

Tips and Tricks to Producing Promising Pygmy Goats



Image courtesy of Z Bar Z Farm
Image is cropped



By Jasmine Hill

Edited by Laurie Zeise, Clackamas County 4-H Pygmy Goat Superintendent
and Jan Williams, Clackamas County 4-H Youth Development Faculty

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Purpose of this packet.

The purpose of this packet is to provide basic information to 4-H members and other interested parties about pygmy goats. Many members, especially those just beginning, are unsure of where to start or what to learn in regards to a pygmy goat 4-H project. This packet discusses different colors, diseases, and specifics related to the project. While this packet is by no means all-inclusive of what is required to raise pygmy goats, it is a good starting point.

This packet will encompass topics such as disease and treatment, types, and other related information that will work to better the reader's understanding of their project. The primary goal is to help facilitate a more confident and prepared member that will continue to develop skills and greater personal and project growth in their desired project area.

This packet was developed in 2020 for families beginning in the pygmy goat project area.

Common Terminology

1. Agouti: Alternations between dark and light coloration on each hair shaft
2. Blind teat: Teat with no end opening
3. Buck: Uncasterated male goat
4. Doe: Female goat
5. Disbudding: Horn removal; Done as kid
6. Chine: Area along spine between loin and shoulder blades
7. Cobby: Stocky; Often used to say compact
8. Cow hocked: Hocks turn in towards each other when standing or walking
9. Cull: Removing an animal from your herd due to lack of need for that animal in program
10. Kid: Baby goat
11. Kidding: Birthing process of goats
12. Over Conditioned: Too much fat present on body
13. Purebreed: Goat with only one breed in bloodline
14. Weaning: Removal of kid(s) from the doe to keep from nursing
15. Wether: Castrated male goat
16. Withers: Point of shoulder blades coming together on the back
17. Yearling: A goat that is one year old but under two years old and has not kidded



Image courtesy Z Bar Z
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Parts of a Pygmy Goat

Knowing the parts of your animal is very important inside and outside the show ring. In the show ring, it is common to be asked to locate certain physiological features on the animal by the judge to showcase your knowledge. Outside the showing it can help with animal husbandry, injury and disease identification, and much more. Below is a diagram to help you learn your goat's physiological parts.

