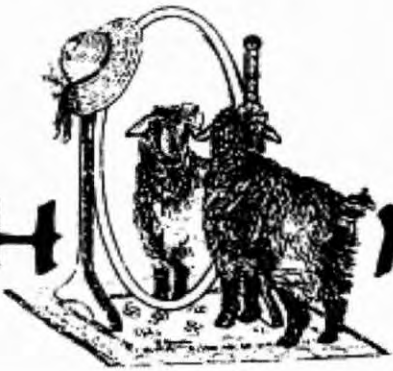


CASH MIRROR



Volume 9, Issue 8

June 1998

The monthly magazine devoted to cashmere goats and their fiber



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The *CashMirror* welcomes contributions of articles and photographs. Submissions may be made by mail, fax or e-mail.

No responsibility will be taken for material while in transit or in this office, although we will certainly be real careful.

Cover photo by Linda Cortright

From left to right: Eileen Cornwall, James Barton and Marilyn Ackley at the Cashmere America Sonora (Texas) warehouse standing in front of bales of cashmere.

The Bucks are Coming!

We're looking for a special photograph of a buck for the cover of the Breeders' Showcase issue. If you have a prospect, please send it in.



Perhaps the beginning of a buck stampede?
October Farm II, Baker, Oregon

Breeders' Showcase Issue

Coming to the *CashMirror* nearest you

This August 1998

Deadline for ads, photographs and copy:

July 20, 1998

We will print extra copies of the August 1998 issue and distribute them as promotional material at fiber and goat gatherings in the US and Canada. As usual, there will be a good deal on advertising—both display and classifieds. We can help you design and lay out an ad, usually at no additional charge.

Get the word out!

Let other breeders and new cashmere producers know what you have for sale or rent. This is the time of year when producers "shop for bucks"—for purchase and for rent.

Special Advertising Rates for August 1998 issue

Display Advertising:

1/2 page	\$65
1/3 page	\$50
1/4 page	\$35
Business cards	\$20

Classified

Advertising:

25 cents per word

Reflections

by Linda Fox

I was talking to my sister the other day about just exactly what shade of knee socks would blend well with my new golfing shorts, when she brought up the subject of perhaps a fact I should think about some—maybe lipstick would not be appropriate for wearing with knee socks and maybe I should just ditch the knee socks, when the subject of...toenail polish...mascara...have we lost all the men yet? Good...ladies, we need to have a talk—About the notorious “goat women.”

You’ve heard of them—the crazy old lady who lives, often alone, at the far edge of town with her herd of goats. She generally talks pretty loud, knows just about everything (whether she does or not), has long, stringy, yellowed, gray hair, is sometimes deficient in personal hygiene and has a large herd of goats she hangs out with the majority of the time. She focuses totally on her goats and not much else.

I hear you saying, “Heh! That has nothing to do with me. I’m not even fifty and my hair isn’t *that* stringy!” Well, it’s usually the younger crowd doing the talking, and the 40’s and 50’s look awfully ancient to them. When they talk about older women, I’m afraid they could mean us.

I’ve heard of the “goat lady” anomaly, but hadn’t been too concerned that I might be sliding into this category until a few chance comments have been accumulating in my mind. My Vet said recently that someone visiting the clinic had mentioned a “goat lady.” He realized they were referring to me. He explained to me that he found the comment amusing as I didn’t quite fit the stereotype. It bothered me somewhat, at the time, that the first descriptive word applied to me by strangers had been “goat.” I don’t mind being labeled as “the nice young couple on the edge of town who keep a lot of goats” or the “accountant who has moved back to the farm” or the “spinner at the fair” but “goat lady” bothered me.

Last week, my mother overheard people talking at a Grange meeting. She just caught the end of the conversation: “...all she talks about in her articles are goats.” The conversationalist was obviously referring to a monthly column of mine in the Oregon State Grange newspaper that, I must admit, has been hitting the subject of goats more often than not.

Another person I talked to mentioned that her Vet also thought goat people (usually women) were a strange lot. She found them to be headstrong, determined individuals, often making decisions on their own which would better



Aunt Jesse and Uncle Owen

be made under the advice of someone with more knowledge.

I’ve heard several fellow goat raisers say their spouses often complain that all their family activities and conversations center around goats. I know a lot of ours around here do. I don’t think anyone’s complaining. *Are they???*

Almost everyone knows a “goat lady.” My great aunt Jesse was one. Well into her 90’s, she maintained a herd of Saanen milking goats who often won awards at shows. Even after Uncle Owen died, she lived alone up in the hills overlooking Los Angeles, California with her goats. I remember visiting her as a child and even though the goats were interesting, I thought she was strange.

This Easter, we made a hurried trip to the grocery store to retrieve molasses and iodine for new kids and their mother (and Oreos for us), not being as prepared for the kidding season as we should have been. A lady behind me in line said, “Pardon me, but what do you use molasses for? I’ve never seen a recipe for it.”

I told her, “Well, normally you use it in gingerbread or molasses cookies, but I’m getting it today for my goats. You know, to put in warm water for the new mothers.” As I continued to explain my rationale for this, long beyond when she had further interest in the subject, she turned her attention to more interesting matters, like the aliens on the front of the *Enquirer*.

The clerk, when totaling up my purchases said, “My, this is a big bottle of iodine!” I assured her, it was a very tiny (expensive) bottle of iodine. But the feed store, where it can be purchased cheaply by the quart was closed today. I started to explain about the navel dipping thing, but sensed that she didn’t have much interest in alternative uses for iodine.

Continued on next page

Reflections

Continued from previous page

As I left the store, wondering about the sorely limited lives of most people, I looked down at my dirty sweatshirt, ragged, filthy jeans and barn boots. Paul and I had been working on a fence line most of the day and weren't looking too pretty for a town trip when the kids arrived. After arriving at the Safeway parking lot, we determined that I was the more presentable of the two of us, so I had been selected as the envoy to the store while he waited in the car. I wondered what these people in the store with their "limited lives" must have thought about the diversity of my own life.

I've often thought, since I moved back to the farm, that perhaps I've "gone to seed" somewhat. My closetfull of dresses and suits seldom get worn and even the jeans I am usually found in are worn long past the time a pair of jeans in the city would have seen the rag bag. I often wear socks which don't match my outfit and sometimes the socks don't even match each other. I gave up the semi-monthly manicure long ago. I attended a meeting with friends in Portland a few months ago and someone commented, "My, you look casual tonight." And I thought I had dressed up!

Are we all dissolving into "goat ladies?" In twenty years, will we all be like Aunt Jesse with mostly our goats for company? And is that bad?

No answers here. Just some questions. While you all ponder this, I think I'll go make an appointment to get my hair trimmed and maybe write a story about chickens. Might even buy a new pair of jeans.



Now, *these* are horns!

The Whiting, Castle Crag Ranch, Hamilton, Montana

OOPS!

Fleece Contest Correction

NorthWest FiberFest Cashmere Fleece Competition
May 15, 1998

We printed the wrong winner for the Best Combed Doe and omitted the winners for the categories for Best Combed Buck and Best Combed Doe. The corrected winners are:

COMBED FLEECE OVERALL WINNERS

Best Combed Buck

GK24 - Dark Warrior, owned by Carol Spencer,
Foxmoor Farm

Best Combed Doe

GK23 - Celtic Lady, owned by Carrie Spencer,
Foxmoor Farm

Overall Best Combed

GK23 - Celtic Lady, owned by Carrie Spencer,
Foxmoor Farm

Publisher Has Horn Fetish!

Paul, always fascinated by the regal horns sported by most cashmere bucks, wrote a couple of short stories in this issue about horns (see pages 14 and 15). Unfortunately, he is not happy to stop here, even though he seems to have run out of material.

He has noticed several distinct types of horns on our farm and in photographs of other breeders' bucks. He is convinced that you may be able to quickly determine the heritage of a particular buck by noting the horn structure. Maybe he does as well.

If you have theories of your own about the horns or possibly know of other reference sources, please contact us. We will print whatever other information we are able to gather in the upcoming Breeders' Showcase issue, August 1998.

At the very least, it seems like a good subject for a bucky issue.

