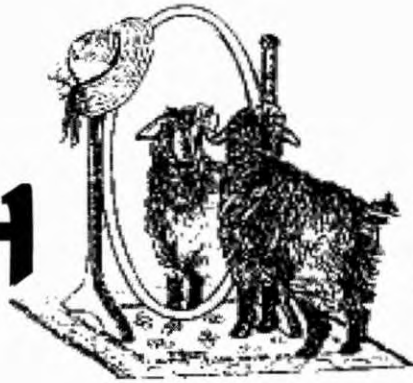


CASH MIRROR



Volume 11, Issue 2

November 1999

The monthly magazine devoted to cashmere goats and their fiber



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CASHMIRROR

ISSN 1090-736X

Technical Information

This magazine is published each month by:

CashMirror Publications

2280 S. Church Rd.
Dallas, Oregon 97338
503-623-5194

E-Mail: goatknol@teleport.com

Home Page: [http://](http://teleport.com/~goatknol)

[www.](http://www.teleport.com/~goatknol)

Publisher and Internet Whiz:

Paul Johnson

Editor: Linda Fox

Eastern Correspondent:

Linda Cortright

N. Rocky Mountain Correspondent:

Yvonne Zweede-Tucker

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Cover photo: Marilyn Ackley

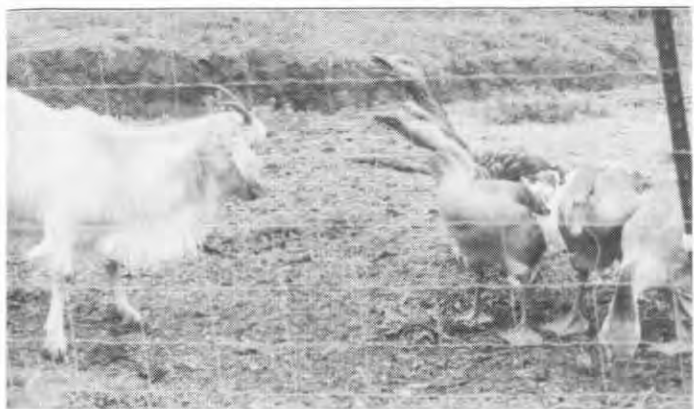
Bessey Place Cashmere, Buckfield, Maine

"A young fairgoer meeting a Black Fen doe baby"

Helen and the Geese



It's getting close to winter and food is getting scarce. What can a practical goat do when the geese get tossed a can of grain. It looks like it might be tasty even for a goat. The other goats kept their distance, but Helen has always had a bit different personality from the rest of the herd. She inspects the geese at close range, assessing her chances of being allowed to feed.



The closer Helen gets to the grain, the more the geese hiss. Even though geese aren't armed with sharp horns or shredding claws, they have been known to deliver a nasty bite when irritated. Will the grain be worth being bitten? There are four geese here and only one small goat.



Helen and the geese arrive at a compromise. Each allows the other to eat at the end of the pile. What happened when they reached the middle? We didn't wait around to find out, but our bet would have been on the geese.

Correction! **ECA/Virginia State Fair** **Cashmere Goat Show**

In the last issue, we listed the Grand Champion doe as SF L7 Perelli, owned by Roy and Anne Repaske. This was incorrect. The winner was her sister, SF L6 Puccini, also owned by Roy and Anne Repaske, Stoney Crest Farm, Star Tannery, Virginia.

The photograph on page 12 of the last issue was of Roy and the winning doe—but it was Puccini, rather than Perelli, as well.

Both Puccini and Perelli, along with another doe, Raisin, sired by the same buck, SF Mozart, won the Get of Sire competition.

Let's see them again—with the correct names!



Roy Repaske and Puccini
Grand Champion Doe

Reflections

by Linda Fox

Musings of a Hoof Trimmer

I just finished trimming the feet on the does and doe kids—all 67 of them. I probably could have finished it in a day if I had to, but I did it over two half days. My back and hands thanked me. It would have made more sense to wait until Paul had time to lend an extra pair of hands, but the last two doe trims have been done on my own. It's a personal challenge to set up a system that one person can handle. It also gives me a chance for a quiet thoughtful day with just me and the girls. Besides, it was raining and the does were just hanging around the barn anyway. I'm sure they wanted relief from barn boredom.

I remember James Barton from Texas saying that if he had to trim hooves, he wouldn't have goats. I relish this brief time with each individual goat and besides, when else would I have quiet time to solve the problems of the world? I have trimmed so many hooves over the years that my mind isn't involved in the process; the hands and trimmers complete the job on their own. I mentally surface once in a while to plot the capture of an unruly goat or to make a specific note about a certain goat on the barn worksheet. However, for most of the doe herd, its just open the gate, wait for a volunteer, close the gate, fasten the goat over her pan of grain with a snap-on collar attached to a dog leash attached to a post in the barn (or fasten her in the platform stand), trim, drag her to another gate to let her out and then check her off the worksheet. The goat gets grain which makes the whole process fairly palatable for her.

Considering we have a minimum of handling equipment, we have a good system aided by well-motivated goats. We have a modified milking stand which the "orange girls" will climb for trimming. The "orange" girls are the 1998 does with bright orange ear tags which I combed on the milking stand this year. Their previous stints in the device eating grain made this a desirable spot for them. My back liked this as well. Since I could see the advantages of getting the goats closer to my level for work, I decided to put the "blue girls" (this year's does) in the stand as well. This was their first adventure with the device so there was a bit of squirreling about it, but most found the trade of food for a brief confinement an adequate exchange.

