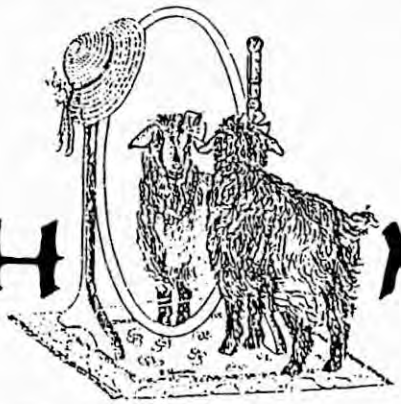

CASH MIRROR

VOLUME TWO, ISSUE FOUR JANURARY 1991

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GREETS THE NEW YEAR

CASHMIRROR

CASHMIRROR
REFLECTING THE CASHMERE INDUSTRY

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REFLECTIONS

Now that the embryo implant is over and the goats are munching happily and pregnant in their barns, I can sit back and allow myself some reflection on the whole trip. As most of you know, we had 15 farms to do implants on using cashmere embryos and angora surrogates. These farms go from Western Washington state to the Atlantic coast of Maine.

Well, the embryo implant came off without a hitch in the schedule. No mean feat when you consider all that happened. Our first implant was at THE FARM CASHMERES right here in our home area on October 31, 1990. From there we moved to the Bellingham area, which is up by the Canadian border (and where all the horrible flooding, arctic storms, power outages from high winds, etc. have been happening). Next it was over to the Kitsap Peninsula and then we began working our way South down through Oregon and Northern California.

From Northern California Duane and I headed out to Colorado by ourselves, pulling our 31 foot mobil surgery. About 35 miles east of Wendover, Nevada, out on the Bonniville Salt Flats, we had a flat tire on the curb side of the trailer. We pulled over, and I mean way over, off the road and Duane got out to change the tire. He told me to sit in the driver's seat so that I could pull the trailer up on a block of wood when he was ready. I don't know what made me glance into the side view mirror but I did, and there was a truck with two tanker trailers jackknifed in the highway about 100 feet behind us. I watched in horror as it hit the rear of our mobil surgery. Then everything exploded. Miraculously the tanker swerved enough to miss the pickup and only ripped the side view mirror off as it passed. I

was safe. In the meantime, Duane was just getting into the forward door of the trailer, thus saw nothing, until the trailer exploded in his face. He too was uninjured. After establishing that neither we nor the truck driver were injured, we got into what was left of the wreckage. That's all we removed until the State Police got there with their flashing lights an hour and a half later. I was terrified to go into the trailer with trucks flying by only a few feet away. I was scared of being hit a second time.

After 5 hours, we were able to get a U-haul truck and two wreckers (the tanker truck had to be towed off while our trailer was put onto a flatbed) from Salt Lake City, 80 miles away. We were indeed fortunate that there were no injuries as it as an hour and a half before even the State Patrol got there. I would hate to have to wait that long for an ambulance! It happened at 2 p.m. and we got into a motel at 11 p.m.. When the U-Haul and wrecker finally arrived it was dark. Duane fired up one of our generators and we hung heat lamps in what was left of the trailer and began emptying out its contents. By this time we had big red flashing lights both front and rear of us. I am sure that Duane stripped cars as a teenager as he had the pig tail, spare tire an propane tanks stripped off the trailer before I could even think. And a good thing as we used the tanks and heater to do the rest of the implants in the test farmers barns.

It was, and still is amazing to me how little we lost. We had some damage to our fiber-optic equipment, we lost our autoclave, a set of clippers and lots of supplies. There are syringes, gauze 4 x 4's, cotton, etc. scattered all over the Bonniville Salt Flats. We lost a lot of our disposable supplies and more had to be thrown away due to the fact that the sterility had been lost. But all in all we were able to continue on schedule.

The next morning, we were on the road again. We had the trucker's insurance company chasing us across country as I would not break our surgery schedule. It was interesting how we began working our way up the ladder with the insurance adjusters, as it began to dawn on them just what the trucker had hit! We are now dealing with the Sr. Vice President of the insurance company.

After borrowing fiber-optic equipment from a clinic in Colorado, we were able to do the implant in Larkspur. Then off we went to recoup at my brother's in Ohio. There we repacked, washed glass and fiber glass from all our clothes, had a couple of good night's sleep and then we were off again to make our schedule, early by one day and were able to play tourist.