Washington Isn't the Only Place That Depends on Gates

By Linda Cortright



Juan and the kids at Bar Y Ranch, Sonora, Texas.

Photo by Linda Cortright.

On my recent trip to Texas as the ECA delegate to CaPrA, I knew I would be seeing lots of goats. What I didn't know was just how many gates would need to be opened to get to those goats. In Maine, gates are designed to keep goats in. In Texas, gates are designed to keep people out. Obviously, Texans must not crowd the streets in spandex and sneakers to stay fit, they just open and close gates all day long.

After a big day of rewriting CaPrA bylaws and feeling a need for a break in the excitement, James Barton was kind enough to lead the CaPrA delegation: Marilyn Ackley, Eileen Cornwell, Kris McGuire and myself on a tour of his ranch. The gates begin.

Opening someone's gate can be a lot like trying to open someone's front door with a key for the first time. You have to know how to push with your right knee while leaning in with your elbow and giving the whole thing a shake like a static filled sock from the dryer. All the while a truck full of snickering farmers is critiquing your style. Were the goats really worth this humiliation?

I call my goats in one of two ways. Either I scream "D-A-I-S-Y!" at the top of my lungs knowing full well I could probably be shouting Freddie and it would have the same effect, or, I clap my hands. Both methods almost unfailingly produce the goats. When James wants his goats he honks the horn! When after a few casual taps came and went and nothing appeared he proceeded to really lay on it—one long loud blast. Sure enough, just like the cavalry in a cloud of dust hundreds of goats came stampeding over the horizon. This isn't a herd. This is a mid-sized urban population. Lesson number two: Texans don't name their goats. (Lesson number one: he who sits in the passenger seat opens the gates.)

James has some nifty looking goats. I didn't go around plucking fiber samples, but out of several hundred goats there just have to be some 14 micron beauties tucked away somewhere.

Several minutes after the herd arrived, this horrific noise emanated from down the road and sure enough, this odd looking figure emerged from the dust and Juan the donkey came frantically trotting down the path—clearly late for dinner. No fourteen micron on Juan, but at least he has a name.

The following evening the CaPrA contingent went to Joe David Ross' ranch. By now I was on Texas lesson number three: ranches not farms (very important). Joe David has an Australian imported buck that IS named and not only did we track him down ten gates later, but also we got a fiber sample. Nice fiber!

No matter how many wonderful pictures appear in our various cashmere publications nothing replaces the experience of seeing these goats first hand. There is certainly a lot more Boer influence then I'm used to seeing in the east. For those folks who aren't readily familiar with Boer characteristics just look for the goat who should be wearing a football jersey, to go with the thick neck and heavy shoulder pads. Of course, the brown and white markings can be a good clue too. Yes, it's true. Things are bigger in Texas, even the goats.

My last night in rattlesnake country was spent with Cathy and Dee Broyles. Their goats have a full time job of keeping the grass mowed in between the pecan trees. And best of all, only one gate. What a concept! Dee and Cathy have worked hard with their herd and Cathy has the advantage of tooling the countryside in a golf cart won by her son. Of course, some of those kids aren't averse to taking a free ride in between stops either.

My reason for going to Texas was initially to fulfill my duties to CaPrA. However, that mission having been accomplished my "in the field" reward was watching Kris McGuire round up and set a broken leg on one of Dee and Cathy's goats.

Fortunately, I have never needed a splint job to date but after watching Kris tend to this limp limb, my confidence was boosted. I don't know if that little kid has beautiful fiber or rug wool, but this goat person is always happy when an injured animal can be properly treated.

My experience in the national goat picture keeps growing and I am grateful. We are all doing our own thing, some one way, some another. But there are lessons to be learned for all. I know one thing after this trip: Texas really depends on gates.

A Bright Star in Central Oregon

By Linda Fox

In Hawaiian legend, when a person dies, they become Hokulani—a bright star in the heavens. Cynthia Heeren was raised in Hawaii. When she and Karl started their Bend farm in 1995, Cynthia's mother, Iona, who had been very supportive of their new venture, died suddenly. Cynthia and Karl named the farm in remembrance of Iona—a Hokulani, a bright star looking down and supporting them still.

Cynthia and Karl started their farm with seven bred does. Six of them were cashmere and one was an angora. Their new goats kidded two weeks after they brought them home. The first kidding produced a set of triplets after 6 hours of labor. The first kid weighed only 2-1/2 pounds, had to be tube fed and became their first bottle baby. The remaining two kids weighed five pounds each. Looking back, Cynthia says, if this were to happen now, she'd have the Vet out.

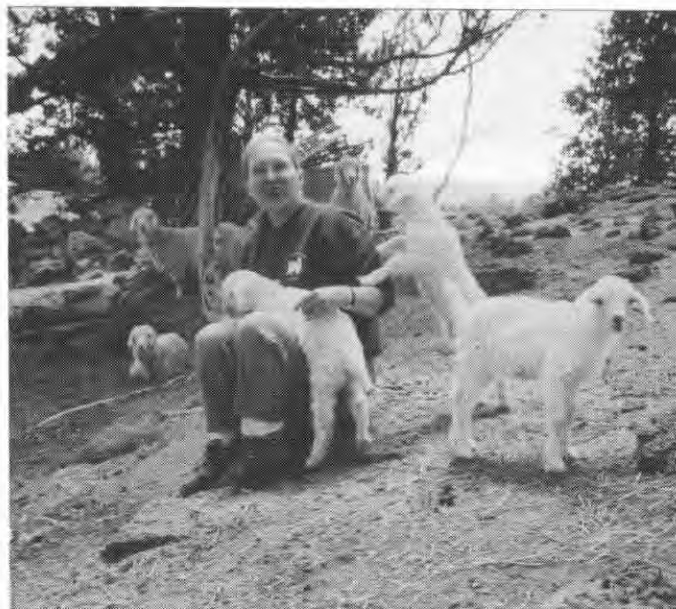
They later bought an entire herd of 20 goats, which increased their total herd count to 40. Cynthia comments that with their first purchase of the seven goats, they got lucky. They knew little about cashmere, but the goats they purchased turned out to be pretty good. By the time of their second investment, they knew what to look for. They knew they were getting some bad goats with the good and selectively culled their new purchase.

Hokulani Farms is now home to 148 goats, one rather large dog, one Australian parakeet and four gigantic cats. The goats include 6 angoras, 4 angora/cashmere crosses and 138 cashmere. Her 138 cashmere goats include 89 does, 38 bucks and 11 wethers. Of these, 61 are this year's kids. When I asked Cynthia how many goats they had, she had a piece of paper at her fingertips with the above detailed information. As you can see, Cynthia is a "records person"—a *good* records person. She enters all goats into her computer. From this base, she prints out barn worksheets, which list all the goats, sorted by sex, including tag number, name and birthdate for the older goats and sire and dam for the kids. The worksheets have columns for entry of specific barn chores—such as vaccinations, worming, foot care, weight and other information. Information from the barn worksheets is later entered onto the goats' master records.

When Cynthia and Karl bought their farm, it was set up for horses. With a little modification, they made

it perfect for their goats. They modified a round pen just outside the barn by placing creep doors on the bottom, so kids have access to their own feed and feeding area at all times. New mothers also use this pen as a "halfway house" between the kidding pen

Continued on next page



Cynthia Heeren and new babies. Kelsey and Kendra are looking for another bottle. Angela in front is apparently full. Angora does in the background.



Karl Heeren in the show ring with Cleo, 1997 Oregon Flock & Fiber Festival.

Hokulani

Continued from previous page

and the pasture.

This spring, Hokulani Farms' numbers increased by 64 with the current crop of kids. Only one set of triplets was born this year which was a relief. Usually there are 5 - 7 sets born each year and more often than not, one of the three ends up being a bottle baby. In Cynthia's experience, if one doesn't end up a bottle baby, it should have, as she has noted that one baby always seems to come in on the short end of the deal with a sacrifice to its growth. She said that sometimes, the mothers seem to monitor that all babies are equally fed, but usually, one baby just loses out.