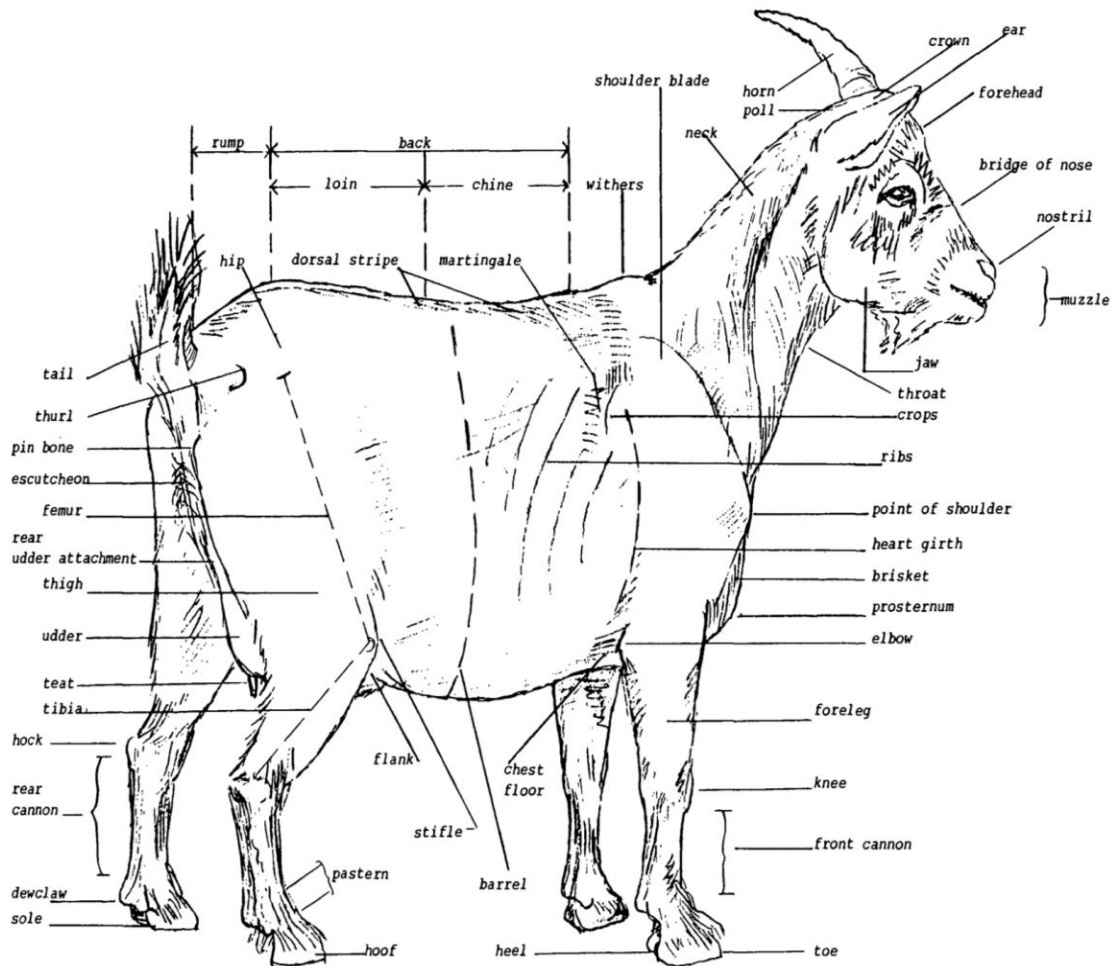


Image courtesy of Oregon State University Extension Service
Image is cropped and stretched

Common Diseases and Treatments

In the table below are some listed common diseases and ailments found in Pygmy goats as well as a handful of pertinent details in each column. This list is far from all-inclusive and is just a sampling of what can be found, both of diseases/ailments and in the following columns. In columns two through five are common details related to that disease/ailment.

Disease	Symptoms	Treatment	Prevention	Other Details
Caprine Arthritis Encephalitis (CAE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Joint swelling -Atrophied muscles -Seizures -Hindquarter weakness -Death 	-There is no treatment for CAE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Test goats for CAE -Do not bring untested goats onto farm -Sporadic testing of your herd -Cull goats with CAE. 	-It's a retrovirus
Caseous Lymphadenitis (CL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Abscesses on lymph nodes -Cheese-like consistency in puss -If internal, abscesses on organs and lymph nodes -Fever 	-There is no treatment for CL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Vaccination -Do not bring untested goats onto farm -Sporadic testing of your own herd -Cull goats with CL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -There are two forms of this, the internal form and the external form -It is caused by a bacteria and can survive in the soil
Strongyle worms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Anemia -Lethargy -Weight loss -Paleness in gums and inside 	-Deworm according to dewormer instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Feed animals in feeders and not directly on the ground -Rotate goats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -It's an internal parasite -In some cases it may be beneficial to

	of eyelids		between pastures -Switch dewormers sporadically to prevent resistance	increase the animal's protein intake to help get their weight back up
Chlamydiosis	-Weak kids -Stillbirths -Abortion -Retained placenta -Sometimes polyarthritis and conjunctivitis	-Antibiotics at discretion of veterinarian	-Herd testing -Require recent testing of other goats before coming to your farm and herd	-This CAN spread to humans
Johne's Disease	-Wasting -Eating but gaining no weight -Feces that is clumpy -Diarrhea in end stage	-No treatment	-Cull infected goats immediately -Improved biosecurity and regular testing of animals	-Affects small intestine -Can be spread sexually, through milk, placenta, feces, and affected grazing areas

***DISCLAIMER:** Authors are not veterinarians and only provide this information as a personal reference. They are not responsible for outcomes. Consult a veterinarian for veterinary advice and treatment.*

Colors

There is only one breed of pygmy goat but there are several color varieties and patterns that are accepted by the National Pygmy Goat Association (NPGA), the main registration body for pygmies. Below are some photos and color descriptions of those accepted varieties and patterns. Please note spots are also permitted, though not shown here as they are not a pattern or variety.

