Introduction:
Small ruminants, Camelids & Deer

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This week

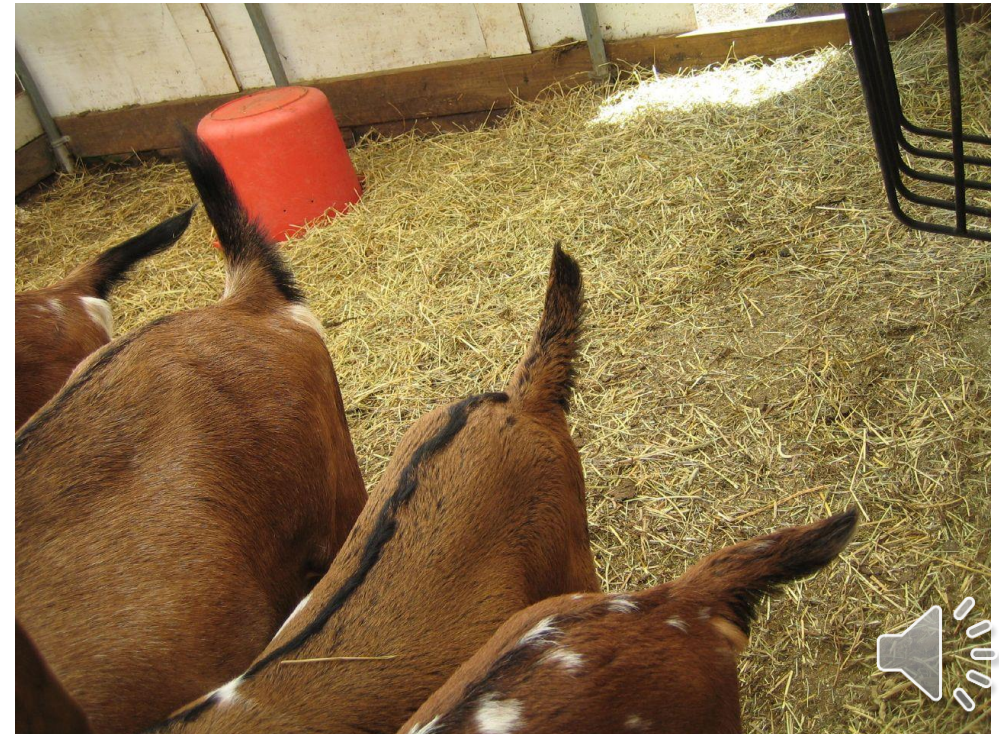- Introduction to small ruminants
- Camelids
- Deer

Small ruminants

- Sheep and goats

- Can be hard to tell the difference

- In general (noting there can be exceptions)
  - Sheep tails down
  - Goat tails up

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a0/Two_l
ambs_rubber_ring_tail_docking%2C_cropped.jpg

Uses

- Both species are capable of producing
  - Meat
  - Milk
  - Fibre
    - Some breeds of sheep and of goats don't produce useful fibre

- Sheep = *Ovis aries*
- Goat = *Capra hircus*

- Domesticated at similar times (probably 10000 years ago)

Breeds

- Generally different breeds used for meat, milk and fibre purposes
- However, some breeds used across multiple enterprises e.g. Merino used across fibre and also meat
- Crossbreeding used to insert different genetics into enterprises e.g. Commonly using Merino mated to Border Leicester and the first cross female progeny mated to a terminal sire to produce a second cross lamb for meat production

Breeding

- Some similarities and some differences
- Similar pregnancy duration of about 150 days

- Shorter duration pregnancy allows potential of multiple breeding times per year (compared to cattle), however some breeds are highly seasonal when cycling

Fibre production

- Ability to produce fibre means that castrated males can produce income each year, as compared to steers (cattle) where income only comes at final sale of animal

- Similarly, any ewe that is not in lamb may still produce wool (presuming not a shedding breed)

A few terms (sheep)

- Wether = castrated male
- Ewe = female
- Ram = male (tup in some areas)
- Weaner = lamb post weaning, up until close to one year of age (then two tooth, yearling etc)
- Crutch = remove wool from around the breech
- Wig = remove wool from around face/head
- Breech = area around anus/vulva below tail
- Jumbuck = sheep (also called maggot taxi by cattle farmers!)
- Shear = remove wool

Terms for goats/sheep

- Female goats = doe or nanny
- Male goat = buck or billy
- Baby goat = kid
- Castrated male = wether (same as sheep)

- Note that around the world different names do exist for the above

Camelids & Deer