Hokulani Farms consists of 8 acres, with 3-1/2 acres in orchard grass hay. The Heerens usually get about 15 tons per year in two or three hay cuttings, but sometimes they get as much as 18 tons in a year from the 3-1/2 acres. Cynthia said that a normal eastern Oregon hay yield per acre is two tons. She attributes their huge yield to the goats. They winter their goats on the hay pastures to let the goats' summer pastures rest. While peaceably wintering, the goats leave behind some very nice fertilizer and aerate the ground with their hooves. In the spring, the goats are transplanted to their summer pastures and the hay grows to supply winter food.

In addition to hay raised on the farm, some hay must be purchased as hay is fed year-round to the herd. The Heerens feed no grain to their goats except as a treat and to manipulate them. (See Pavlov's Goats—inset at right.) The kids, however, do get grain,



Hokulani Farms—in beautiful, sunny, central Oregon.

creep fed in their round coral. They offer the kids a cob and barley mix right after birth and continue to provide it in the kid corral until the kids are weaned.

The Heerens also provide their goats with a prescription mineral mix purchased from their Veterinarian. This mixture has been specifically designed for requirements of the central Oregon area and includes a selenium supplement among other things.

Heerens' goal is to winter about 100 goats. They exceed these numbers now, due to spring kidding and a miscalculation of the 1998 Easter holiday, and are working on getting their numbers down before winter.

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Pavlov's Goats

Remember Pavlov and his slobbering dogs? Ivan Petrovich Pavlov was a Russian physiologist best known for his work on the conditioned reflex around the turn of the century. Over a long period of time, he rang a bell before feeding a pack of dogs, noting that he could train them to slobber.

Using Pavlov's approach, Cynthia and Karl Heeren have trained their goats—not to slobber—but to come when they ring the bell.

They have a bell at the house which they ring when they want the goats to head for the barn, thus eliminating the embarrassing chore of trying to round up the herd when you have an audience of prospective customers. This also enables easier corralling of the goats when you want them to come in for regular maintenance chores.

Cynthia said that, unlike Pavlov's obviously stupid dogs, the goats learned the trick after only a few sessions. To train your goats, ring the bell and then immediately feed them in the barn. Your goats will quickly link the noise with the food and respond to the bell.

Cynthia notes that you will need to occasionally reinforce the behavior by offering food from time to time as the goats may just as quickly learn that the bell means nothing except that maybe you want to whack on their hooves.

Hokulani

Continued from previous page

Breeding

Heerens breed their does in groups, ideally timing kidding for March or April. They spread out the breedings somewhat to time kidding for their facility maximum. The does are not flushed. Cynthia says, "I'm getting more triplets than I want now. Why do I need to flush?" She believes that if the does are on good nutrition, they shouldn't need to be flushed. She said she certainly doesn't want quads!

Heerens breed their does to kid at two years of age. They believe that even though a doelings is physically able to kid at one year, she is still growing and her resources are better spent on her own body. If food weren't so expensive, Cynthia would wait an additional year and have the does kid first at age three. She believes that younger does have more kidding problems and post-kidding problems. Young doelings are more likely to have a lack of maternal attitude. She likened the resulting problems to teenagers having babies in our own species.

Kids

Expectant mothers are left with the herd until labor begins. At this time, they are moved to a birthing room to kid. After they birth and bond a bit, they are moved to the kidding pens. Mothers and new kids spend 24 hours after birth in a kidding pen and then are moved to the kid coral for 1-2 days. In the kid coral, the mother eats free choice and the new mothers and kids get some time in a smaller herd environment before being moved back into the main herd. Then, mother and babies are moved back to the herd. The kids, of course, still have access to the kid coral through their little doors.

At birth, kids only get their new navels dipped in iodine. (They also get weighed and the dreaded ear tag!) Cynthia does not give vaccinations or Bo-Se shots at birth. The mothers' CD&T antibodies have been boosted 4-6 weeks prior to kidding and the free-choice minerals provided to all goats contain a prescription-strength selenium.

Kids gets their first CD&T vaccination at two months of age, when they also get their first exposure to hoof care. They get weighed again at this point as well. At three months of age, they get their second CD&T shot, their second hoof trim and are weighed again.

Buck kids are weaned at two months of age and does are weaned at three to three and one half months of age. Cynthia weans bucks at two months to prevent early breeding. She has not had a younger buck breed without permission in her herd, but says that most of her friends have had them breed unexpectedly *before* three months of age. Cynthia notes that it is not usually the bucks exhibiting the obvious bucky behavior, such as the young buck kid riding every other goat in sight, who are the problem. It is usually the young buck who is discretely sniffing the older does rears who know the real secrets of breeding. Cynthia pointed out her studly young bucking, Hannibal, who was nine pounds at birth on March 20, 1998, and acting extremely bucky at six weeks of age. She made sure he was promptly removed from the doe herd at two months of age.

Heerens had three original Tasmanian imports in their herd earlier. They still have one left: Mama Cass (aka Maitland's Montana Lilac) who was born in 1986. Mama Cass (and the other two imports) weaned their own kids at three months of age. Cynthia has noted different behavior in her three imports than in their descendants. Besides weaning their own kids, the imports' kids also seemed to eat solid food at an earlier date.

Heerens used to band all non-breeding buck kids 3-10 days after birth. This year, they intend on castrating young bucks in October or later after they see what kind of fleece they have. Cynthia believes that,

Continued on next page



Round converted horse corral for the kids.

Look at the rocks!

Karl and Cynthia don't have to trim hooves, right? Wrong!

Hokulani

Continued from previous page

in the past, they have banded too many good bucks when forced to make a decision about conformation and fleece before a buck is two weeks old.

Vaccinations/Worming

All goats are vaccinated for CD&T twice a year, in the fall and spring. The spring vaccinations for does are timed to be 4-6 weeks before kidding in order to boost the mother's antibodies for pass along to her kids.

Goats are dewormed as needed, which may be every four weeks or every four months, depending on the state of the pasture and physical condition of the animals. They seldom worm without a fecal examination. They do their own fecal analysis for the herd, having been trained by their veterinarian in the procedure. Cynthia doesn't recommend doing your own fecals for everyone. She said it takes quite a bit of time and believes it is very important that you be trained by a veterinarian in the procedure. The Heerens rotate worming medicines so that the parasites do not build up a tolerance to a specific wormer.

They note that pasture rotation is helpful to prevent worm build up. They are careful to provide adequate food even when the herd is on pasture. Goats are browsers, not grazers, and if they start eating close to the ground like sheep, you can bet they are picking up worms with their food.

Heerens don't have problems with lice in their herd. Any new goat brought into the herd, which is seldom these days, is shorn, isolated and checked extensively for any problems before introduction into the main herd. Any goat who is taken off the farm for any reason—exhibit, showing, breeding—is treated like a "new goat" when it returns to the farm.

Hooves

Hooves are trimmed every two months. Cynthia notes that the hooves on their goats "grow like crazy." She attributes this to good nutrition and the good minerals they have available to them at all times.

Markets

Goats that are not sold as breeding stock or kept for the farm are sent to market in November or December or at the Easter holiday. Heerens depend on the boys (wethers) to support the rest of the herd.



Kid feeder by Karl—in the playpen (the round corral). Note the other kid toys in the background. Lucky kids!

Cynthia noted that they have a few more goats now than they would like due to a miscalculation of the 1998 Easter holiday. They had wormed the market-destined goats and then realized that an adequate drug withdrawal time had not elapsed before the market date.

Karl learned to shear goats from Terry Sim. He does all shearing of both the cashmeres and the Angoras on the farm (and does an excellent job, per Cynthia).

Fleeces are sold on the wholesale market. Cynthia has a few favorite spinning-fleeced goats which she combs and hand-dehairs for her own spinning projects. One of her favorites, Oreo, releases very little guard hair with her fleece and Cynthia can quickly dehair a beautiful spinning fleece.

The Heerens do not believe in storing cashmere fleece for better market times. Cynthia believes that the fleece does not store well and that it is also important to get the fleece out into the market, one way or another.

Hot Tips From the Heerens

It is very important to work with a veterinarian to establish a herd health management program for your conditions—your land, your goats and your climate. Find a veterinarian you can work with. Cynthia and Karl are lucky. They have a very good veterinarian

Continued on next page

Hokulani

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(who owns her own herd of cashmere goats) who is also a good friend.

Know your specific animals and what is normal for them. This is the key to good herd health.