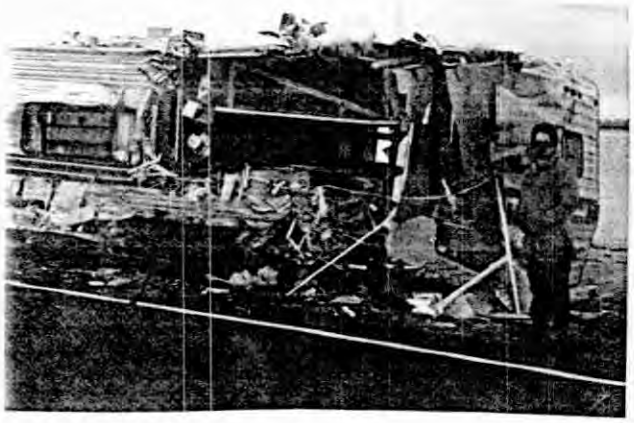
The first two Maine implants went right on schedule. Coming out of the barn at the 2nd farm upon completion of the implant, Duane lit a cigarette. Little did he know it was to be his last. Two minutes later he sat down, complained of chest pain, and turned ashen gray. 45 minutes later he was wired for sound in the coronary care unit at the local hospital. Yep, he'd had the BIG ONE! The rest of the transfer team went onto the coast of Maine and completed the last two implants while I stayed with the test farmers and spent my days at my husbands bedside. Five days later, Doug Gilbert, the embryologist from Texas, returned and we bailed out the recovering Duane and headed west. Fortunately, our trip west was uneventful and we arrived home just as the weather here and across the land turned into an arctic freeze.

As a friend's Christmas card says, "I hope you have a very dull and boring 1991". So do I!

Cashmerely yours,

Judith Haralson

P.S. Duane is doing well and will complete further tests January 2nd. We will then have a better idea of what really happened.



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WINTERIZE YOUR GOATS

by

Miriam Jeswine

It is the depths of winter and you are questioning your sanity. The mud or the snow is knee deep, and you only get to see the goats on weekends because you do chores in the dark, night and morning. The feed bills are mounting; the vet bills are worse. How can you reduce the expense and hassle? By seeing to it that the care you give the goats in winter helps reduce the stress.

Winter is the time to prepare for spring by working on the environmental and nutritional stresses of winter that bring on spring problems with kidding and metabolic diseases. One major stressor is manure accumulation, a stewpot of diseases from hoofrot to parasites and pneumonia. If you stop to think, it's horrible to have to spend all your days in the stench of manure. Ammonia fumes from manure and urine in a too-tight barn can make the goats more likely to get pneumonia. Animals which have to climb manure mountains to get to their feed or which have to stand around in a cold stew of watery manure are exposed to disease and they can't escape their stressful environment.

Now, in the depths of winter, it might be difficult to deal with the manure accumulation, but the stresses can be relieved. The barn can be opened to cross-ventilation so that ammonia does not build up. Dry bedding can be scattered on top of the manure pack to provide a dry surface. The wettest spots can be dug out and filled with dry material. You can dig a trench around the outside of the barn to drain water away, and put up gutters to catch moisture. Drain tiles installed in low areas can carry away water, too. Goats can handle cold a lot easier than they can wet. All they need is shelter from the wind, and that can be as simple as a three-sided shed. They don't need coddling; they need to be dry, well fed, and protected from stress.

One of the most stressful things you can do to a goat is move it into a new herd. That is when the newcomer is likely to become ill, and maybe pass it on to some of the others in your flock. If you acquire new animals, the best thing you can do for flock health is to isolate the newcomers for about a month. That way they can recover from the move without having to fight for spots in the pecking order. If they are going to fall ill, they do it where the rest of the flock isn't exposed. Although a separate building would be best for isolation, even a ten foot gap between animal groups makes a big difference. The big hazard for a goat which has just been moved is pneumonia. If they are going to get sick, they'll likely do it and recover in the month of isolation. You can spot any problems and deal with them more easily in isolation than in a large, milling flock, too. Deworming and delousing before putting them into the isolation pen and again before introducing them to the rest of the flock will help them get the most from their feed and reduce the internal stressors.

