



UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

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Feeding Goats Meat to Keep them Healthy

FEEDING

Goals in feeding are good health, maximum production while staying within a reasonable budget.

How much grain and hay to feed depends on the breed, male/female, body size, lactation (dry/lactating).

Dry matter intake as a percentage of body weight ranges between 2-3%.

Some General Feeding Guidelines

- Feed five (5) lbs of high quality hay per adult animal.
- Hay and grain offered should be consumed in about 20 minutes. Much longer may be overfeeding.
- Do not feed moldy hay or grain.

Minerals Protect the Animal's Health

- Offer free choice minerals formulated for goats.
- Ratio must be approximately 2 parts of calcium to 1 part of phosphorus (2:1).
- Do not feed sheep and horse minerals to goats.

Feeding to Prevent Acidosis and Bloat

- In the morning feed hay first before grains to avoid acidosis. Grain ration should not be fed alone.
- Feed high quality hay before allowing them to eat new and green moist grass.

Management to Prevent Coccidiosis

- Although most goats carry coccidia, only the young kids become sick due to this protozoan parasite.
- Part of its life cycle requires moist conditions that are ideally suitable for the development of coccidiosis.
- Remove old bedding from kidding pen before the new kids are born.
- Remove and dispose of bedding and manure regularly.
- Consult a veterinarian on treatment with Albon (sulfadimethoxine)/Corid (amprolium).

Feeding To Prevent Laminitis

- Laminitis – signs are lameness, reluctance to move, fever, all 4 feet are hot to touch.
- Predisposing causes are overeating or sudden access to concentrate/high grain and low roughage diet.
- Provide a balanced ration with no sudden or drastic change in diet.

Feeding & Grazing Management to Prevent Enterotoxaemia

- Many sheep and goats carry a strain of the bacteria *Clostridium perfringens* Type D.
- This microorganism is part of the normal microflora of the goat's intestine.
- Excessive consumption of grain or young succulent forage causes the bacteria to multiply and produce a toxin that leads to death of the animal.
- Avoid feeding high grain diets and lush forages.
- Vaccinate goats for enterotoxaemia and tetanus (clostridium C&D plus Tetanus).
- Vaccinate does 2 to 3 weeks before kidding.
- Vaccinate kids at 4 weeks of age for Enterotoxaemia.

Feeding & Grazing Management to Prevent Urinary Calculi

- Caused by the deposition of stones in the urethra.
- Signs - straining to urinate, abdominal discomfort, kicking and tail switching.
- Fresh water available at all times encourages urine flow.
- Consider delaying castration until 3 to 5 months of age to encourage the development of the urethral lumen size.