The Heerens use an adapted dairy milking stanchion for feet trimming. They store the stanchion where the kids can play on it when they are young so they get used to it. As soon as the kids are big enough to reach the food bowl, which is usually at three months of age, they are confined to the stanchion for hoof care. A secret to success, especially at first, is making sure they have plenty to eat in the stanchion. The Heeren goats eagerly jump up on the stanchion for hoof maintenance.

Keep C & D antitoxin in your refrigerator for emergency use. Don't administer penicillin without veterinary advice.

Make your feeders accessible to you from outside the goats' pens. This saves wear and tear on the (human) feeder. Karl has built several goat feeders, some of them adapted from sheep feeders by welding additional steel bars to prevent sticking horns. He said, for additional feeders, he has learned that it is easier to start from scratch rather than modifying a sheep feeder.

Cleanliness creates a healthy environment and keeps the herd healthy. The barn and barnyard at the farm are raked each day.

The Future for Hokulani Farms

The Heerens' goal for their farm is to help establish American cashmere as a viable livestock industry in the United States. They believe that this will take a lot of cooperation among breeders and leadership in the National organization.

Other Interesting Stuff

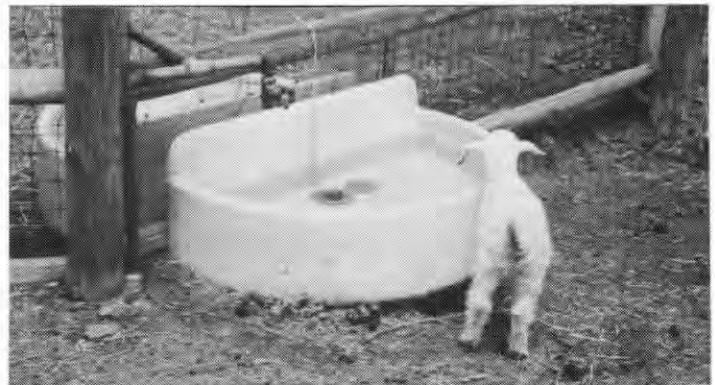
Angoras and cashmeres do not mix (socially, that is). The Heerens have a few Angora goats who live with the herd of cashmere goats. Cynthia has noted that the kids will mingle freely until they are about 6-8 months of age, at which time, they will generally herd-up with their own kind.

The Heerens have won numerous fleece and show awards for their animals at many different events. Their goats are generally high-yielding animals with very nice fleeces.

Cynthia is a fiber artist and has also won numerous awards for her creations including the Champion Award for Handspinning at the 1997 Black Sheep Gathering, for her handspun cashmere. She has also won numerous first place awards in the cashmere, mohair and wool spinning categories. Hanging in their living room, were Cynthia's entries for this year's Black Sheep Gathering fiber arts contest. A beautiful, long, lacy, crocheted mohair vest (who says mohair doesn't make nice lace???) hung next to an equally-gorgeous moorit-colored, knitted vest (2-plys of CVM moorit and 1 ply of Corriedale moorit)—both from hand spun yarn, of course.

Karl and Cynthia are active promoting fiber goats in the 4-H and the FFA programs. Cynthia serves on the board of the NorthWest Cashmere Association and the Central Oregon Spinners and Weavers Guild.

After visiting the Hokulani farm, touring their well-kept facilities, looking at Cynthia's beautiful projects and listening about all the other goat-related things they do, I was tired just thinking about trying to keep up with them.



In case you think these watering tubs looks like the wash basins out of your grade school restroom—you're right. They are cheap, durable and freeze-resistant



Sebastian, age 4—the hunk on the left.

Weighing a Goat

(Without Actually Weighing the Goat)

What do you do when you want to know what a goat weighs? Usually you are fumbling for this piece of information when treating your herd for parasites or dosing with other medications which are administered according to the patient's weight. Do you lug the bathroom scales out to the barn, get on the scales to determine your own weight (while carefully shielding this information from all others in the barn) and then, get on the scales again, holding a squirming goat and subtract the first weight from the second? Maybe you even have a set of those nifty scales that set to zero for your weight (and save the embarrassment of actually glowing digitally with your guarded statistics) and just weighs the goat.

Or, do you look at the goat and say, "I think she looks slightly heavier than the dog who got weighed at the vet's last week, so I'll just add five pounds to the dog's weight." Or, do you lift her briefly and say, "A little lighter than a feed bag," and use 45 pounds?

The goat ranchers with larger herds no doubt have a special weighing device which, simply and quickly gives them the information they need. But, for the rest of us, what can we do?

The *Caprine Supply* catalog sells a Dairy Goat Weight Tape, which we have been using. This tape is 44" long and sells for \$3.25 plus shipping. It's made out of a tough paper material, stitched on one side and complete with two metal ends. It's fairly durable; in three years of use, only one metal end has come off.

To use the tape, you place the tape around the goat, just behind the front legs (the heart girth) and read the weight on the tape, which is conveniently listed in pounds and kilograms. If you come up with a weight on 120 pounds for a kid, wrap the tape around the other direction. The tape is supposed to be accurate up to 200 pounds.

Reading from our (dirty) dairy goat tape, the following are selected hearth girth measurements with their related weights:

GIRTH	WEIGHT
<u>Inches</u>	<u>Pounds</u>
10-3/4	5
12	6-1/2
16	15
18	23
24	51
36	140
41	195

An article in the *Australian Goat Notes* states that, even though heart girth measurement is the best indication of goat weight (while keeping in mind cheap and simple), this relationship, based on dairy goats, is not accurate for Australian condition, cashmere goats. Since our cashmere goats are probably closer to Australia's than to dairy goats in body style and weights (assuming you're not feeding your goats like typical tubby American pets!), the heart girth/weight relationship from Australia is most likely more accurate than the dairy goat computations.

The Australian chart (converted to inches and pounds from centimeters and kilograms) is listed below:

GIRTH	WEIGHT				
<u>Inches</u>	<u>Lbs.</u>	<u>Inches</u>	<u>Lbs.</u>	<u>Inches</u>	<u>Lbs.</u>
9.1	3.1	20.1	21.6	31.1	80.3
9.4	3.3	20.5	22.9	31.5	83.2
9.8	3.5	20.9	24.2	31.9	86.0
10.2	3.7	21.3	25.7	32.3	88.9
10.6	4.2	21.7	27.1	32.7	91.7
11.0	4.4	22.0	28.6	33.1	94.6
11.4	4.8	22.4	30.4	33.5	97.7
11.8	5.3	22.8	31.9	33.9	100.5
12.2	5.7	23.2	33.7	34.3	103.4
12.6	6.2	23.6	35.4	34.6	106.3
13.0	6.6	24.0	37.4	35.0	109.1
13.4	7.0	24.4	39.2	35.4	112.2
13.8	7.5	24.8	41.1	35.8	115.1
14.2	8.1	25.2	43.1	36.2	117.7
14.6	8.8	25.6	45.3	36.6	120.6
15.0	9.5	26.0	47.5	37.0	123.4
15.4	10.1	26.4	49.7	37.4	126.1
15.7	10.8	26.8	51.9	37.8	128.7
16.1	11.4	27.2	54.3	38.2	131.3
16.5	12.3	27.6	56.8	38.6	133.8
16.9	13.2	28.0	59.2	39.0	136.4
17.3	14.1	28.3	61.6	39.4	138.8
17.7	15.0	28.7	64.2	39.8	141.0
18.1	15.8	29.1	66.7	40.2	143.9
18.5	16.9	29.5	69.3	40.6	145.4
18.9	18.0	30.3	74.8	40.9	147.6
19.3	19.1	30.7	77.7	41.3	149.4
19.7	20.5				

These relationships were developed from measurements taken on over 500 goats, ranging in age from one week to adult. Goats measured were from both feral and selected goats.

They note that measurements will vary somewhat depending on how full the goat is.

Goat Stomach Worms

From the National Goat Handbook
USDA Extension Service

Some of the most important internal parasites of goats are "stomach" worms. Because of husbandry practices, diagnosis and treatment-control of these parasites should be approached on the basis of the entire herd, not as individual animals alone.