Good nutrition is extremely important in winter. Ruminants like goats need plenty of good quality hay to produce heat in the rumen to keep warm. You may have noticed that animals eat less in hot weather and more in cold. You can think of it as stoking their furnaces. The calorie needs can increase 30 to 70% in cold weather, so the hay mangers should never quite go empty. If the hay is good enough, you might not need grain, but you may need mineral and vitamin supplementation.

If you feed alfalfa, you may need to provide a high phosphorus mineral mix. If you feed grass hay, you may need a balanced 50/50 calcium/phosphorus mix. You may live in a selenium-short area. All your grain and mineral mixes must have selenium added. In fact, there is reason to suspect that goats might need more selenium than other animals because of their high activity and metabolic rates. Selenium is an important component of the immune system's needs. Loose minerals are easier for the goats to eat than blocks, so you are more likely to get enough mineral consumption with loose. Other nutrients likely to run short in winter include vitamin A, which can help prevent skin and mammary problems, and vitamin E, which works together with selenium in helping immune function. You can provide all kinds of selenium, but if the vitamins A and E are short, it won't do much good. These three

nutrients work together. Nutrition is always a matter of balance and sufficiency, regardless of the season.

Mongolian herdsmen say there are four seasons. In summer animals get fat; in fall they stay the same weight; in winter they lose, and in spring they die. Winter and spring are the time of greatest nutritional need. Those seasons include the sixty days or so before kidding when the fetuses are growing most rapidly, and the sixty to ninety days after kidding when the does are producing milk. The payoff in poor nutrition is vet bills, weak or dead kids, and frustration. The payoff in good nutrition comes in spring when healthy does give birth easily and raise vigorous kids. Good nutrition and a stress-free environment are for more important for health than all the pills, powders and potions the vets can provide.

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WHAT IS FAECAL EGG COUNTING?

Reprinted Fiber News December 1990

Dr Max Merrall
Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences,
Massey University

With the warmer weather now here it is an appropriate time to look at faecal egg counts, what they are, why we do them and what they can tell us.

We are all familiar with the effects of gastro-intestinal parasites in goats. They live in the bowel and cause all sorts of problems for us as well as the goats in the living animal these mature worms are present in the bowel and their life is to some extent hidden from us. However, just as the hunter follows traces of his prey we can follow traces of the worms. Living as they do in the bowel when they lay eggs to reproduce the species these mingle with the bowel contents and are passed out in the dung or faeces. If we count the eggs we can get a picture of what is going on inside the animal where we cannot see.

When we count eggs we generally count what are called strongylate eggs. These are all very similar and cannot really be separated from each other just by looking at them. This in itself is not all that critical in that although the different species of worms may lay eggs at different rates the animal is likely to pick up the larvae and become re-infected at the proportion that the eggs are dropped and one figure gives us a good guide as to the size of the problem. Imagine a factory whose workers are paid only on productivity. It does not matter how many workers are present to manufacture a given number of units. The costs are based on the units produced so the output is the important factor.

The type of worm is not the only factor which governs the number of eggs that will be present in the faeces. The immunity of the host is also important. Compared with other animals the goat does not develop a significant level of immunity to worms. You have no doubt been told this on numerous occasions. They do develop some immunity however and in individuals this may be significant. If a goat has some immunity this influences the reaction of the host to the parasite. The net result of this interaction is that the supply of nutrients to the parasite is reduced. As a

result of this reduced nutrient supply they lay fewer eggs. As an analogy look at reproduction in your goats if you have a drought in the autumn. If the animals has some immunity the effect of the worm is also going to be less on the host. It is the output that is important. This is a little oversimplified but broadly holds true, it the level of faecal eggs that indicates how severe the effect on the goat the burden of parasites that is carrying is going to be. We also take note of the effect of immunity in interpreting the faecal egg count.

Right, there are parasites in the stomach and bowel and they are laying eggs as fast as they can. How do we measure them and in what way can we determine if the level is critical. The best way is to do some objective measure and in this we have to make some assumptions. We have to assume that no matter what the consistency of the dung, unless it is scouring its little insides out, that the concentration of eggs remains the same. Not really true but it is a case of the swings and roundabouts. Individual counts vary and cannot be relied upon. We use the mean of a number of counts and while some will be lower than they should be some will be higher and the mean gives us a realistic value. Having made this assumption we count the number of worm eggs per gram of faeces. The faecal eggs per gram or epg.