The older girls, the "white girls", "yellow girls" and various other colored tags had not been trained to the stand and often, their larger horns would not fit through the stanchion. So they continue to be trimmed at ground level. I figure they do well with the current system and as the years pass (and my back ages) an increasing number of does will be trained to enjoy platform trimming. I will need to change the stand to allow for bigger horns. I'll need to dig out Larry Lofdahl's platform stand plans soon which is designed to accommodate cashmere goat horns.

Trimming each hoof gets me all the way around the goat—up close and personal so I can check her carefully, noting strengths and weaknesses and fine-tuning breeding plans

to improve her kids. I also make notes on this year's kids which will be entered into my computer data base. This little bit of early information will give me something to analyze prior to the first fleece. This will help me bring one more year's kids into my analysis for deciding which attractive (or at least personable) doe gets which smelly buck.

Their feet looked pretty good this time considering the last trim was four months ago. Most needed a trim with the wet season just beginning, but there were no serious problems. In a wet climate such as ours, religious attention to hoof care is a must, especially in the wet months. This doesn't mean you have to trim feet monthly, it just means you need to do it periodically—we've been doing it three times per year. You also need to make sure they have a place to hang out where their feet can dry out and you need to keep an eye out for limpers. We've removed small sticks, embedded rocks and even a fence clip hung up in hooves.

I like hoof trimming, although I'm glad our sheep only require a once a year fix. Somehow hoof trimming on the sheep and the llama is not quite the same.

As I reached the last 10 goats, catching them becomes more of a challenge. Of course I'm down to a batch of this year's doelings who haven't been taught the concept of standing still for food. It will take them a few passes through the system to understand that they will get grain for their time and they can trust me not to harm them. This time, I will have to corner them and grab. Someday we'll have a chute system to make our life easier and theirs less stressful, but for now, I chase the mob into a smaller area and corner them one by one. I push the small squirming heads through the platform stand stanchion and hook them in. Some calm down and immediately attack the grain in front of their nose while some shiver the whole time I nip gently on their small toes and talk to them, reassuring them that everything is all right.

When the last does are done, I let everyone out of the barn, feed the dogs and barn cats and trudge towards the house with my dirty, crumpled barn worksheet in hand. I run myself a warm bath to soak my stiff hands and tired back. It feels good to have the chore done and rewarding to find healthy goats and no serious problems.

And as for the problems of the world—I didn't solve them all today. The world will just have to limp along without me for the next few months—at least until the next hoof trim is due.

Pelleted Feeds

What comes in small handy packages which look somewhat like miniature unwrapped tootsie rolls? Hint: It comes in heavy sacks at your local feed store. It's pelleted feeds. They are often billed as a more nutritious, less-wasteful version of whole grains and hay for feeding your animals. Does this mean that they are always preferable if they are affordable? Well, maybe...

Pelleted feeds are those feeds which have been scrunched, molded and shaped versus those that are merely mixed or baled into various shaped hay bales. Pellets have advantages and disadvantages as pointed out in a recent article by Woody Lane, Ph.D., which appeared in the October 1999 issue of *The Shepherd* magazine. Pelleting animal foodstuffs increases some of the nutritional values of the feed and decreases others. It is good to understand the pelleting process and be able to compare and understand the differences beyond cost factors.

Pelleting is more than merely forcing feed elements through a die under heat, moisture and pressure. The elements of the food are first ground which involves smashing the fiber. After the fiber is smashed, the shaping process, which involves heat and moisture, may also change the nutritional value of the feed. Advantages and disadvantages of pelleted feed are as follows:

The Advantages

Pelleting has a greater effect on fiber-based feeds (such as alfalfa or other hay) than on non-fiber elements. Non-fiber parts of the feed, such as sugar and fat are very digestible in any form so grinding and other abuse doesn't change them much. Grinding fiber elements of the mixture smashes the fiber structure. The fiber is still all there, but it has more of its surface exposed which makes it more digestible to the goat. This is good because your goats' rumen microbes have easier access to fiber particles which increases the digestibility of the feed by speeding up fermentation. It's somewhat like comparing how long a whole apple takes to ferment compared to applesauce. The applesauce is going to get really ugly first.

Not all ground fibers will be digested more quickly. Lignin and other fibers are not digestible at all, so smashing them will not put smiles on the faces of the rumen microbes. In case you are beginning to think that this fiber mashing is generally all good, don't forget to read about the down side in the Disadvantages section.

Another advantage of pelleted feeds is that animals generally consume a greater amount of it than whole feeds. Smashed up food takes up less space in the rumen and animals are able to wolf down large quantities of the food in a short period of time without much effort. Even though this may be poor caprine table manners, this is good because more food intake means more nutrients going through the digestive system which would seem to increase the nutritional status of the animal. More food equals more weight gain and faster growth.

In the pelleting process, a small amount of heat is produced which may increase the digestibility of some of the feed proteins. Moist heat may also gelatinize some forms of starch which can increase their digestibility in the lower digestive tract.

The Disadvantages

About smashing the fiber to increase digestibility: Pelleted food contains everything in the feed including hay stems and other less nutritious parts of the feed which a discriminating goat might just pass over if she is given the chance. Goats will eat the best parts of any food first and leave the rest for later—or for never. With a pelleted food, it's an all or nothing proposition; the goat is forced to consume it all, so their actual food intake of pelleted food, if not supplemented by other elements, may actually be less nutritious than the whole feeds. Clever people fooling a goat into eating those icky stems may not be so clever after all.

Another disadvantage is that since the animals eat more pelleted food, the higher intake causes food to move faster through the animal's digestive system and when food spends less time in, the now-unsmiling microbes have less time to ferment the stuff as it passes on by before they have a chance to get at it. So, the food can actually be less digestible because some of it goes on through and out, undigested.