In a goat herd, young animals under 6 months of age are by far the most susceptible to parasitic infection. This group of kids is highly susceptible since they have had very little exposure to parasites and thereby have very little resistance or immunity.

The second most susceptible animals in the goat herd are the yearlings and 2-year olds. The growing animals, with their rapidly expanding blood volumes are susceptible to blood loss due to the actions of certain species of the stomach worms. This age group also is the most likely to suffer malnutrition which will make them more susceptible to parasitic disease. It is a proven fact that animals receiving an adequate, balanced ration are less susceptible to parasite infection.

The older members of a herd will generally be resistant to parasitism due to prior exposure to the various parasites. However, they will harbor subclinical numbers of the common parasites and thereby serve as reservoirs of infection for the younger, susceptible members of the herd.

All of the parasitic organisms that are capable of producing disease in goats follow a definite life cycle pattern. In general, the actual infection of the goat is by mouth, but there are some necessary developmental stages that occur in the environment, such as in the pasture.

The use of anthelmintic drugs as a part of controlling stomach worm infections in goats is an important and essential part of the total herd health program. The exact drug to use is determined by the

cost per dose and ease of administration with most species of domesticated animals. However, only thiabendazole and phenothiazine are approved for use in goats by the Food and Drug Administration. These anthelmintics are effective, and are probably sufficient for goat use. This is because anthelmintics should be used only as an aid to the series of management techniques. It is proven fact that when anthelmintic drugs are substituted for good management in stomach worm control in a goat herd, poor results are always the end result.

Less common and, therefore, less important internal parasites of goats are liver flukes (*Fasciola hepatica*), lungworms (*Dictyocaulus* sp.) and whipworms (*Trichuris* sp.). These parasites do not respond to thiabendazole or phenothiazine treatment, but other drugs are available, on prescription from a licensed veterinarian. Fortunately, the management practices recommended for controlling stomach worms are effective for controlling these less common parasites.

In conclusion, stomach worms are considered one of the most pathogenic gastrointestinal parasites of goats. They are best controlled by strict management procedures which include drug treatment, but which mainly depends on the prevention of fecal contamination of feed and water.

Fibre News Becomes The Goat Farmer Becomes The Dairy Goat Farmer? (A Bow to the Bag)

The Goat Farmer, a magazine published seven times a year in New Zealand has, in the past focused on fiber goats, including cashmere. The magazine has been published for about thirteen years. It originally covered mohair and cashmere goats. Later Boer goat coverage was included.

In its October-November 1996 issue, Geoff Minchin, Managing Editor, acknowledged the magazine's "increasing number of readers committed to the Boer/goat meat sector of the industry," and changed the name of the magazine to *The Goat Farmer*. It appeared that the name change merely reflected the current coverage of the magazine. Even though the name implied all goat breeds were to be included, coverage seemed to remain with the fiber and meat goat breeds.

However, the latest issue (April-May 1998) arrived with a barnful of (gasp!) dairy goats on the cover. Minchin's opening editorial explains that "after evolving over a period of 10 years from an exclusively mohair magazine to an exclusively fibre magazine" the only way to maintain quality at the level they wanted was to evolve to an all goat magazine.

Minchin proclaims that his magazine is the "only professional fulltime magazine devoted exclusively to international coverage of goats in the world." He asks readers to be tolerant of coverage of other types of goat farming and look at all articles for what you can learn from other farmers.

Horn Etiquette

From information in
The Pack Goat
 a book by John Mionczynski

"Brandishing horns is akin to a mutually assured destruction policy that keeps the fighting to a minimum. (Not having horns is like having the policy but with the knowledge that there are no warheads in anybody's missiles.) But there are more subtle ways of utilizing weapons—for instance, to show trust."

... John Mionczynski

A comparison of man's behavior, with guns (or other potentially destructive weapon of choice) to the goat's behavior (with horns) from John's book, is as follows:

Please note: If you are a rabid anti-gun person, rather than get angry that we've even mentioned the word "gun," please substitute mentally, the words "taut rubber band" in the chart below at every horrid reference to the word "gun."



Cloudy and Rayvon

Above: An example of horn types A and C. Type A, left, grow out to the sides in long, curving lines. Type C horns, right, grow sharply up first, then out, and then more up in a spiral.

Below: An example of type B. horns. They are thick and heavy at the base and grow back and out, more curled toward the head than the other two types.

Are there more types than these three? Probably. And does any of this mean much for breeders? Probably not.

HUMAN BEHAVIOR	GOAT BEHAVIOR
Two men (or women) meet, one aims a gun at the other—a clear statement of aggression.	Brandishing of horns with aggressive body language.
Man holds gun at hip level, in general direction of another man.	Chin held in, horns angled pointed towards othergoat. Other goat watched out of the corner of the eye.
Man holds gun at side, pointed at the ground.	Stands at angle to the other goat, relaxed, does not stare directly at other goat.
Man sets gun aside and smiles.	Goat extends nose, horns go back (non-threatening) Stands alongside other goat.
Man offers to shake hands.	Goat rests side of face on other goat's face or neck. (Total trust)



The Horns of a Goat

By Paul Johnson

Have you felt your goat's horn on a hot day? The base will be hot, but the horn cools as you slide your hand up the length of the horn. A goat's horns are its radiators, dissipating up to 12% of the animal's body heat.

Horns are comprised of porous bone tissue and sinus cavity for half or more of the length. Horns are very sturdy, made of organic polymers, which contain keratin much like hooves, except harder and thicker.

Antlers (which the un-goat people often accuse our goats of having) are, by contrast, more of a bone-like material. Antlers are more brittle than horns. They are solid, bony and branched and shed by the bearer annually.

During head-butting, the skull and lower horn are a shock-absorbing mechanism. The horns are also used for defense (and offense!) and to handily scratch an itch.

Most goat references proclaim that getting rid of the horns is best, especially for dairy goats. Horns can get stuck in fences and feeders, making the stuck goat an easy target for other goats with grudges. In crowded conditions, goats can injure one another or a careless human. In most other breeds of goats, horn removal is required for registry or showing the goat. In most breeds, a goat's horns are considered a fault. In cashmere-producing goats, it comes down to personal preference. Most cashmere breeders leave their goat's horns intact, although some prefer their removal.

Removal is fairly easy (called disbudding), but briefly painful, at a very young age. Removal of horns, by accident or design, on an older goat can be life threatening.

It is a fact that breeding for polled (hornless) goats has unpleasant side effects (hermaphroditism). Maybe there's a message here. In any event, DO NOT mix horned goats with unhorned goats! The horned goats will most certainly damage the unhorned goats.

I think horns are one of the characteristics that gives goats their distinctive personalities. At every public event where we've displayed goats, the horns draw attention. People seem fascinated by the horns. Or maybe, because people are so used to seeing hornless goats, they merely find our horned variety unusual.

As all cashmere goat owners who have had their goats past one maintenance chore realize, horns are actually goat handles. The goat may be more easily managed by grabbing it by the horns. Although, this works extremely well with adult goats, and they even become quite used to it, beware of lugging around kids by

their horns. Kid horns are often soft and thin. We avoid moving kids using their horns for at least a year or longer, depending on the size and strength of their horns. Breaking off a horn can lead to serious health problems.

I have observed three distinct types of horns on our farm. I concocted an elaborate theory on the three types of horns being indicative of what section of the country the goats' ancestors were from, labeling the three types (fondly and originally) A, B and C. After constructing charts and diagrams on my own, and after finding all the resources available to me contained absolutely nothing except the recurring comment, "Lose them!" I find I still can't conclude a whole lot. But, just in case, any remnants of my thoughts remain after the editor gets done whacking through them, here's my conclusions:

There are three types of horns on our farm—A, B, and C. Type A grow out to the sides in long, curving lines; type B has thick, heavy, flat bases, and grow back, then out to the side; type C grows sharply up, then out, then up (See photos on previous page.) In young bucks, it is often easy to distinguish horn type at a young age by examining the early shape of the horn, and the trait appears to be very heritable. It is usually easy to tell the family line visually by looking at the horns.

Who has horns?

Goats, cows, sheep, true antelope.

Who has antlers?

Deer, moose, elk, people's living rooms.

WETHER REPORT

by Dorothy Benedict

The article below was originally printed in the Eastern Cashmere Association's Spring 1998 Hoofprints newsletter.