HOW DO WE COUNT THEM

The technique is take a measured amount of faeces, mash it up to let the eggs escape and mix something with it that will let the eggs float free. We then take a small representative sample and on a special slide count the eggs in this sample and multiply them to get the correct number per gram of the original faeces. No-one in their right mind is going to count 20,000 eggs in one gram of faeces. What then are the right numbers or rather the wrong ones. The level generally accepted is 20,000 epg in kids and 1000 epg in adults, the differences representing the effect of immunity. For an average sized mob this is the mean of ten freshly collected samples and by fresh I mean collected from the rear end of the animal or from the ground when you have watched it just drop. In moist foggy times of year a sample may still look fresh after 24 house.

This is what faecal egg counting is, why we do it, how we do it and some of the information that we can get from it. The next piece of important information that we can get from it is whether there is any drench resistance. Before a drench is released on an unsuspecting public your representatives in the form of the Animal Remedies Board have put this new wonder drug under a microscope and part of this is field trials, testing the product under the conditions that it will be used. As part of this it will have known under repeated trials that it will kill say 99.% of Haemonchus. If you have a worm resistance problem it will kill less than 90% Haemonchus. We find this out by drenching the animals. There are a number of ways of doing this but basically what you are measuring is the reduction of faecal epg as a result of the drench and the reduction calculated as a percentage of the original epg figure. At this time there are sufficient worms that are resistant to drenches that this should be included on all goat farms that employ regular drenching for worm control, on at least an annual basis. It can be very simply done through your own veterinarian and would be well worth the trouble to prevent a worse problem.

TO SUM IT UP.

If you have goats that do not thrive and develop diarrhoea they probably have worms. To be certain of this and to find out if you need to drench you would be best to have a faecal eggs per gram count done on a representative sample of your goats. If you are drenching more than about 6 times a year to control gastro-intestinal worms on your farm then it would definitely be worth your while to have a faecal egg count reduction trial carried out on your property to assess the continuing effectiveness of your drench before it is too late.

GOAT = A NATURAL HERBICIDE

Reprinted Goat Udderings Newsletter 8/90

Goats are being re-discovered in the United States. In a search to find alternatives for herbicides to control vegetation on government land, the goat is being used experimentally. People who have owned goats very long know that goats will eat brush before they will eat grass. Their lips are sensitive and nimble enough to pluck leaves off a thorny vine. Even poison ivy gives them little or not problems...they just eat it! Goats stand on their hind legs and eat the leaves off the tree, leaving a clear area to walk under the trees. Managed properly, their tiny hooves have little effect on the ground vegetation.

In the West, a noxious week known as the Leafy Spurge spreads with a horizontal root system that allows it to grow quickly, crowding out grass, crops and natural vegetation. In Stillwater County, Montana, Officials discovered that goats liked the weed, preferring it over other vegetation. A three year study showed that they could control the growth of the weed. Goats are now being used by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks as well as the Stillwater County Extension service for this purpose.

Goats have also been used in a study in Jessieville, Arkansas, for the Hot Springs National Park. The goats were used to clear brush in an area where pine seedlings would be planted. They plan to use the goats the following year to keep the brush controlled while the seedlings grow. 51 Alpine goats were used on a 20 acre tract between April 18 and July 7.

In the case of Arkansas, the goats were removed from the area 2 weeks early due to attacks by wild dogs. The dogs got through the surrounding electric fence and killed 10 goats and injured 11 others. Guard dogs had been used, but (not bonded with the herd) they left as soon as the humans did. Guard dogs are being raised with the herd for next year.

Stillwater addressed the problem of fencing in a different way. The goats wear a radio collar that picks up signals from an underground insulted wire around the perimeters. When they get too close to the wire, they receive a mild shock. They quickly learned to stay inside the area, even after the current was turned off!

For more information about using Goats on Government land to control vegetation, contact the Hot Springs National Forestry Service or Chuck Egan, Stillwater County Extension Agent, Box 807, Columbus, MT 59019

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CASHMERE DOWN UNDER BY JENNY EDDINGTON

As I sit to write it is a sweltering hot day and I think of you all going into winter. We are part way through hay-making and in our area it has been a very good season for growing. Although it is a rather gloomy world right now with the Gulf situation and the economy. The current slump in the world textile market is having a dramatic effect on Australia as we are said to be riding on the sheep's back. The wool industry is really depressed with no early solution in sight, so we are all hoping for a cold Northern Winter so Europe in particular needs to buy lots of clothes.

