucky Natural Fiber Center team has been planning and orchestrating virtual fiber events for our producers and patrons.

In June, we hosted our first online fleece contest and sale. Not knowing exactly what to expect, since buying fleeces is such a hands on activity, we were delighted to intake over 75 fleeces. Our guest judge, Hannah Nilsson, carefully went through each fleece, giving feedback and helpful advice for each producer on each fleece. We saw many first time producers

of sheep and alpaca, who had never entered their fleeces into a contest before. Several of them walked away with ribbons and a new excitement for their fiber production.

Each fleece was professionally photographed and put online. We hosted a live event on social media to showcase each fleece, read the comments from the judge and talked about each farm and producer. This was viewed over 800 times on the first day. Since our patrons couldn't feel each fleece themselves or judge the staple length and quality, we made sure to give a thorough description of the fleeces and measure the staple length of each one. In the first 24 hours of posting our video, we had

sold over \$1000 worth of fleeces for our producers. Each producer was also given copies of their photographs to use in their own marketing, with many of our producers commenting that it has increased their sales since the event aired.

We are planning on other virtual events happening throughout the fall and hope to host in person events as soon as safely possible. Our most recent event was a mail in skein contest and fleece sale that was held on September 12th.

Sarabeth Parido, is the Director of the Kentucky Sheep and Fiber Festival and The Kentucky Fiber Trail. She raises her own small flock of sheep in Clark County, Kentucky along with her husband and four sons.

*These guidelines represent one of 11 investment areas within the **County Agricultural Investment Program (CAIP)** to provide Kentucky agricultural producers cost-share assistance on practices that increase net farm income and opportunities to try new/innovative technologies or systems that improve farm efficiency and productivity.*

Funded participants shall adhere to all local, state, and federal rules and regulations.

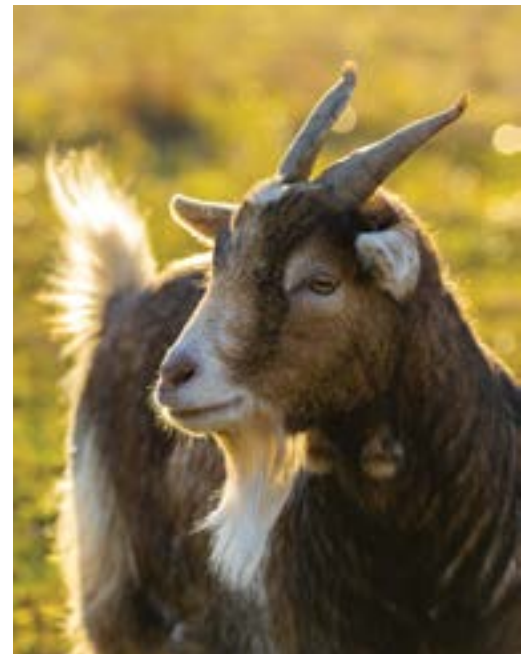
A. Goat, Sheep Production

Prerequisites:

- **"1. Genetics"**
 - **All breeding males** must be at least six months of age, in good health, have all required health papers and be up-to-date on their CDT vaccinations. Breeding males must be registered full bloods or purebreds with permanent identification.
 - **Ownership of breeding males** must be maintained for a minimum of two (2) successive breeding seasons. *See exceptions for deviations from this rule.*
 - **Breeding females** need not be registered, but should have permanent identification.
 - **Ownership of breeding females** must be maintained for two (2) years. *See exceptions for deviations from this rule.*
 - **All breeding males** purchased through this program are encouraged to have a Breeding Soundness Evaluation (BSE) – within the last six months; **however it is not a requirement** prior to receiving cost-share funds.
- **"2. Handling"**
Minimum herd/flock size to qualify for handling equipment cost-share: 20

Eligible Cost-share Items:

1. **Genetics**
 - a. Male Breeding Stock
 - b. Purchase of bucks, rams
 - c. Semen from registered meat or dairy bucks
 - d. Female Breeding Stock – purchase of does, ewes
 - e. Artificial insemination (AI) procedure
 - f. Embryo transfer work
 - g. Herd pregnancy checks and DNA tests
2. **Handling**
 - a. Commercial head gate
 - b. Chutes - working, holding, loading, etc.
 - c. Tilt table or sheep sling