Pelleting may negatively affect the digestibility of grasses more than legumes, like alfalfa and clover. Legumes contain a higher proportion of lignin than grasses and since lignin is indigestible, passing through the rumen more quickly, caused by the pelleting, will have no effect. However, pelleting grasses may have a negative effect—unless the grasses are very mature. Mature grasses contain higher levels of lignin than immature grasses.

Remember the heat in the Advantages which might help some? Well, that same heat can reduce the digestibility of some of the other proteins in the feed.

Pellets almost always cost more than loose feeds since processing is certainly not free, but pellets have little or no waste, so one factor may offset or outweigh the other. Confused yet? You could always go back to just making a decision based on cost...

Cashmere—What a Bargain!

By Linda Cortright
Grumble Goat Farm Union, Maine



Meet Echo

Echo is a basic cashmere goat. She has average fiber, an average body, above average children—naturally—and last year she produced a fleece that weighed less than 6 ounces. Out of the 6 ounces, roughly one half will eventually become usable fiber. Which weighs about as much as two blueberry muffins.

What Echo needs:

26 bales of hay for the winter	\$91
1 acre of pasture for the summer	\$\$\$
Once a year she must be bred to a buck—average guy	\$50
Her fleece must be cleaned, dehaired and carded	\$51
Vaccinations and vet visits	\$30

Are you starting to get a picture?

Not to mention the cost of fencing, barn maintenance and trips to the chiropractor to fix my back from bending over and trimming her hooves.

The next time someone sneers about the price of cashmere, you tell them about Echo!

Ten Steps for Trimming a Buck's Hooves (No Guarantees!)

1. Let the buck out of his pasture into the road between his pasture and the does'.
2. Bring two does who are in heat from their pasture into the road between them as well.
3. Leave the happy threesome alone for two hours.
4. Come back, open the gate for the does, who will be extremely glad, by this time, to return to the safety and more "polite society" of the doe pasture.
5. Bring the extremely fatigued buck a big pan of grain and place it under his (smelly) nose.
6. Trim feet. The buck will be so tired and so glad to get food that he will not even notice that you are circling him with a sharp tool and whacking on his feet. Since he didn't seem to be bothered by this at all, you might also want to take this opportunity to worm him if he needs it.
7. Then, when the chores are done and the grain is gone, lead the still quite complacent buck back to his own pasture.
8. This works especially well if this is the buck's first time out of the chute, so to speak.
9. Wash up.
10. Wash up again.

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Past Ad

Cold Maine Wind, Wild Blueberry Pancakes and Beautiful Cashmere Goats

Farm Feature—Wes and Marilyn Ackley

By Linda Fox

Wes and Marilyn Ackley have owned cashmere goats a long time—for ten years, which is a long time in this country. In addition to approaching their venture in a serious, methodical, businesslike manner, they have contributed an enormous amount of time and talent to the American cashmere industry and its organizations. They have served as officers and directors of CaPrA, the ECA and the Cashmere America Cooperative. In the process, they have managed to produce a beautiful, consistent herd of cashmere goats. Marilyn's photography, writing skills and quick wit are legendary. While writing a farm feature about the Ackleys and photographing their place, I felt like a student making a feeble attempt to capture the masters at work.

History of the Farm

Wes and Marilyn Ackley's first farm was located in Connecticut. It was only three point something acres and gave them enough taste of the good farm life that Wes longed for more. They purchased their first farm in Maine in 1974, when they left their city jobs in Connecticut and moved back to the land in search of a simpler life. They quickly discovered that living on the land was not quite as simple as envisioned. Fixing up an old farm required hard work and unanticipated funds which made it necessary that they keep outside employment for a while. Their first farm was an extreme-fixer upper and they quickly realized that it would require much more to bring it around than they had anticipated. This project almost defeated them as the house was determined to fall down around them and the fields were filled with rocks and poison ivy. Marilyn notes that even goats would have struggled to save that place.

So they gave up on the first place and moved their dream 14 miles to their current location out of Buckfield Maine. Buckfield is a small, old town of under 2,000 inhabitants, filled with old buildings and lots of character. To find it you travel about an hour north of Portland, Maine, winding through other small picturesque towns such as Poland, Norway and South Paris. There are currently less people living in Buckfield than there were before the Civil War. Before the war, this was sheep country. When industrialization came along with its resulting changes to the



Wes Ackley, Bessey Place Cashmere

The side view of their beautiful, old farmhouse. One barn is on the far end of the house and this one, at right, is the one that was built from a salvaged frame.



This sign (which you can't read here) proudly announces that this is the Buckfield Mall. Buckfield, Maine is a small place.

Continued on next page

The Ackleys

Continued from previous page

American economy, many shepherds left for the war, settled elsewhere at its end and never returned. The area's population is increasing at present as it is a beautiful place to live and a welcome change from a more hectic pace of life.

Bessey Place Farm is not named after dairy cows as I had suspected, but after an early family who owned much of the surrounding countryside. It is 280 acres (or so—survey lines are somewhat vague) of rolling hills, trees, underbrush and immense Maine rocks. When Ackleys claimed the farm, the pastures were overgrown, no fencing existed besides the low rock-covered walls (which were engulfed in brush) and an old farm house and outbuildings which were deemed closer to fixable than the prior establishment, were still in need of repair. There were two barns on the place and both had structural problems. One of them was fixed and the other was taken down and the timber frame re-used to build another barn. They didn't have goats in mind when they built the new barn, but it has worked fine.

A mix of farm animals had always been part of the farm dream. Their first thought was of dairy goats—perfect black Nubians with silver ears—but the reality of continued employment made the twice a day milking routine impossible.