Fortunately thus far cashmere prices have held well and with many of the teething problems in the fiber identification and classing being sorted out our sales have been good and there are some promising things on the horizon for the industry. At this point I should comment on recent statements in CashMirror regarding angora infusion in the Australian industry and Dawsons not buying under the current contract arrangements. Firstly, in the early days of the industry it was noticed that goats known to have some angora infusion produced much more "fiber", when micron tested. This was found to be within the cashmere range, it was in fact Dawson's research form that began some of the early work on this route of increasing yield. Down the track of course it has been found that this fiber is in fact different from cashmere in many ways and so this route of breeding has been abandoned. The unfortunate part of this story is that as a research project it was worth a try, but early information from the research suggested it would prove worthwhile and some breeders began to use the G4 route (angora infusion). In hindsight it would have been much more prudent to wait for the results of the research until using it on farm, but human nature makes us impatient and dollars in the pocket also played a part. It should be noted that the majority of breeders either did not begin this breeding or did it in a controlled way and did not infuse it into their main herd. The important message here is that when looking at Australian animals it is important to discuss the breeding aims of the breeder and the animals background. And for the infant American industry to learn from this and do much research on just what cashmere is and what you are breeding. Skilled reading of a histogram will tell you of potential problems with intermediary fibers.

My next point is that Dawson's did not pull out of Australia because they did not like the fiber. While there were some problems, the quality fiber being processed met their criteria. However, they are carrying stocks of chinese cashmere and when contract negotiations were underway they were only prepared to bid to a figure around $20.00 below the Italian manufactures, hence there bid was not accepted. As a result, for the next 3 years they will not be buying Australian cashmere. The Italian buyers are very happy with the Australian product and are working on new types of yarns to make use of the increased length of Australian fiber. Of course on the world scene the amount of fiber produced in Australia is but a drop in the ocean, but it is the first real emergence of cashmere production in the developed world. It has meant for the first time scientific measuring of fiber type and production and also animals grazed on good food as opposed to substance existence. Many lessons have been learned and many more are to be learned, that's what makes the challenge worthwhile for the breeders. Cashmere Australia has just arrived with the news that the Italians and Forte' are both working on a range of garments and material using just Australian fiber. This is very exciting as previously they have been blending it with traditional supplies.

On the home front the kids are really growing and their first fiber is just emerging which is an exciting time when they grow the type of fiber you are aiming for and when the kids from a buck you had high hopes for realize those hopes. Then there are those you are not so pleased with and another lesson is learned.

This year we have confirmed our thoughts on one thing, it is a great problem to us having to shear the goats in Winter as we are in a very wet area this time of year. It is prone to extended patches of wet cold weather and it is not economically feasible to house the shorn goats on grain. We can't feed more grain then the value of the down produced. With shelter sheds they tend to stay in the sheds and not feed so we spend a few weeks chasing our tails and I spend sleepless nights listening to the rain and worrying. Mind you they fare much better than you think they will. Our goats are always on good feed as we have year round good pastures and therefore never get skinny. We have found that by really feeding them up in late fall they don't really get much fatter but they get through winter shearing well and

hold their condition much better and get back into form after kidding much quicker. We had separate groups this year to observer it properly.
I would like to wish everyone all the very best for the New Year, I will be thinking of you in the snow while we probably will swelter and stick with tradition and have turkey and plum pudding.

NEW CASHMERE LINE SPECIFICATIONS
Reprinted with permission
from Fiber News December 1990

By Andrew Sinclair

Over the past five months Forte' Cashmere Company has been trying lines of fiber not previously sold to them. Many of these lines have been included in the new contract (notable WW1, WC1 and BR1).

Joseph Dawson Ltd have found the Type 1 (fine) fiber is currently not in demand. Joseph Dawson had hoped that the Type 1 fiber would be acceptable in the trade as a substitute for Chinese Cashmere in the Knitwear trade. Trials have shown that for this specific use the New Zealand Type 1 fiber has not been a success with the primary reason given that the New Zealand fiber was too coarse, being 1-1.5 micron coarser than the Chinese.