If they haven't arrived by now, they soon will. I mean the cashmere kids and, with them, the extra males we will turn into wethers.

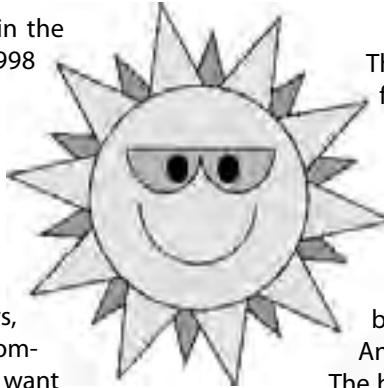
Along with being excellent fiber producers, these little guys are wonderful pets and companions. If you are new to goats, you may want to know about different methods of castration and how they work. Here is an overview.

Surgical Castration

This procedure is usually done by a veterinarian. It involves removal of the lower part of the scrotum and removal of the testes. This is done with the aid of an anesthetic in older bucks. Younger bucklings are sometimes castrated without anesthesia. Care must be taken regarding the time of year when this is done because the surgery creates an open wound. Therefore, this should be done before the arrival of fly season. This is a complete and unquestionable method of castration.

Rubber Rings

Castration rings made of rubber are available from goat supply houses. The rings are used with a special applicator which enlarges the ring while the scrotum is placed inside of the ring. The applicator is then removed and the band tightens around the scrotum, cutting off the blood supply. Care must be taken to ensure that the rubber ring is placed snugly where the scrotum is attached to the buckling. The rings should also be treated with disinfectant before application.



This method, while bloodless, is uncomfortable for the buckling, but he will forget about it in a few days. The scrotum will dry up and fall off in a couple of weeks. This method is easily done by the goat owner.

Burdizzo

The burdizzo is a castration device which works by actual crushing of the cord above each testis. Anesthetic is not usually used with this method.

The buckling is held tightly while the vet applies the burdizzo to each side of the scrotum. Although I have used this method with success, there are many cases of semi-castration due to the failure to crush all of the necessary material, resulting in a frustrated wether and a frustrated owner. The advantage of this method is that it, too, is bloodless, although your buckling may not let you near him for a very long time. It must be very scary and painful.

So—there you have it—the three most commonly used methods for reaching gender harmony in your herd. Remember to cut down on the grain for your new wethers or cut out grain completely. The development of stones in highly grain-fed little wethers can be avoided by feeding good quality (not alfalfa) hay.

From your wether person, that is all. May all your little guys be fair wethers.

What is the productive life span of a cashmere-producing goat?

While first fleeces are an important indicator of what's to come, a goat's second fleece is usually the best, as far as **amount** of cashmere is concerned. The second fleece is generally the biggest of the goat's life. In subsequent years, fleece weight gradually tapers off, until the sixth fleece (approximate goat age = 7 years).

By fleece year 6, the yearly decline in volume becomes more dramatic, and continues in a steep decline thereafter. The annual decrease is noted at 9.08% in year 6, and 15.2% in year 7.

Based solely on the criteria of cashmere fleece weight, it becomes unfeasible (in theory) to keep a goat past age 7. However, other factors must be considered, such as reproduction abilities, which may not peak until year 5.

These results were obtained from a study using 221 does ("she goats") at the Baihutai Cashmere Breeding trial base, Akera Cashmere Goat Research Center, Xingjiang, China, and reported at the VI International Conference on Goats (1996) by Zhang Fuquang and Shi Bele.

GUARD LLAMA STUDY FOR SPECIES *OTHER* THAN SHEEP IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

If you are a farmer or rancher who has ever suffered livestock losses due to predation, we need your help! Predation has long been a problem for ranchers in the United States. Coyotes and other predators cost ranchers millions of dollars per year in terms of livestock loss.

Although the most publicity is given to sheep which are killed by coyotes, predation is also a major problem for ranchers raising goats, poultry, deer, foals, and calves. One fairly new predator control technique that seems to be working well so far is the use of guard llamas to watch over farm animals.

A previous study conducted at Iowa State University by Dr. William Franklin and Kelly Powell involved interviewing farmers who had used guard llamas to protect their sheep. The results of this study were encouraging. It was shown that predation was reduced from 11% to 1% of the flock after a guard llama was introduced. In addition, 88% of the ranchers said that they were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the performance of their guard llama. Some advantages of using a guard llama are its long life span, the lack of training required, and the fact that little or no special care is needed.

A second study is now being conducted at Iowa State University to further investigate the use and effectiveness of the guard llama. This study will focus on the use of guard llamas to protect farm animals other than sheep. Ranchers who use llamas to guard goats, poultry (chickens, ducks, geese, etc.), foals, deer, or calves, will be interviewed about the effectiveness of their guard llamas and also about the management practices which they are using. In this study, we hope to determine whether llamas are as useful for guarding these other farm species as they are for guarding sheep and also define specific characteristics which can predict the effectiveness of a guard llama.

We need your help to make this project a success! If you use llamas as guards for these farm species or know of anyone who does, please contact us so that we may learn more about your good and bad experiences.

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**Dave guards the kids.
How effective is a llama for guarding the goats?
Iowa State researchers want to know!**

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Selenium

Too Much? Too Little?

Selenium is a trace mineral which can cause problems with livestock if too little or too much is ingested.

A deficiency occurs when soil contains less than 0.5 mg Se/Kg soil and the goats are fed on feeds (less than 0.1 mg Se/kg of feed) harvested from these soils. Selenium deficiency has been found in animals and man in United States, China, Australia, New Zealand and Finland. In the United States, areas low in selenium include the Pacific Northwest, New York and Ohio.

Trace amounts of selenium, 0.1 - 0.3 parts per million, are required by goats to prevent such deficiency problems as white muscle disease, lowered conception rates and decreased milk production. Some livestock feeds and mineral mixes are supplemented with selenium. However, supplementation levels are controlled by law in the United States, so even if a supplemented feed is fed to animals in a selenium-deficient area, the extra selenium provided may not be enough. By law, selenium supplementation in cattle or sheep feed cannot exceed 0.3 ppm and

cannot exceed 90 ppm added to a sheep salt-mineral mix. Some veterinarians market mineral mixes with prescription strength selenium for herds where a specific deficiency has been documented.

Additional selenium can also be added to an animal by injection or orally. Many herds who deal with a selenium deficiency, incorporate periodic injections of a prescription vitamin E/selenium preparation (such as Bo-Se) to their animals at regular intervals. Some herds are injected shortly before breeding and at 4-6 weeks before kidding for does, twice a year for bucks and at birth and one year of age for kids. Typical goat dosage is one to two times the labelled sheep dosage.

Your local veterinarian or extension personnel can help you find out what the selenium needs are for your area and can help you determine if supplementation is needed for your herd.

Selenium excess can also be a problem so it is unwise to booster selenium when there is no need. Areas with excess selenium include western plains of Canada,

Mexico, Colorado, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming.

Selenium amounts of 3-5 ppm can result in anorexia and poisoning. Some soils contain too much selenium—they're called seleniferous. Certain species of plants, such as Stanleya, Haplopappus and some species of Astragalus grow in seleniferous soils and accumulate even more selenium in the plant. Most crop plants, grasses and weeds can also accumulate an excess of selenium if grown on seleniferous soils. Excess selenium is corrected by withholding selenium-rich grains or forage.

References:

The Merck Veterinary Manual, 7th Edition. Stamm, GW, Veterinary Guide for Farms, 1975.

Smith, Mary C. and Sherman, David M., Goat Medicine, 1994.

Map of US regions where selenium in soils is deficient or toxic

- ☒ Low--80% of forage and grain has less than .05 ppm
- ☐ Variable--about 50% contains more than .1 ppm
- ☐ Adequate--80% has more than .1 ppm
- Local areas where accumulator plants contain over 50 ppm



Learn How To Kid When *You* Want To

By Linda Cortright
Grumble Goat Farm



**HC (at Goat Knoll) welcoming a brand new baby.
We planned when she should have it.
She had it when she wanted to.**

There seems to be one universal truth governing the birth process. Whether it is humans, goats, or big fat manatees, the actual moment of birth is pretty much a mystery until it arrives. I was willing to accept this margin of uncertainty and just camp out in the barn during kidding season so as not to miss a moment of the thrill and glop. But the experience of this past spring has taught me that the arrival of kids has more to do with my nesting habits than those of the goats.