The first animals brought to Bessey Place to help consume the excess greenery were steers. The steers were big, not much fun and didn't really eat much brush. Still thinking of goats, they learned about cashmere goats in the fall of 1989. They read about Judith Richardson's cashmere herd projects in the local newspaper and learned that Maine had been selected as one of four states for her cashmere test farm project. They telephone the local contact, but learned that the four openings in Maine had already been filled. In 1990, they located and purchased their first cashmere goats—three cashmere doe kids and one bred doe from a breeder in Maine. They got rid of the steers.

Education, Conferences and Organizations

A week after the first goat purchase, Marilyn attended her first goat conference. The conference was the 3rd CaPrA conference located in Tulsa, Oklahoma. At this conference, Hugh Hopkins announced that this was the last year that Forte would buy individual fleeces. They would, in the future, only accept fleeces which were classed in 80 lb. bales. This announcement was a bit discouraging since Ackleys had only five goats. Hugh also taught two hour-long classing clinics which

Marilyn attended twice and still considers the beginning of cashmere wisdom.

The next large dose of learning arrived compliments of two important new organizations. The Eastern Cashmere Association (ECA) was formed in January of 1992. About the same time, a county in Colorado received a grant from the State to form a cashmere growers' cooperative. The Cashmere America Cooperative was formed and in May 1992, Terry Sim, a cashmere guru and expert goat shearer from Perth, Australia arrived to help with grower education and organization of the newly-formed Cooperative.

The first ECA event was Terry Sim's six-hour classing clinic and a fleece competition in Cummington, Massachusetts. It was the first time that people from Virginia, Pennsylvania, the mid-Atlantic states and New England all met in person. None of the people attending seemed to have a clue about which were their best goats, so winning ribbons in their first competition was exciting. At this clinic they met Terry Sim. The clinic was a revelation to everyone attending. Misconceptions were put aside and new goals were formed. Some people decided to leave the industry, but some, like the Ackleys, approached their project with new knowledge and enthusiasm. Ackleys had owned cashmere goats for two years by this time, and finally they began to realize what they were looking for. They came to learn that some of their original expensive imported goats didn't carry the kind of fiber the Ackleys wanted to grow, but at least now they knew what needed improvement. Even with the bad news, Terry's clinic was a positive experience for them. They came home with ribbons and new friends. A spirit of cooperation was born which helped everyone during the next few years. Producers began helping each other by trading knowledge and by trading animals.

Improving the Herd

Now that they had a feel for where they were going, the Ackleys began planning in earnest how to get there. They decided that it would be difficult to improve everything in their herd at once, so they concentrated on making improvements in cashmere style and fineness. They decided that yield was also important, but they would worry about that later.

They began making purchases of new animals with these goals in mind. In 1995, together with Yvonne Taylor, they bought Mary Matthews' buck Imagine, 2-1/2 years old, with fine, stylish fleece and a great chunky body. The same year they travelled to Indiana to buy Spanish does from Mary Mears. A year

Continued on next page

The Ackleys

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later the impressive buck Fortune was born, one of the results of blending traits from the two Marys' herds.

Bringing in the Spanish does helped immensely in improving the herd's cashmere to a fine, crimped, commercial length. They also feel that breeding with Spanish does brought in hybrid vigor to their herd. They are still enamored of hybrid vigor and avoid linebreeding or other close breedings whenever possible. They noticed that when breeding and culling for the desired cashmere traits, they were eliminating the white goats. In their search for the perfect cashmere goat, they have ended up with mostly colored goats.

In the last three to four years, they believe they have made great strides in improving the quality of their herd, both in conformation and fiber quality. Their goal is to be able to produce kids with fine enough cashmere that they can enjoy a career as a cashmere goat indefinitely. They definitely don't want their goats to dump out of the cashmere range at age three. They also like to protect their yield, so they do not want goats with long guard hair. Good coverage on the goat is also important to them. They like long cashmere fiber, but do not believe that a longer fiber will hold its style year after year. They are not willing to sacrifice style and fineness for increased fiber length.

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The doe herd



Marilyn and the young bucks.



Marilyn and Wes check out the adult bucks in their temporary quarters.

The Ackleys

Continued from previous page

Goats that do not contribute to the breeding goals fill an important niche in the meat market. Meat sales continue to provide an important bit of farm income each year.

The Ideal Cashmere Goat

Per Wes, the ideal cashmere goat is a 100 lb. doe with a square body, wide at the brisket and hip, with 2-1/2", style 3 cashmere which does not exceed 17µ as an adult, with 2-5/8" guard hair and cashmere coverage from brisket to tail. Their beautiful black doe Feather, who won the Reserve Grand Champion Doe award at the 1999 ECA Goat Competition is, per Wes, his idea of the perfect cashmere goat—if she had a little longer legs. Wes likes long legged does so they can bound across fields like deer and avoid getting bogged down in deep snow. One of Harriet Jensen's does that they own, Cozad, has Wes's idea of perfect goat legs.

Marilyn the Spinner

Marilyn admits that she never had plans of being a hand crafter when they embarked on their cashmere goat adventure. She had no dreams of selling the end product herself. A marketing arm for cashmere producers, as introduced with the Cashmere America Co-op in 1992, has always made sense to them. However, eventually, the goats did insist that she learn to spin and knit. Marilyn already had rudimentary knitting skills, but was beginning to feel like a fraud talking about the fiber on her goats when she didn't know much about its uses. She began to learn to spin and work with the fiber in order to better understand the properties which are important in cashmere and which make it so special. She also found spinning to be therapeutic. The last morning I was there, Marilyn rushed off early morning with her spinning wheel and cashmere display items in tow to spin at a local fair. She noted sadly that she still had a bobbin which contained spun fiber from the prior year's event. Like most of us, she isn't spending as much quality time with her wheel as she would like.