The Type 2 (coarse) fiber has been competing in the market place with Iranian/Afghan fiber in the predominantly weaving trade. This fiber already has recognition as being superior to Iranian/Afgan fiber with its degree of whiteness, fewer intermediate fibers and reliability of trade. Unfortunately even this advantage is not enabling the NZ Mohair Cashmere Warehouse to currently sell all Type 2 stocks with the market demand for weaving cashmere temporarily at a standstill due to price uncertainty in the marketplace.

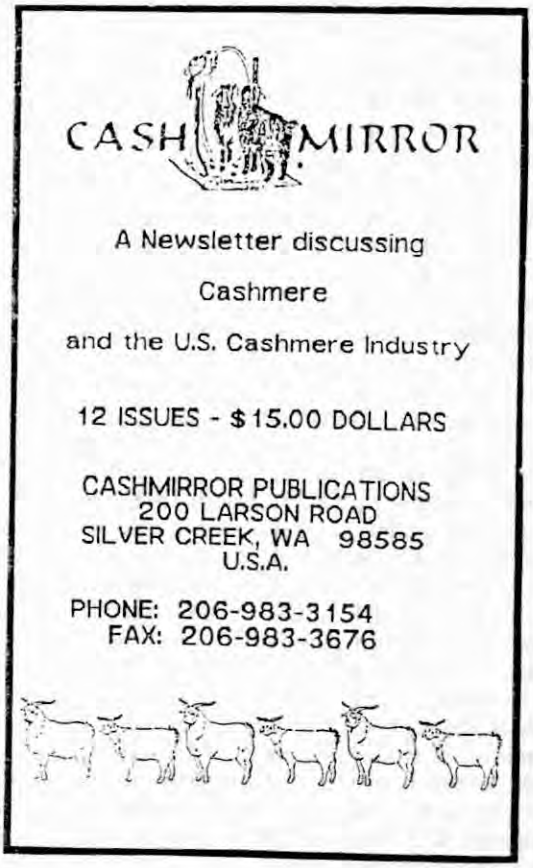
Over the last 10 months both Joseph Dawson and Forte' Cashmere Company have advised that to further improve the marketing edge of the Type 2 fiber it would be preferable to have the fiber slightly finer.

Since Pool 3/90 all the cashmere has been tested at Whatawhata Fiber Testing Center on the basis of the IWTO wooltop calibration. Forte' have been receiving these results as well as a calculated conversion to the previous AWTA cashmere calibration result.

On the basis of this the contract with Forte has resulted in the following line specifications. Specifications are based on WFTC results, calibrated to IWTO wooltops. There may be future amendments to these specifications as a result of ongoing feedback from the Marketplace.

All Type 1 fiber–under 17.3 micron
All Type 2 fiber– 17.3 to 19 micron

Regarding the proposed sliding scale payment system for lot tested cashmere , some producers are expressing concern with the delay in its introduction. With the restructuring taking place the sliding scale has been put on hold. However, the NZMCW is fully aware of the dis-incentive for fine cashmere production the current stepped pricing system imposes.



PROMOTING GOATS

By Linda Rigsbee
Reprinted: Goat Udderings Newsletter 9/90

GOATUDDERINGS Newsletter has promoted the goat for almost 5 years. In that time it has developed a method of planning and advertising for activities. Below is a format of that method. I hope it will be helpful to clubs just beginning.

1. Determine the need: What questions do people ask the most? What are the most common requests?

2. Determine the Audience: Who asks the questions? What subjects will appeal to the broadest range of interests?

3. Determine the place, date, and time: Where do most of the questions come from? Where would it be the most convenient for those who volunteer to help. What time and day is best for everyone interested. The law of averages will have to serve here. When there is a tie, go for what the volunteers require.

4. Ask for assistance: This is often the hardest part! However, remember that the people who help with the event do not have to own goats or even necessarily be interested in goats. ALWAYS work with them.

5. Notify Radio Stations, Newspapers, etc. Word a post card something like: Please announce/Print the following public service message for our club." State your message and don't forget to say thank you (Never use this method for anything for which the public will be charged or benefits a personal gain!)