For the past two years, my does have all kidded before their scientifically-calculated due dates. I have friends, mostly goat friends, who have all sorts of methods for determining when birth is imminent. But I believe that if you know your goats well, you'll just know when it's time to go grab the iodine.

My first goat to kid this year was due on a Tuesday, so the proceeding Sunday I assembled the ap-

propriate kidding paraphernalia, (I'll let someone who is more informed write about the contents of a kidding kit.) and headed for the barn. I checked Esprit's sides; they looked pretty big. Checked her udder; it looked pretty full. Checked her vulva (have to be thorough) and it was pink. Even did the old finger down the spine to the base of the tail routine to see if it felt detached. I've never been very good with that method but I try it anyway. So everything seemed ready to go. Where were the kids?

After several hours of pretending to be busy cleaning the barn while turning around and looking at her every six seconds, I reluctantly left the barn and returned to the house mildly disappointed. Perhaps tomorrow.

Monday morning, back to the barn fresh with anticipation fully expecting to see little slimy legs protruding from Esprit's back end. Nothing. Not even a dribble. Well, it was still early in the day and there was plenty of time for her to produce. By noontime my spirits were beginning to dwindle; but gosh, the barn really was getting cleaned out.

In the meantime, another animal had emerged on the scene, a winged animal. Prior to moving to Maine from suburban Philadelphia I thought all flies were created equal. I still think they are created equal—equally annoying. It's just that black flies in Maine are created in the trillions. Every spring, when the weather warms just so, and you entertain thoughts of taking the snowplow off the truck, the black flies descend. They stay about a month and then disappear. It is a miserable time for both humans and goats. The flies cling to their face. They cling to their tail. They swarm the barn and go up your nose. It's disgusting but I figure it's our trade off for not having rattlesnakes. (There isn't a fly big enough to compete with a rattlesnake in my book.) That Monday morning the black flies descended.

Tom came home that night anxious to see the new arrivals and I said, with a slight smirk, "Oh, they're here—all six million of them."

I had unearthed our fly nets from the preceding season and together we ventured down to the barn, nets on heads, for one last check on Esprit before bedtime. Although I have become accustomed to buzzing around under my veil of protective netting I always feel I should be fending off something a bit more exotic than black flies in Maine.

Continued on next page

Planned Kidding

Continued from previous page

Nothing new at the barn except more flies, so, disappointed and annoyed, I went to bed. Tomorrow would be the day. After all, that was her official due date.

Tuesday morning, up and out to the barn. No kids. More flies. All day long I waited and kept thinking of a way to relieve their obvious distress. Clearly I couldn't spray them with bug juice and somehow the idea of rubbing Avon's Skin so Soft* all over them just lacked the proper livestock motif. It was a long, disturbing day.

Tom came home from work; once again, optimistic about new arrivals and I could barely respond, my disappointment was so great. By now you realize my goats are something of an obsession, but don't let that get in the way of a good story.

Wednesday morning: it had to be today. The black flies were driving me out of my mind and the goats could find no peace. How could this poor goat possibly go into labor when she's bolting from these insidious bugs every two minutes? I began to wonder...just exactly how upset would Tom be if I brought them inside? No, perhaps a bit more patience might be prudent.

Day five, Thursday, was the day to take action. I believe there really is a solution to everything if you work on it long enough and obviously the reason poor Esprit had not kidded was because her instincts told her not to bring babies into this plague-ridden environment. (I don't know if those were her exact thoughts but I'm probably close.) So, where to take her without upsetting her emotionally. Aha! The garage, that's it! The garage is well sealed—no black flies. All I needed to do was section off an area for a kidding pen and voila!—she would produce.

For the next two plus hours I maneuvered boxes and shoved things around and basically moved the entire contents of our last two houses to make room for one goat. My adrenaline was going; I knew the answer was at hand. Poor Esprit, down there with all those nasty flies making her miserable. I'll give her a nice little screened-in room all her own. (Can't you just see the Texans doing this?)

The pen was completed and surely I would have kids before noon. But first, I had to rescue the three non-pregnant ladies who were also being eaten alive.

I could put them in the back of the truck, open the side windows with screens, drive around the block a few times so they would settle down and life would be great. Gee, why hadn't I thought of all this three days ago?

Back down to the barn to load the three ladies I go and we're off on a ten-minute ride. Immediately they knew they were fly free and settled right down. I parked the truck in the shade and went to go take Esprit to the new maternity ward.

Now, what I'm about to tell you causes me great embarrassment and I am loath to expose my foolishness, but it's all in the name of helping the industry. I walked down to the barn and to my shock and amazement, there were two slimy legs sticking out below Esprit's tail. Yup, right there in the thick of the flies, Esprit was doing her thing. Well, can I tell you my relief that the kids were finally arriving? And not only did her twins come spilling out but, within less than five minutes, my other goat kidded.

The morale of this story is that when someone tells you to watch for signs of nesting, they mean yours, not the goats.

**Avon's Skin So Soft is used by many folk as an effective bug repellent. Some of these people are even knowledgeable folk and still claim it works. I stick with my net.*

Linda Cortright is the new Eastern Correspondent for CashMirror magazine. She will be officially introduced to you in the next issue. Right now, she's getting ready to go for a sailing trip on a "way cool boat."

Myst (with two huge babies nursing)

"Motherhood is overrated!"

Breed Characteristics of Changthangi Pashmina Goat

There are, apparently, two breeds of pashmina (cashmere) goats in India—the Chegu and the Changthangi. Both are found at high altitudes in the Himalayan mountain range bordering Tibet. The Chegu breed has been studied by other researchers, producing detailed description of breed characteristics and production performance.

A 1996 research paper written by R.K. Misra, B. Singh, V. K. Jain, from the Central Institute for Research on Goats in India, presents the breed characteristics on the neglected breed—the Changthangi pashmina goat.

This article is an attempt to pass along those interesting characteristics to you, in less and smaller words.

A nomadic tribe, known as the Changpa, rears these goats. They're not sure exactly how many of them there are now, but in 1977, they counted 103,905 total goats in the Leh district with 77% of this number being pashmina. So, like good researchers, they guessed that the goats increased 2.8% per year and estimate that there are now (now being 1995) 224,000 Changthangi pashmina goats. Of course, we can take this approach too and bring the number up to the real now (still using 2.8%) and guess that in 1998, there are 243,348 goats. Even if we are off a bit, there's still quite a few of these goats now.

The local nomads keep the goats under an open range system. In the summer (June - September), they migrate to high alpine pastures for grazing. In the winter, they are brought down to the valleys.

To study this goat, foundation stock was purchased from the Changthang region (in the Leh district in Ladakh) from the nomads, I presume. The goats were raised and studied at the Research Center in Upshi, in the Leh district.

Generally the Changthangi is a medium-sized goat who lives in the cold, arid region of Ladakh, India. They survive in

a harsh climate at an altitude of about 10,000 feet. Rainfall averages only 11 - 16 inches per year, temperature ranges from 140° F in the summer to -40° F in the winter, which means the landscape is understandably barren.

Bucks at age three and does at age four both weigh, on an average, about 65 pounds. Average cashmere production of first through fifth clips, were: 78 grams, 159 grams, 227 grams, 191 grams and 195 grams. For you determined ounce people, that's 2-3/4 oz, 5.6 oz, 8 oz, 6.7 oz, and 6.9 oz. Assuming these figures are correct for actual cashmere produced, that is a lot of cashmere for a smallish, fine-fibered goat.

As they decided that the heritability of yield was high, the researchers envision a plan to improve the pashmina yield of these native goats in their native habitat.

The goats studied at Upshi farm are maintained similarly to the nomadic-raised goats except they are fed, contained in chain link fencing in the winter, new babies are given lots of attention and shelter in thatched huts and goats are vaccinated and treated for parasites. Other than these minor differences, everything else is the same.

All figures in this study were based on the farm-raised goats, not the goats as raised by the nomads.