Goat Management at Bessey Place

The Ackleys are minimalists when it comes to goat care. They don't like to do anything that is not necessary. They like their goats to stay healthy with a minimum of outside assistance. They do annual vaccinations and worm two or three times per year. The goats get an annual rabies shot as there are problems with



Marilyn checks out the young buckling, Ike. He is the final son and exact replica of their last Aussie import doe. His mother retired last year after producing her 17th and 18th kids. Her fleece was still only 16.8µ after all those years. Ike's looking good so far!



This is BPC Feather. She won the first place ribbon for does born in 1996, and the Reserve Grand Champion Doe award at the 1999 ECA Goat Show. Her second fleece also won first place in the Doe Combed 2nd/3rd Combed Fleece Class at the 1998 ECA Fleece Competition. Feather would be an ideal cashmere goat per Wes—if only her legs were a bit longer.

Continued on next page

The Ackleys

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rabies in the area. These shots can be administered by the farmer, but veterinary administration is required for the vaccination to be valid for travel. Because their goats travel to various shows and fairs, they have their veterinarian vaccinate for rabies. With proper timing, the shot protects from the disease as well as covering the travel requirements for their summer and fall shows and fairs.

Land stewardship is extremely important to the Ackleys. They believe in taking good care of their land and working with it, planning for its best use and preservation as well as providing food for the herd. They use cedar posts for their fencing rather than treated posts. The farm includes some permanent fencing, but animals are moved frequently so that they can work with the land to provide them with groceries. They use temporary fencing which can be moved as the goats need to be moved. A group of does who had just returned from the Virginia State Fair were being contained in temporary fencing across the road for their two week separation from the rest of the herd. The bucks were currently spending time in temporary fencing quite a distance from eager does. A bear had been sighted recently in the area so, when I visited, Wes was camping out near the bucks to make sure they were safe. Perhaps he was wisely putting distance between himself and a couple of chatty women as well.

Goats at Bessey Place get most of their food from the land. In the summer, they have more pasture and browse than they can possibly consume. Hay is cut and baled from 50 acres on the farm. This provides plenty of winter food for the goats as well as extra to sell. Hay is fertilized only with "hen dressing." The application of manure to fields requires the filing of a Manure Plan with the County. The Extension agent tests the soil and approves the plan for application. A separate approval is required if the manure is to be stacked and stored, rather than immediately applied. It is interesting that no particular plan is required to dump chemicals on the land, but chicken poop is regulated. Wes had planted some of the fields with timothy and red clover, but most of this died out in a hard freeze. Now, most of the pastures contain native grasses.

The goats are fed some grain one month before kidding and/or after shearing. The grain is not meant to



The beautiful Bessey Place pond, a good place to cool off in warm weather. They built the pond—it's spring fed, 9' deep and Wes had boulders from the property moved into the pond to provide handy steps for swimmer access.



The bucks temporary quarters includes electric tape fencing, a solar charger and a trailer which doubles as a shelter in nasty wether.



Wes's temporary quarters—a good place to sleep to guard goats at night and a good place to avoid chatty women.

Continued on next page

The Ackleys

Continued from previous page

provide a meal, merely a "calorie pop" to fend off extra stressors. They use a 14 - 16% grain ration and feed them about one cup of grain for each goat.

Maine snow can arrive as early as November and sometimes lasts as late as May. Maine winters are cold. Let me say this again—Maine winters are cold. It was definitely chilly when I was there in early October and the wind was brisk. I had to borrow warm clothing to keep from turning blue. The bucks in their temporary pasture had cleverly chosen a spot on the lee side of a rock wall to avoid the wind. I've seen Marilyn's beautiful photographs of goats who actually seem to be enjoying the winter snow. I have a feeling it was still considered fairly warm when I was there.

Ackley goats get minerals. One winter they bought sheep minerals, which contain less copper than cattle minerals. They noticed that they were having difficulties with skin and feet problems so they switched to cattle minerals which seemed to help. Goat feet are trimmed frequently and any persistent hoof problems are treated by standing the goats in zinc sulphate for 40 minutes. The Ackleys note that black hooves seem to grow slower and are stronger than white hooves, an observation confirmed by horse owners who need a farrier about twice as frequently for light colored feet.

Does are currently bred when they are about 1-1/2 years old to kid when they are about age 2.

Kidding Procedures

There is a rule at Bessey Place—no breeding until after election day in early November. Goats are bred later in the year so that kids will be born after the worst weather has passed. Last year they bred earlier in order to use Fortune, a buck who was leaving the farm to enjoy breeding elsewhere. Marilyn noted that they had liked the earlier babies and again this year allowed breeding to begin late in October.

The Ackleys observe the entertainment of the breeding season and have a good idea of which day each doe is bred. Per Marilyn, this entertainment helps her get over the fact that all the flowers and plants are freezing and dying. Breeding dates are tracked and expected kidding dates are calculated. They usually do not jug mothers and new kids, but observe them carefully to make sure that they are bonding well and that the kids are staying warm and keeping up with their mothers. If it is late in the day and the mother is shy or a first timer and kidding looks imminent, they



Having your own hay supply sounds good, but making your own hay is hard work and involves expensive equipment. This is a hay tedder. It fluffs the hay after it is cut to facilitate drying.

will confine the doe for the night. They have never had a bottle baby, never pulled a kid and never needed veterinary help with kidding. Per Marilyn, the goats are a "rugged lot."

Kids are ear tagged at one week to ten days of age, before the nasty, black, biting flies hatch out of the running streams in the northern forests. They usually hatch about the first week of May and are bad for a month. They bite goats and people mercilessly. It is good to have the babies older before they have to deal with the flies.