6. Make up flyers and put them in feed stores, gas stations (anywhere "goat" people might go regularly) and grocery stores. Don't forget the health food stores and sale barns. ALWAYS REMEMBER TO TAKE YOUR SIGNS DOWN WHEN YOU ARE THROUGH! Also, signs will be received better if they look professional. Colors always attract more attention, as do pictures. The flyers should not be larger than 8 1/2 x 11 and many stores have bulletin boards on which you may put index cards. Make them bright colors or put a picture in the corner to attract attention. Make your message brief and be sure to state Date, Time, Place and describe the activity. Give a contact number. If you can't put a pen on a rubber band hooked to it. Write the number a number of times on a piece of paper sideways and cut so that they may be individually torn off and taken home. Keep an eye to see there are always some available! ALSO, ALWAYS REMEMBER TO ASK FOR PERMISSION BEFORE YOU PUT A SIGH UP!

7. Prepare for your activity. Door prizes are always a hit. Your local feed store or other stores may be willing to donate a sack of feed or something in return for advertising. Remember to thank them!!

8. Put out directional signs the evening before the activity. NEVER put signs on telephone poles or road signs.. it is illegal!! If your club has or plans to have frequent activities, it will pay to invest a little time and money in a portable sign. You will need things, wood, and florescent paint. Make several that can be set beside the road. Your signs can be tacked to these. A little clear plastic wrap will protect it during rain.

9. Be sure to start your advertising at least a month before the activity and have a meeting for those helping at least 2 weeks before the activity. It is best to have another within a week of the activity to make sure all is going as needed.

10. After your activity: Take down all signs; clean up the area; write thank you notes to all who have helped.

"Don't be afraid to take a large step, you can't leap a chasm in two jumps." I love that saying, though I don't know where it originated. No one can guarantee a successful activity each time and some times will be real flops. It often happens that those activities that don't seem to be shaping up wind up being the best ones! Hang in there and don't be defeated by one failure. WE NEED YOU TO PROMOTE THE GOAT!

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Feature Farmer of the Month.....

CHIVO NEGRO

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It all started when a friend of mine wanted a stake in the goat business about 3 and 1/2 years ago. He commissioned a goat buyer to get him some goats - about 600 nannies of all ages, colors and sizes. They were cheap enough, about $35.00 to $40.00 a head and probably not worth that. They were shipped in a large multi decked trailer rig and subsequently unloaded at his ranch.

A number of things were learned expensively from this episode:

1) avoid hauling goats in a multi deck rig as the refuse from the goats on top inundate the bottom deck insuring disease and contamination of most every kind. We lost 70 goats as a result of the exposure. The University of Arizona proved to be invaluable in determining diseases and medication for those who did survive the trip;

2) Environmental stress caused abortion to run rampant through the pregnant does. Over 100 kids were lost. Cleaner pastures and nutrition helped curb this trouble;

3) The goat buyer as it turned out did little or no selection about age size or quality. But as luck would have it, cashmere at this time was an unknown and often meat growers sold the fuzzy goats since they appeared bigger or may have been an undesirable cross. Because of this over 1/3 of these goats had some cashmere fiber.

My friend shortly fell on hard times and I ended up being goat-keeper and owner of his herd. About that time a symposium for cashmere goats was being promoted by Forte' and Cashco. This event, I believe was a huge success and so cashmere, U.S.A. was born. Since I, as well as many others, wanted in immediately, there was no known quantity of cashmere goats in the U.S. and so developed the import business. It was very expensive and in my experience of questionable quality when mixed with our native goats. Having bought one 1st cross buck I can attest to this. He at first appeared to have a coarse cashmere fleece, but the following year developed only hair. He developed into a nice strong buck and brought $80.00 the next year at the auction sale. * editors note: (*This has not been the experience of all breeders using import feral crosses.)*

That same year, two years ago, I sheared some of the goats I had and sent the result off to Forte'. I also asked our good friend at Forte' why there was not some cashmere goats already here in the U.S.A. and he then named a grower in Texas that had submitted some samples that were just as good as any of the imports. This I suspected and was fortunate enough to acquire about 100 of his best nannie kids of which almost 2/3 had some cashmere fiber, these with extensive culling from my original goats gave me about 400 head of goats with some cashmere fiber which I intend to send off to Forte' in February 1991.