Caramel Patterns



Image courtesy of Z Bar Z Farm
Image is cropped

- Caramel patterned goats range in color from white or caramel hairs mixed in with a white top coat, which causes it to look white to cream to tan in shade.
- There are two variations of this pattern, caramel with black markings or caramel with brown markings.
 - These markings appear on the face, sides, socks on the rear legs, along their spine, and the martingale is accented in the marking color of the animal.
- The black or brown color markings must reach all the way into their undercoat and be the same throughout.
- They must have vertical stripes on the front of their socks that are identical in color to their bodily top coat.

Agouti Patterns



Image courtesy of CB Pygmies

- The leg colorings on all agouti goats are darker than the color of their main body color while the coloring of their muzzle, poll, around their eyes, and their ears are often mixed with white hairs along with their body color.
 - The white in these areas tend to be heavier in presence.
- There are three variations of this pattern: Black agouti, grey agouti, and brown agouti.
- With the agouti coloring white hairs are mixed with the main body color throughout the goat with some goats looking more grizzled in appearance due to heavier white hair presence.
- Agouti is the alternating color pattern of dark-light-dark on the hair shafts.

Black Patterns



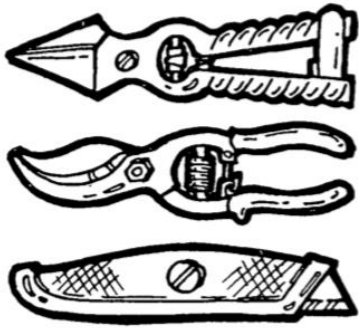
Image courtesy of Z Bar Z Farm
Image is cropped

- There are two variations of this pattern: Black and solid black.
- Black animals have muzzles, polls, and areas around the eyes and ears that are colored white. The tail may also be white.
- Solid black animals have no white colorings.
- The stockings on these animals are solid in color with either color variety.

Grooming and Trimming

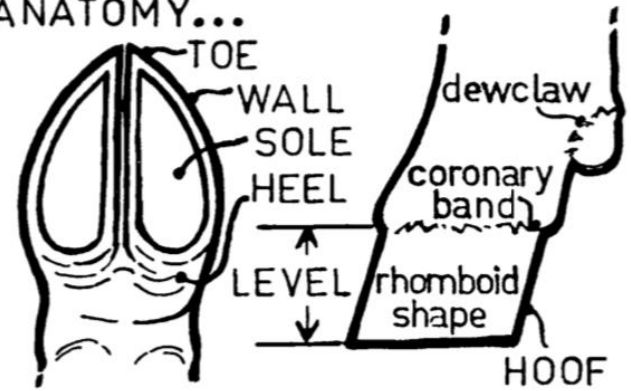
The hooves of your animal are the foundation on which they stand. When the foundation is strong, so is your animal. When the foundation is weak, so is your animal. Trimming hooves can be tricky for first time goat owners, however. It is important for them to know that it is just like trimming your fingernails. As long as you are mindful and not catching their quick, it is painless. For this activity you will need hoof trimmers, also called foot shearers, and blood stop in case you catch their quick. It is normal for the goat to kick during this or try to pull away when grabbing a back leg, but don't worry, this is just their natural instinct as they are prey animals. Below is a diagram on what the hooves should look like and how to trim your goat's hooves.

TOOLS...



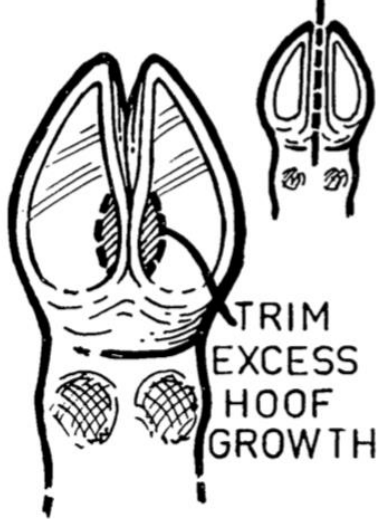
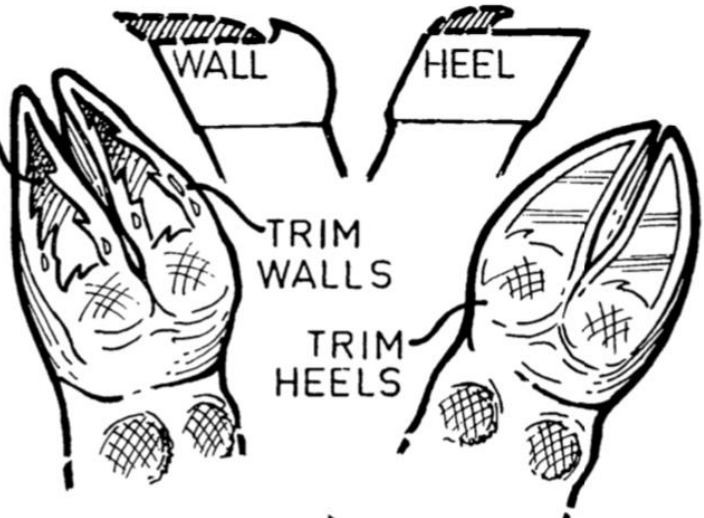
foot rot shears
or
pruning shears
and
utility
knife