Markets

Ackley's comfort zone does not allow selling goats at auction. Big, intact bucks are sold to the Jamaicans for meat. Wes takes larger groups of culls or excess goats to Massachusetts to a slaughter facility, which has its own butcher outlet, three hours away. Some of the does get to avoid the stress of being shipped to Massachusetts by going directly to the Ackley freezer. The farm raised, low fat meat is a good complement to the Ackleys' mostly vegetarian diet.

They combed the fleece from their goats the first year. In subsequent years, most were sheared. Marilyn admitted that she still combs a couple of goats—well, tries to comb a couple of goats.

The first year, fleece was sold to Forte and since that time, they have always sold their fleeces to the Cooperative. Marilyn notes that as yet, there are no cheap

Continued on next page

The Ackleys

Continued from previous page

or efficient neighborhood dehairing operations and she has no illusions about hand dehairing fleece from their own goats. Most people who envision crafting items from their own fleece or selling prepared fiber to other spinners have been stymied by disappointments. Wes and Marilyn decided at the outset to avoid these frustrations and joined the Cashmere America marketing cooperative and put their faith in the cooperative system, which has worked throughout American agriculture. Per Marilyn, "Like producers of apples, wheat, cranberries, and oranges, we decided to pool our resources with those of other growers to get our product to the marketplace on a scale impossible for any of us individually."

After Bessey Place goats are sheared, the best fleeces are set aside for competition. The rest are shipped off to Sonora, Texas, to the Coop. After fleece contests are over, the contest fleeces are mailed off as well. Ackleys usually alternate shipment with one going into the direct sales pool, which results in cash payment after the fiber has been classed and tested. The next shipment goes to the Value Added Pool, a pool in which participating Coop members agree to share the cost of producing value-added products and then share in the profits. Per Marilyn, "As producers of soybeans or pork bellies will tell you, there is more money in selling value added products than in selling raw agricultural commodities. I'm convinced the Coop can do this for us."

Two Fleeces per Year?

Ackleys are trying a new cashmere harvesting approach. They have read that some Australian growers harvest fleece twice per year from their animals and they have noticed that some of their goats have a full length fleece by early autumn. Rather than waiting until February or March to shear that fleece, the plan is to shear early and trust that a second fleece will emerge by spring. They had just sheared Huck, the buck, before I came. He had been sheared in March 1999, and produced a 484 gram fleece in October 1999. The fun will be seeing how much fleece he produces by March 2000 and how the Yocom-McColl tests on the two fleeces compare. In addition to Huck, three well-fleeced yearlings have been sheared this fall.

Farm Records

I feel that no farm visit is complete until annoying questions about recordkeeping have been asked. I'm not sure if answers to this question is interesting to

anyone but me, but I can't stop myself from asking. The Ackleys keep "The Journal," a running record where they make note of every goat-related event including the days the goats spend in each pasture strip. They may miss recording a few days, but most items of interest are written in this diary.

The secret to good records, per Marilyn, is graph paper. Graph paper is used for hoof trimming charts, CD&T charts and records of weigh-ins, which are completed every month or so on young animals. Marilyn noted that she probably should be keeping the records on her computer, but the graph paper works well. Also, she said it is cold upstairs where the computer lives and she'd have to boot the thing up. Stock up on graph paper.

Goats are ear tagged with a different color each year. Sequential numbers are assigned—sequential from the first kid born in 1991. They are up to tag 180 or so now. Naming Bessey Place kids can be a challenge. All names assigned in a year begin with one letter of the alphabet, progressing to the next letter with each subsequent year. Names are collected ahead of time, sometimes as a "car game" when traveling. Names from the list are doled out as the babies arrive. This year's babies' names began with "I"—18 kids whose names start with "I"—Invincible, Invictus, Indomitable, Indiana, Ike... (And Wes thought the "I" year would be impossible!)

Future of Goats

The Ackleys believe that goats have an important role to play in the future of agriculture. Beef consumption

Continued on next page



This unseasonably bald goat is Huck. He had a great summer fleece and just lost it to the shears in October. What will he regrow by normal shearing time next spring? Stay tuned.

The Ackleys

Continued from previous page

is decreasing and the country's demographics are changing. People who live here want goat meat—our country imports million of goat carcasses each year. Our goats have an important role to play as a dual purpose animal, one which provides both meat and fleece. They are also a great landscaping tool as well as the perfect entertainment in your back yard. Even though the international cashmere scene seems to be in turmoil, we have a lovely product.

Tips for Visiting the Ackleys

1. Take warm clothes especially if you visit after the Virginia State Fair. It's cold in their part of Maine and it's not just cold, it's cold with a biting wind. However, if you forget to take adequate clothing, it's not all bad. They loaned me one of Wes's Dad's old cashmere sweaters, a light blue cashgora hat produced years ago by Judith Richardson, a plum colored L. L. Bean polar fleece jacket and a bright orange pair of gloves. Not only was I toasty warm, I was a veritable fashion statement.

2. See if you can get Wes to fix you a batch of wild blueberry pancakes on the woodstove. However, don't distract him with too much with chatter as he may burn them. Preparing perfect blueberry pancakes on a woodstove is not an easy chore.

3. Close your bedroom door when you leave the house. Phoebe, their new dog, likes to steal underwear from your suitcase and leave it in incriminating spots around the house. This can be embarrassing.

4. Have Marilyn take you on a hike up the hill to the old feldspar mine. It's beautiful and you may come back a few cents richer by picking up soda cans left by swimmers.



These are Maine rocks. Early farmers lugged them out of their fields and stacked them in walls along pasture perimeters. Perhaps they make good fencing for something, but certainly not for goats.



Marilyn and Phoebe warming up in front of the kitchen wood stove. Beware—Phoebe steals underwear!