- d. Goat Tote
- e. Crowding tub and gate
- f. Panels and Gates and materials for pens
- g. Kidding Pens/Lambing jugs/pens
- h. Footbath; Foot trimmers
- i. Wool/hair clippers/shears
- j. Drench gun and reservoir
- k. Small livestock scales
- l. Feeders: Bunk or creep feeders
- m. Forage mixers, feedways, feeding equipment systems
- n. Feed ingredient and complete diet sampling equipment and analysis
- o. Animal waste handling and distribution equipment (excluding motorized vehicles) or custom services
- p. Filter fabric pads for heavy use areas
- q. Cooling fans / ventilation equipment
- r. FAMACHA chart: to measure anemia
- s. Whole herd disease diagnostic testing (live animals only)
- t. Castration tools, including banders
- u. Vaccines
- v. Microscopes, flotation solutions, slides/covers for parasite management
- w. Ear tagging and tattoo equipment
- x. Cost of having a Nutrient Management Plan or Comprehensive Nutrient Mangement Plan developed

3. Milk Production

- a. Milking equipment
 - b. Cooling and raw milk storage equipment
 - c. Pasteurization equipment
 - d. Animal waste handling and distribution equipment (excluding motorized vehicles) or custom services
4. Cost of participation in a master-level agricultural education program (e.g. Small Ruminant Profit School, etc.)
5. Biosecurity signage

Exceptions:

- **Buyer/Seller Clause:** A producer shall not participate as a buyer and seller (of that sex of breeding livestock) within the same program year.
Meaning – if one producer sells rams to producers that participate in CAIP, they shall not receive cost-share on the purchase of rams within the same program year – this statement also applies to female breeding stock.



- **Emergency Early Release Clause** – The local program administrator shall reserve the right to approve an early release, if it is determined that an animal, due to physical or disposition problems, is no longer considered sound for breeding purposes. The local program administrator can require the animal to undergo an examination by a licensed veterinarian to assist in determination.
- **Genetic Diversification Clause** – In the event that a producer retains female offspring sired by the ram for use as breeding stock, the ram may be sold, but **MUST** be replaced by another ram of equal or greater value. The replacement animal is not eligible for cost-share funds.

Exclusions:

- Animals in the family *Cervidae*, a.k.a. cervids (e.g. white-tail deer, etc.), are not eligible for cost-share under these guidelines.
- The intent of genetics investments is to aid producers in bringing superior genetics into their herd.

Cost-share shall not be provided for animals traded or sold between producers who have co-mingled herds or share sires. This includes the use of a third party to buy/sell the same animals from the co-mingled herd.



Photos by Kim Goodling of Vermont Grand View Farm



BioWorma®: Worm-killing fungus

by Susan Schoenian

BioWorma® is a relatively new feed product that contains a worm-killing fungus: *Duddingtonia flagrans*. When fed to livestock, the fungus passes through the animal's digestive system and ends up in the feces, where it traps and kills roundworm larvae. By targeting worm larvae, BioWorma® reduces pasture infectivity. It is effective against various roundworm species and works in any grazing animal. It is a biological method of worm control, with no known adverse effects in the animal or environment.

To get the desired results, it is recommended that BioWorma® be fed daily to livestock when the environmental conditions are conducive to larvae development, e.g. over 40°F. The most susceptible livestock should be targeted for feeding. In small ruminants, these include young animals (3 to 24 months) and periparturient females (last month of pregnancy and while producing milk).

Two BioWorma® products are available for purchase: 1) Bio-Worma® and 2) Livamol® with BioWorma®. BioWorma® is a feed additive that contains 34 percent fungus. It is meant to be mixed into large batches of feed, as its dosage is only 0.1 ounces per hundred weight of animal. Livamol® with BioWorma® is a feed supplement that contains 2.2 percent fungus. It is meant to be mixed into other feeds or supplements. The dosage is 1.6 ounces per hundred weight of animal.

For small producers, the Livamol® product is probably the better option, as it is a ready-to-use product, whereas BioWorma® needs to be blended into a feed. In addition, Livamol® is the only product that producers can directly purchase. The EPA limits the purchase of BioWorma® to veterinarians and feed manufacturers (with EPA certification). Premier 1 Supplies (of Iowa) is one of the major suppliers of BioWorma® to the US market. Since Premier has veterinarians on staff, it is now able to sell BioWorma®.

Many years of research went into the development of BioWorma® and

similar fungi. BioWorma® products are marketed by an Australian company (International Animal Health) and became available to US producers last spring (2019). US research (with BioWorma®) is just beginning. The research isn't aimed at proving the efficacy of BioWorma® so much as determining if BioWorma® can produce similar results if it is fed less often, e.g. every other day or for two weeks every month. There is also interest in incorporating BioWorma® into a mineral product, so that animals could self-feed. The goal of proposed research is to reduce the cost and labor associated with feeding BioWorma®. Research is needed before any of these practices can be recommended.

Watch a webinar (YouTube video) on BioWorma® at <https://youtu.be/i-JmxoytzDc>.