ANATOMY...



OVERGROWN

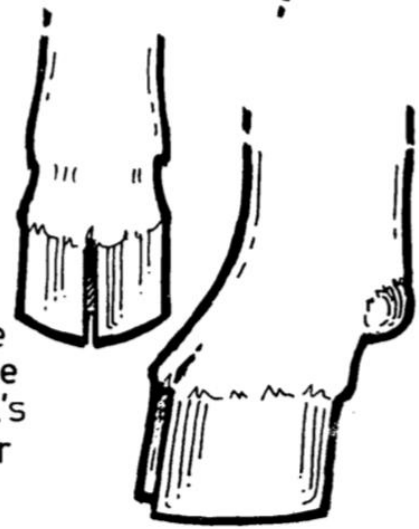
DIG
OUT
DIRT



TRIM
EXCESS
HOOF
GROWTH

* if the hoofs
are trimmed
regularly
the job is
much easier

* if the goat
bleeds use some
iodine and make
sure the animal's
tetanus booster
is up to date



PROPER TRIM

Image courtesy of Oregon State University Extension Service
Image is cropped

Grooming

Unlike many goat breeds, Pygmy goats are not clipped for show. They are, however, trimmed and brushed with a variety of brushes to help smooth down their coat and make them more appealing to the eye. Any soft bristled brush will do. Trimming helps to show the goat's proper conformation. Some also use wet wipes on the coat to give them a sleek appearance by running the wet wipe over the hair. Goats are also bathed to help give their hair an appealing shine and make them cleaner overall.



Image courtesy of Z Bar Z Farm
Image is cropped

Fast Facts

- When showing Pygmy goat bucks you do not have their beard or the extra hair they grow along their shoulders trimmed as you do with other breeds.
- Measurements are very serious in the Pygmy goat world and special tools are used to measure the animals. A doe over 12 months of age must have cannon bone lengths of at least $2 \frac{7}{8}$ inches but no more than $4 \frac{1}{2}$ inches. Their height at their withers must be at least 16 inches but no more than $22 \frac{3}{8}$ inches.
- When measuring these goats there is a margin of error of $\frac{1}{8}$ inch that is considered permissible.
- Even though pygmy goats may look pregnant due to their bulging bellies, there is a good chance they are not. That is where their fat is stored. They are a naturally short and cobby breed, which is why they may *appear* pregnant.
- A part of the breed scorecard for show wethers is being friendly and cooperative. You can be deducted points if your wether has a bad temperament or is unmanageable in the show ring.
- In many species, a judge does not have to be certified to judge that animal at a breed show, however, to judge a Pygmy goat show sponsored by the NPGA the judge must be licensed with the NPGA.
- The pulse rate for a Pygmy goat is 60 to 80 beats per minute.
- Some Pygmy goats are able to start reproducing at as young as four months of age.
- Despite their small stature, pygmy goats can have four live kids from one pregnancy.
- Pygmy goats are the smallest form of livestock and are easily housed in large backyards since their acreage need is much smaller than that of a “normal” sized goat. They are great for smaller 4-H members just starting out and very economical.