Chevon and cranberry sauce!
Give it a try!

Did You Know?

3 ounces of cooked chevon contains:

122 calories
2.58 g fat
0.79 g saturated fat
23 g protein
3.2 mg iron

Source: USDA Handbook #8, 1989

World Cashmere Prices Climbing (At Last)

For the past few years, world cashmere prices have been at about 1/3 of the level of the early 1990's. This was caused, like a lot of economic problems, by an increased supply and a decreased demand for the product. The increased supply came from newly-unregulated Chinese goat farmers increasing their herds to pursue increased profits. Decreased demand came primarily from a demand decrease in Japan and Korea caused by Asian financial woes. It's been a glum few years for cashmere producers. China's cashmere industry is based in its province of Inner Mongolia where number of goats has risen from 8 million to 19 million. Mongolia (the country) produces around 3,000 tonnes of cashmere to China's 9,600. Over the past years, as production rose, quality fell. Good quality fiber was often blended with poorer quality cashmere fibers and other fibers, such as yak, camel, merino and nylon.

In September 1999, the Wool Record reported that short (22 - 24 mm = less than 1 inch) dehaired white Chinese cashmere had almost doubled in price. A leading Scottish processor reported a 50% increase in price over 10 days with fiber being almost unobtainable.

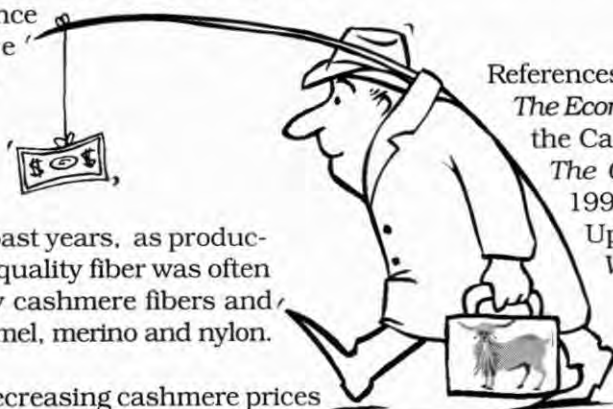
The Wool Record quotes the current price (September 1999) for 38 mm (1-1/2") white hosiery grade dehaired cashmere at \$95/kg (\$209/lb) as compared to \$53/kg (\$116.60/lb) in February 1999. Knitwear or hosiery grades are the finer grades of cashmere.

References:

The Economist, August 14, 1999, "Mongolia, the Cashmere Crash", pg 55.

The Goat Farmer, September/October 1999, "Chinese Cashmere Price Picks Up", pg 38.

Wool Record, September 1999.



After a four year period of decreasing cashmere prices on the world market, it appears that world prices are increasing at last. Steady growth in prices for Chinese cashmere has been observed since May 1999. Zhang Quanxiang, a Beijing-based analyst announced that, "A comprehensive growth in all of China's cashmere producing lines indicates that the country's cashmere industry has moved out of the bottom." Current prices in the various provinces range 30% to 60% higher this year than last.

Speculation about the reason for the price increases include Chinese farmers no longer willing to stockpile cashmere waiting for higher prices, thus depleting backlogs. Another reason is that cashmere output in China has decreased. The output from Inner Mongolia alone, the primary producer of quality cashmere, is estimated to be 1,000 tonnes less in 1999 than 1998. Due to declining prices, many goat farmers have slaughtered a large number of goats and local Chinese governments have started to restrict goat raising in an attempt to protect grassland from overgrazing. Also, at the beginning of 1999, Beijing and the provincial government loaned Inner Mongolia \$50 - 60 million which processors used to buy cashmere. There has also been an increased demand for cashmere sweaters in the United States and somewhat in Japan.

Prices in Mongolia, the number two producer of cashmere, have been on the increase as well. Current prices in Mongolia average \$25-\$28/kg (\$55.00 - \$61.60/lb), which is almost double since the first of the year.

Good Cashmere News From Down Under

The last few years have been bleak ones for Australian cashmere producers, at least on the marketing end of the business. It now appears things are looking up. The Australian Cashmere Growers Association (ACGA) and its marketing arm, the Australian Cashmere Marketing Corporation (ACMC) have finally sold their 1997 and 1998 clips and prices are looking favorable for the sale of their 1999 clip.

The 1996 clip totalling about 17.5 tonnes had been sold through the ACMC at prices lower than those received for the previous year. The major cashmere buyer in this sale had been Baotou Luda-Jili Cashmere Products Co. Ltd., Inner Mongolia, China. This company is a joint venture between the Luyuan group of companies in China and the Dawson International group in the UK. The Luyuan group had been the major buyer of the Australian clip for 1993 - 1995 as well.

The Association, in lieu of dismal world cashmere prices, had decided to store the 1997 clip and wait for a better price. The 1998 clip was collected and still the 1997 clip had not been sold. In late 1998, the Association decided to combine the two years' clips and offer them

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Good News

Continued from previous page

for sale. All fiber was offered to over twenty major cashmere processors in November 1998. In February 1999, it was announced that Forte Cashmere Co. had purchased the bulk of the 1997/1998 clip, through their dehairing company, MonForte Co., Ltd., Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Fault and cashgora lines were sold to Seals International, UK and the premium white lines were sold to an Australian buyer. The combined 1997/98 clip consisted of about 27 tonnes of cashmere and 2.3 tonnes of cashgora fiber.

An Australian joint-venture investor group purchased the final 19 bales of the combined clip which consisted of the superfine white end of the clip, averaging around 15.5µ. This purchase was made through the venture's agent, Dorothy Rosewell of Rosewell Cashmere Pty. Ltd., Jillyby, NSW. It has been announced that these 19 bales will be processed by Cashmere Processors Ltd., located in New Zealand, who will dehair and process the cashmere into yarn and send it back to Australia, where it will be manufactured into knitwear for both local and duty free export markets.