By chance, this past year 1990, I was in Texas looking for feeder goats when I discovered that a ranch of very high quality black goats, was being sold as a result of the demise of the owner. There were 1,000 goats of which there was about 150 super good black two year old nannies, most of which I was able to acquire at what I believe as about 1/2 their value. I did not buy any of the billies as I would have had to buy most of them to select the few good ones for fiber and with my entire heard I will have over 500 to select from this coming year. This purchase brings my base herd up to about 700 goats at this time plus about 200 head of feeder goats that should sell the early part of this year.

Since I had always planned to be a commercial grower I do not have any fiber analysis and have developed the cashmere content from appearance and feel. Since also the primary objective is to have strong healthy goats first and cashmere second when and where it can be developed, continual extensive culling is required.

A number of things I have learned the hard way and will be happy to share them:

1) Goat selection if you don't have unlimited money: Start with young healthy nanny kids as near to a year old as possible. They transport easier without loss and or abortion. If you buy at the auctions you will have to cull at least 1/2 and at this stage in time are unlikely to get many with cashmere fiber.

2) Bucks may be obtained that are just as good in quality of fiber as the imports. * editor's note *(quantity may be less)* Bucks from the offspring of imports, if they maintain their cashmere fiber after the 2nd generation should prove satisfactory. I think the first cross has more chance of a throw back to the spanish goat ancestry.

3) Nutrition, has proved to be one of the most important factors for me. I have access to corn at a cheaper price than good alfalfa, and feed it whole the year around.

4) Shelter is equally important as goats do not seem to do well in cold wet weather and the kid loss will be monumental if left to survive in cold wet weather, further if the mother is stressed substantially with weather or nutrition that will certainly add to the losses. CashMirror had a very good article this past year indicating the mothers are quick to abandon their young in favor of their own survival.

5) Predators - our coyote problem is severe. Coyotes like to eat goats of almost all sizes from the back to the front while they are still alive. I believe if the environmentalists saw this in action there would be fewer friends for the coyotes. We also have to be careful as the Crows like to pick the eyes of the young kids. I have had a couple of losses to mountain lion and bobcats but my real enemy is the coyote. Because of the predator loss I have concentrated my goats more and buy more feed. Presently I pen the goats every night with lights and have a zero loss factor from this method. My pastures are all goat tight and most of the perimeter fencing has apron fencing to help the coyote problem besides the government trapper. From the efforts now in place I hope to minimize the losses this year.

6) Marketing: hopefully Forte' will maintain his interest in quantity and prices as this business gets underway. I believe the meat market for goats leaves much to be desired, except maybe, for the growers in goat country in Texas. We have virtually an untouched market in the west because the various ethnic groups want and would buy goat meat if it were readily available. I notice at the auction, there are people of all colors and types buying goats of every kind. I have noticed one guy in particular that only buys old billies. Here there is a saying "if you choke an old billy to death with an onion the meat will not be rank!"

ON THE GOOD SIDE, goats under good management should be twice as productive as cattle, they may be more concentrated, are smaller and less dangerous to handle, do well on whole grain and many will produce twins or triplets, some will produce twice a year and of course the possible cashmere product is just a plus. better meat markets and packing houses ought to develop with time and numbers.

Unfortunately at this time the midwest Texans have an advantage, they have free pasture, rain, and are in a central grain producing area with well developed markets.

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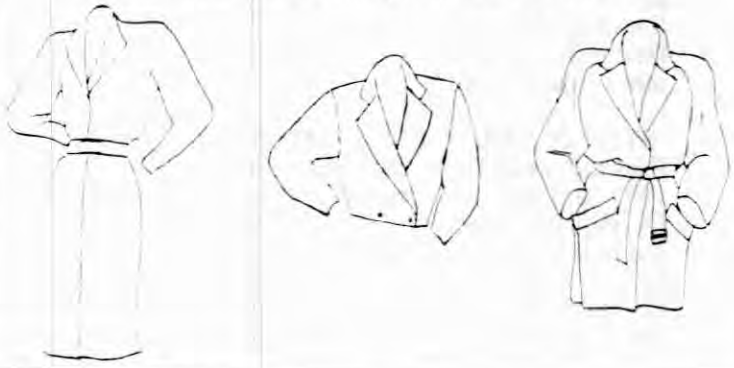

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