Susan Schoenian, *Sheep & Goat Specialist* University of Maryland Extension - sschoen@umd.edu

Breaking the Parasite Cycle

with BioWorma®

by Kim Gooding

One topic that will often launch into passionate discussions among sheep people is parasite management. I have met hardcore sheep people who scoff at using natural means to battle parasites in ruminants. They question the effectiveness of various herbal or garlic based remedies and rely heavily on available anthelmintics in treating parasite infestations. I have also met shepherds who swear by natural remedies and their effectiveness. On my farm, I am constantly walking a careful line between effectively treating without creating a resistance to medications in the parasite population and finding natural means to reduce the parasite burden in my flock. I spend much of my grazing season, doing intensive rotational grazing, checking mucous membranes and taking routine fecal samples to monitor the status of my flock.

This summer I have made a concentrated effort to break the parasite cycle in my fields by using Livamol with BioWorma®, a product developed and highly researched in Australia. BioWorma® contains *Duddingtonia flagrans*, a fungus which when ingested by ruminants, is passed through their rumen and into their manure. The fungus then consumes parasite larvae in the manure, therefore reducing the number of nematodes released into the field. (www.bioworma.com)

BioWorma® has undergone 20

years of research in a variety of ruminants including horses, cows, sheep, and goats. Studies show that *Duddingtonia flagrans* can significantly reduce nematode larvae on sheep pasture by 68%. With resistance to chemical dewormers becoming more and more widespread, this product has hit the market at a critical time for shepherds.

Steps Taken

Per the label instructions, I dewormed all of our sheep with an effective anthelmintic prior to being put on pasture this spring. I then began daily feeding Livamol with BioWorma® per label dosing. I mixed the BioWorma® with Chaffhaye, a fermented alfalfa product which my sheep love. With the first few feedings, I had to feed quite a bit of Chaffhaye to make it palatable to the sheep. Slowly, I began reducing the amount of Chaffhaye as they adjusted to the flavor of the BioWorma®. The sheep were then put out on clean pasture that had not been grazed in a year.

I have continued this routine of feeding BioWorma® daily in combination with rotational grazing, moving the flock to new pasture every two days. I have done fecal sample tests monthly, as well as conducted body scoring and FAMACHA checks periodically to monitor the flock health.

Results of BioWorma®

As a result of feeding BioWorma® I have seen drastic changes in my



flock compared to previous years.

1. Per fecal sample testing, I have seen a tremendous reduction in overall parasite loads in our flock compared to previous years. Fecal test results were interesting. Many of the sheep showed zero parasite eggs or only a few, putting them into a low risk category. I have only needed to treat a few sheep. Testing showed that the only sheep who carry a high load are lambs which were bottle fed. Though these lambs were given mom's colostrum at birth, they were bottle fed using a manufactured milk replacer. I feel this directly impacts their immune system and their ability to fight parasites. I also needed to treat a ram that I purchased from another farm from a different geographical region. Again, I felt this logical, as he is being introduced to new parasites than what he is used to.
2. My breeding ewes regained their body condition in record time after weaning. They are going into breeding season in top body condition.
3. Our lamb growth has far exceeded growth in previous years.

Pros & Cons to Using BioWorma®

Pros:

- Healthier sheep
- Less reliance on chemical dewormers
- Less chance of building resistance to anthelmintics
- Higher lamb growth
- Less stress on the shepherd

Cons:

- Expensive to use
- Must be sure to continually have BioWorma® on hand
- Must be able to feed daily being careful to dose properly

Clearly, the pros stack up nicely in favor of using BioWorma®. The only con which will make it prohibitive to many, is the cost. Thus far, I have spent a total of \$1,192 for Livamol with BioWorma® and \$90 for Chaffhaye. At first, I was feeding it to a flock of 33 sheep which included 17 lambs. Since the end of June, I have been feeding it to 13 sheep consistently. I suspect I will end up spending about \$1,800-\$2,000 on this project before grazing season ends.

Would I use it again? Yes, definitely, I plan to use Livamol with BioWorma® on a two year rotation. In consulting with my vet, she feels that if I use it two years in a row, it will drastically reduce the parasite burden in my fields.

Kim Goodling is shepherdess to a flock of Gotland sheep at Vermont Grand View Farm.

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KYSHEEPANDGOAT.ORG





WHAT LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE SHOULD YOU EXPECT FROM YOUR MEAT GOATS?

by Dr. Ken Andries,
*Kentucky State University College of
Agriculture, Communities, and the
Environment*

Every livestock producer needs to be selecting for performance in their herds, but what is a realistic performance goals for meat goats? There is a long history of performance data collection and use in other livestock species. The data is generally collected and controlled by breed associations and national industry groups, but are lacking in the meat goats.