Maternal instincts in does are poor. Most abandon their babies at birth due to, they are guessing, a poor milk supply due to inadequate nutrition. The farm give the kids special attention to ensure their survival. Kids are vaccinated against clostridial diseases, wormed, and weaned at four months of age.

Goats graze for about seven hours per day, depending on the weather and are fed a concentrate supplement. In the summer, the herd is taken to high altitude pastures and are range grazed.

Researchers note that the growth of the

Pashmina

pashmina: From a Persian term for wool (pasham), meaning the fine, soft fiber spun from the undercoat of Himalayan mountain goats. Pashmina is also known as cashmere.

The Pashmina (Cashmere) fibre is derived from a mountain goat called 'Chyangra' which is native to the Himalayan belt, around and above 10,000 ft. above sea level. The Pasham is the fine inner (under) growth over which the goat has another layer of thick and coarse dead fibres. The Pasham is profusely mixed up with these dead fibres. It is an extremely complicated technique to extricate pure Pasham from the beds of the coarser dead fibres into which the real fibre is deeply embedded. Unless fibres are cleaned up to 98% purity before hand spinning, the unique texture of Pashmina does not emerge.

NEPAL PASHMINA INDUSTRY

From their web page at:

<http://www.catmando.com/pashmina/pashmina.htm>

pashmina fiber depends on the severity of the winter. When temperatures rise in May, the pashmina loosens from the skin and becomes trapped in the outer coat.

To harvest the fiber, the goat is combed with a metal comb. The combed fleece contains about 30% guard hairs and a small amount (less than 4%) of very fine intermediate fibers which are nearly 42 µm in diameter. These intermediate fibers are difficult to separate out during (hand) dehairing.

The researchers collected data on body weights of 1,095 kids born between the years 1976 and 1981. They analyzed weight differences by sex, year and season of kidding and age of dam at kidding. They also collected data on pashmina yields

Continued on next page

Pashmina

Continued from previous apge

from 541 goats over this five year period.

Goat coat color is mostly white, but there are black, brown and mixed colored coats as well. The outer coat of guard hair is long and shiny. The pashmina undercoat grows close to the body surface and is white or light brown in color. Both sexes have horns, both have beards and you see a variety of ear shapes and sizes.

Average body weights of kids at birth, 3 months, 6 months, 9 months and 12 months is 4.6 lb, 18.5 lb, 22.4 lb, 28 lb, and 35 pounds. Little guys. Birth weights for kids born to does less than two years old were significantly smaller for the first six months of the kid's life.

Peak pashmina yield was at age 3. On the first clip, does produced, on average, more pashmina than bucks. On later clips, the bucks produced more. However, bucks were selectively culled for breeding purposes after the first year, so, it stands to reason that later clips for bucks retained would average more and this number wouldn't necessarily mean anything.

Goats with higher body weights did not necessarily produce more pashmina.

The paper states that: "Pashmina fibres grow from secondary follicles. These fibres are non-medullated and are devoid of crimps." There may be a translation problem here regarding the lack of crimp.

Average fiber length was about 2 inches. Average fiber diameter was 12 μm , with a range of 9.1 μm to 16.7 μm . Researchers said the pashmina fibers were similar to the fiber on a Chegu and Mongolian pashmina goat, but much finer than the fiber from a Chinese cashmere or Australian feral goat.

Kidding rates were noted to be 85.3%, with only .6% of does producing twins. Does normally kidded once a year and were seasonally oestrus. They say that puberty was at 889 days (2-1/2 years?)

Mortality rate was low (at least on the farm) at 2.3% for 0-4 month kids, 3.9% for 4-12 month goats and 1.5% for adults (older than 1 year).

Researchers note that the fibers are too fine to be processed mechanically (They note that fibers finer than 16 μm cannot be processed by machine.) but that this is OK as the local artisans are trained in this trade and other employment in the cold desert of Ladakh is lacking.

Researchers feel that the Changthangi pashmina goats are part of the precious genetic resources of India and seek breeding strategies to increase yield without compromising fiber fineness. They had considered, in the past, crossing the Changthangi with the Gorno-Altayskya breed of the former USSR, but believe now that any yield increase would be obtained at a cost to fiber fineness.

Did You Shear This Year?

Many cashmere goat farmers in several countries, including Australia and New Zealand, reportedly are not/have not sheared this season due to the low world prices for raw cashmere. Remember that shearing season in Australia and New Zealand is late summer here.

However most are keeping their goats for the time being for weed control and possible meat sales.

The root cause seems to be a combination of the Southeast Asian financial crisis and large stocks of cashmere the Chinese are trying sell at any price. Some are concerned this may lead Chinese farmers to sell their goats for meat due to the extremely low price they receive for fiber.

Reading all available literature on the subject leads one to conclude that next year's international cashmere market will be better/worse/same with demand lower/higher/same.

What Did Your Goats Do Today?

Generally, goats spend 30% of the day feeding (usually sunrise, noon and sunset sessions—1/3 grazing time and 2/3 browsing time). 48% of the day is spent resting, 10% ruminating and 12% travelling.

Also, on the average, a goat defecates 11.2 times a day and urinates 8.3 times per day. Cool.

Calendar of Events

Association Contacts

June 19-21, 1998

Black Sheep Gathering
Lane County Fairgrounds, Eugene, Oregon. Sheep and Angora goat shows, workshops, talks, demonstrations, wool and mohair show and sale, trade show. For info: 25455 NW Dixie Mtn. Rd., Scappoose, OR 97056, 503-621-3063.

July 17, 1998

Open Class Cashmere Goat Show, Crook County Fair, Prinville, Oregon, Friday, 4pm, Premiums paid through 4th place. Entry fee - \$2/head. For info, entry forms, premium books, contact Crook County Fair, PO Box 507, Prinville, OR 97754.
Phone: 541-447-8675

August 1, 1998

Open Class Cashmere Goat Show, Washington County Fair, 872 28th St., Hillsboro, Oregon, 503-648-1416 or Lisa Zietz, 503-324-0910, email: moon@hevanet.com

September 26-27, 1998

Oregon Flock & Fiber Festival
Clackamas County Fairgrounds, Canby, Oregon
Cashmere, Pygora, Angora livestock and fiber shows and sales. For more info contact Brandy Chastain, 30881 SW Bald Peak Rd., Hillsboro, OR 97123, phone 503-628-1205, email: wstlstop@gte.net

October 3-4, 1998

15th annual Wool Festival at Kit Carson Park, Taos, New Mexico, Demonstrations, sales, animal exhibits. For info contact Nicole Yardley, 6069 WCR 5, Erie, CO 80516, 303-828-3638.

November 13-15, 1998

Kid 'N Ewe (9th annual) Central Texas Wool Market, Blanco County Fairgrounds, Johnson City, Texas. Demonstrations, fiber arts displays, vendors, animals, sheep and goat shearing, lamb dinner with fashion show and auction. For info and tickets: Tara Wheeler (evenings) 512-288-9845, Mary Carol Buchholz (evenings) 512-858-7920.

American Meat Goat Association

W. E. Banker, President, 512-384-2829

Cashmere America Co-operative

Joe David Ross, Manager, 915-387-6052
fax: 915-387-2642
Wes Ackley (Maine) 207-336-2948
Marti Wall (Washington) 360-424-7935

Cashmere Producers of America (CaPrA)

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Carol Kromer, Club Contact, 719-347-2329

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North West Cashmere Association (NWCA)

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Pygora Breeders Association (PBA)

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Texas Cashmere Association

Dee Broyles, President
806-489-7645 office, 806-489-7959 home

Wild Goat Women

Debbie Walstead, Chairperson, 719-495-2962

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15419 E Rio Verde Drive
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Blocksburg, CA 95514
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"During a daylight air raid a plane dropped a stick of bombs across the holding; one in the garden, another on the fence between garden and paddock; while the whine of the departing plane was still in his ears, the owner poked his head out of his shelter to see what had become of the goats grazing in the paddock. They were eating cabbages in the garden."



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Special rates for August 1998 issue-See Page 3



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...Susan Black Drummond

Angora Goats the Northern Way, 1993

"Find me a cashmere goat who produces 16 ounces a year and I'll take a dozen!"

...Paul Johnson

Lisa's ad

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