Getting Ready For the Clackamas County Fair

The Clackamas County Fair is in August. Information pertaining to the show can be found in the Clackamas County Fair book. Rules are subject to change and should be checked in the fair book. It is the responsibility of the member to stay up-to-date on these rules. Below is information pertaining to fair:

General Information

- Members are expected to set-up, paint, and decorate their pen areas.
- Members **MUST** participate in showmanship.
- Good sportsmanship and herdsmanship are strongly emphasized.
- Members are expected to care for animals themselves, including washing, feeding, and caring for the animal, both at home and at fair.
 - Club members or members from another club enrolled in 4-H may help with these tasks but the sole responsibility falls on the member.
- Only the Pygmy goat superintendent may check-in goats to the fair.
- **MUST HAVE scrapie identification in accordance with the USDA Scrapie Eradication Program and you (or your farm) must be enrolled in the program.**
 - Tattoos and/or microchips are permissible as identification.

Resources

1. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/bagsgroove/5748177484/in/photolist-9KWUUm-tPR7uf-7zc885-545P7H-5jeLVf-5nLzMo-vskvCp-asuxcb-asrTDn-5XehdE-kDdAe7-7wvuzk-LsxhpC-3wXm18-bx8Dg5-5Xa3H8-5Xa3Qt-6NNBLE-fdfgsX-5165Ph-bxZuoy-AAomC1-4RqPgU-5YZufH-r2WgaS-6w5EYe-5WeJQp-cY7HrU-7BtchA-626xJG-jMPPk-59rgQt-4iRSZs-51ea11-6qs5of-519YH6-bL3kPZ-NBwb-52qrZ5-5nLzY9-7wvuGe-4RZJxH-bL3146-79y9sf-6sfX5Z-AzbopK-dq7X9u-6Ea7i9-22S7wLg-6qs57S>
2. <https://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/downloads/8w32r575j>
3. <https://www.tractorsupply.com/tsc/cms/life-out-here/the-barn/animal-medication-for-goats/goat-health-conditions-and-caprine-arthritis-encephalitis>
4. <https://www.texvetpets.org/article/caseous-lymphadenitis/>
5. <https://www.tennesseeameatgoats.com/articles2/caseouslymphadenitis.html>
6. <https://www.merckvetmanual.com/generalized-conditions/chlamydiosis/overview-of-chlamydiosis>
7. <https://www.merckvetmanual.com/generalized-conditions/chlamydiosis/overview-of-chlamydiosis>
8. <https://www.farmhealthonline.com/US/disease-management/goat-diseases/johnes-disease-in-goats/>
9. <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/nvap/NVAP-Reference-Guide/Control-and-Eradication/Johnes-Disease>
10. https://www.npga-pygmy.com/resources/conformation/color_chart.asp
11. https://www.npga-pygmy.com/resources/conformation/color_samples.asp
12. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/glenbowman/6925596936/in/photolist-5nLA6w-gnDEvR-4EjG9f-Eu8A6V-9uA2fM-21MK6DE-HVEMVK-519Y3i-bLUahR-5hz221-5Gb8r8-cPqQjE-AAv6D-EkUe6t-bLU9X6-5nGjLD-2atfvYb-csriyb-PWRCni-2dZtue-bxZuFJ-bxZuy7-bxZuRo-anHcBG-AAAnTCZ-36BxFx-4JvK9o-fdfiQc-51ebCE-fduCfU-6W2R5h-2aGeD1d-PWRB7x-csqi55-ErP3z7-cY7xJ1-9uD1q5-51eb77-6pdS7M-d5qBX7-PWRzbt-anHcBS-27DPjTt-csridf-rmXyuf-27Wjfqq-XPhoZ-2aWsybm-csriPG-2hkzUS4>
13. <http://www.cbpygmies.com/senior-does.html>
14. <http://www.npga-pygmy.com/resources/conformation/BREED%20STANDARD%20JUNE%202015.pdf>
15. <http://www.npga-pygmy.com/resources/conformation/GUIDELINES%20FOR%20JUDGING%20PYGMY%20GOAT%20WETHERS.pdf>
16. <https://www.npga-pygmy.com/contacts/judges.asp>
17. https://www.npga-pygmy.com/resources/health/normal_values.asp

4-H Reference Books:

1. Goat Resource Handbook by The Ohio State University Extension

Note: These books are available to check-out or purchase from the Clackamas County 4-H Extension Office in Oregon City.