In meat goat production, there has not been a national performance testing program and the breed associations have not adapted performance data

collection as seen in beef cattle. As a result, there is little information on average meat goat performance available to producers.

Kentucky State University has offered an on-farm performance testing program for 15 years now. In this program, producers collect birth to weaning performance data in their herd. Producers submit these data for calculations of adjusted weights and performance summaries. Through this process, we developed a large, birth to weaning, performance dataset for meat goats for birth to weaning performance. The data include information on average litter size at birth and weaning; and dam weight at weaning. The dataset now contains over 15,000 kidding

records from over 100 herds in 10 states and Canada. The data also has both purebred and commercial herds including Boer, Kiko, Savana, Spanish breeds, and their crosses.

Average performance data for 5 years, 2014 to 2019, and the total combined dataset averages are presented in the tables below. **Table 1** shows the average birth to weaning performances for kids. **Table 2** shows dam performance data including average body weight at weaning, and litter size at birth and weaning.

These averages are good starting points when thinking about goal setting and expectations. Your goal should be to have above average performance from your kids. Therefore, when setting

Year	Number	BWT	WNWT	ADG	90 d wt.	ADJ WNWT
2014	961	7.4	37.05	0.34	37.46	42.29
2015	2,215	7.5	42.17	0.34	38.28	42.78
2016	601	7.1	40.39	0.36	39.93	45.58
2017	473	7.63	45.29	0.41	44.66	50.35
2018	900	7.76	43.49	0.39	42.73	48.77
2019	938	7.74	56.93	0.41	44.48	50.65
Combined	15,055	7.54	40.32	0.35	39.18	44.41

^a All weights are in pounds, BWT= Birth weight, WNWT – Weaning Weight, ADG – Average daily Gain, ADJ WNWT = Adjusted weaning weight.

Year	Number	# Born	BWT	# Wean	WNWT	90 d wt.	ADJ WNWT	Dam wt.	Efficiency Ratio
2014	751	1.93	13.9	1.66	63.77	65.6	73.88	104.34	61.47
2015	1,202	1.81	13.0	1.69	70.05	63.88	71.40	106.97	71.61
2016	252	1.87	13.6	1.66	70.09	70.71	80.7	106.44	68.73
2017	208	1.78	13.2	1.64	71.58	71.68	79.85	112.16	65.00
2018	445	1.98	14.95	1.81	77.15	75.45	86.06	112.33	68.36
2019	490	1.94	14.5	1.76	76.83	77.82	88.33	108.33	67.43
Comb.	8,285	1.87	13.8	1.61	66.48	66.05	74.78	104.35	63.84

^a All weights are in pounds, BWT = Birth weight, WNWT = Weaning Weight, ADJ WNWT = Adjusted weaning weight. Birth through weaning weights are total litter weights. Efficiency ratio is the % of doe body weight that was weaned (WNWT/Dam wt. * 100).

goals, we recommend using the overall combined data as a starting point. For instance, litter size is important for profitability in meat goats, but milking and mothering ability have to match the litter size as well. Measurements on these milking ability and others, such as structural correctness and temperament, are not captured in the dataset. Be aware of these limitations when making culling and selection decisions in your herd.

Sire data and proper sire selection is critical to advancing progeny performance in your herd. You need to look for sires that have performance that will move your herd in the direction you desire. By using good data to make selection and culling decisions on your herd, you can improve performance within your management. Knowing the performance of your herd, obtain data on sires you are considering and

compare them to insure they will move your herd in the right direction. But be aware that individual performance is not easy to directly compare between herds. This is due to management differences between the herds. However, any data is better than no data.

I believe a commercial meat goat herd in Kentucky and surrounding states can reach a reasonable production level. A litter size at birth of between 1.9 and 2.0 are possible and we can wean 1.7 to 1.9 kids per doe. We should also be able to have actual weaning weights between 40 and 60 pounds at 90 days without excessive feeding cost, if the management is correct. While this is at the upper end or slightly above the averages, they are well within reason for our environment without excessive feeding. This is where we believe producers need to be profitable based on budgets we have worked with.

I hope everyone's kidding and weaning went well and I hope you collected data that can help you make decisions in the coming breeding season. We can make progress through the use of the tools we have, and performance data is one that is critical to long term success in meat goat production.

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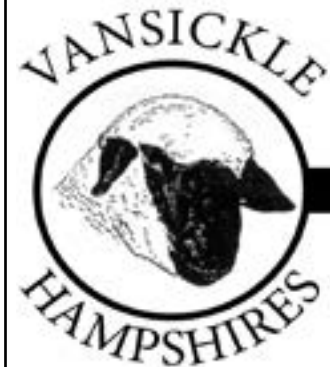
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