This same joint-venture group has already expressed interest in purchasing cashmere from the 1999 clip when lines are finalized later this year. It is expected that prices will be higher than for the 1997/98 sale as world prices have increased considerably since then.

References:

Cashmere Australia Update, Issues, 4/99, 6/99, 9/99.
ACMC announcement of sale of 1996 clip, Internet site:
http://www.farmwide.com.au/eureka/reports/wool_cp.htm



"Prices are up!—Bring on the babes!"

Strube Packing

A Goat and Sheep Processing Plant in Texas

The Strube Packing Plant in Rowena Texas specializes in the processing of sheep and goats. They currently process 7,000 animals per week. Al Strube, the owner is not new to the meat processing business. As a young man he helped his father in the family slaughter business. In 1970, the business was moved to its current location, still near Rowena and Al took over ownership in 1985 and turned the facility into a packing plant which handled sheep, lamb and goats exclusively.

Strube buys animals at auctions and sale barns. He attends goat and sheep sales in the area two or three days per week and does most of the buying for the business. He also has buyers who purchase animals at sales further from the plant.

Animals purchased are brought into the facility and put on maintenance feeding when they arrive at the facility pens. He keeps them for two hours or sometimes as long as ten days before they are processed. Meat leaves his plant 85% as swinging carcasses and 15% as packaged meat. The company's meat is well-known and shipped all over the United States.

Strube said that the Boer or Spanish goat is preferred for meat, but Angoras can also be used, especially when a sufficient quantity of goats is difficult to find. He says that at some times of year there are too many goats and sheep for sale like in the months of July through September. At other times, such as during the Christmas season, there aren't enough animals available. If there is a drought, a glut of goats and sheep can hit the market earlier in the spring.

Over the years, Strube has seen the quality of lamb carcasses improve in their amount of muscling, but the goats have become fatter. He attributes this to the availability of better feeds, grain feeding and crossing with Boer goats, who develop a heavier carcass than the Spanish or Angora goats. Per Strube, customers prefer a leaner goat carcass. It used to be that most US purchasers of goat meat were primarily of Hispanic descent. This is no longer true; there are a variety of ethnic groups who seek goat meat including those of Asian descent.

Strube and other US packers must compete with frozen meat brought in from New Zealand and Australia and it is often difficult to compete with the foreign meat prices.

Strube Packing is open all year, normally five days per week. They employ 55 workers.

"I Sure Hope I Win Something"

By Linda Cortright
Grumble Goat Farm

Hatie and I hopped in the truck long before sunrise and headed down the road for the Cumberland Fair. I seem to remember that we hadn't even left my driveway before she blurted out, "Oh, I hope I win something today. I just really want to win something."

So for the next several miles, if not more, we chatted about the hideous acrylic garments that took blue ribbons at the Virginia Show last year with nary a glance at some of her handspun cashmere creations. It's one thing to not get a ribbon but to lose to acrylic?? Such travesties of injustice can take years to repair. Oh well.

Down the road we went and the conversation drifted, as it usually does between us at that hour, about our favorite goats and then we talk about designing new products for Coastal Cashmere, and then we usually go back to our favorite goats. But this time I remember Hatie repeating, "Oh, I hope I win something."

We arrived at the Fair and within minutes I was struck with terror realizing that our lovely tablecloth was merrily resting in a nicely ironed pile back home and that we had nothing to display our cashmere on. You certainly can't put cashmere on just a plain table. Within moments I spied a stack of folded tent sides and before you knew it, Hatie and I had taken a twenty-five foot canvas panel and had successfully draped not one but two tables for our elegant display.

Relieved that we had survived the first crisis of the day, Hatie began appropriately tagging her items that were to be entered into the various contests. A skein of handspun cashmere here, a cashmere sweater with exquisite silk trim there, a felted cashmere scarf here, some handspun booties and a hat there, all the while muttering, "Oh, I hope I win something today."

After nearly two hours the booth was ready and Hatie and I sat down with our coffee, picked up our knitting and she turned to me and said, "Oh, I hope..."

"I know Hatie," I replied, "You hope you win something today and I'm sure you will." Meanwhile thinking that if she doesn't win something this could be a really long ride home.

The fair gates swung open and the first army of pickers and tire kickers came parading through. I never get tired of hearing people admire our items, even if they reach for the smelling salts when they see the price. This isn't acrylic we're talking about.



Hatie Clingerman knitting at the New York Sheep and Wool Festival, Rhinebeck, New York. Photo by Marilyn Ackley.

At the far end of the tent the judging of finished garments was being conducted and people were obviously admiring Hatie's items from one end of the tent to the other. After several hours I went in search of some hot cider since both of us had vowed that we would not eat a Bloomin' Onion on this trip. Somehow I got sidetracked in my journey and wound up watching the pig races. Cheering for Wiggles who was leading the pack by at least two snouts, you would have thought I was at the Kentucky Derby. I returned to our booth and apologized for being gone so long and Hatie was understanding but then gave me that look that said I've had a lot of coffee this morning and so I manned the booth while she disappeared.

I sat down to resume my knitting (a pair of cashmere socks that I could have sold right off the needle) when Hatie literally flew through the tent. "OH MY GOD I WON A BLUE RIBBON!" she announced with all the excitement of someone who has just given birth.

"REALLY?" I said, being almost as excited as she was, "That's terrific!" Quietly thinking that at least the car

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"I Hope..."

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ride home had now been saved. Sure enough, Hatie's nuno felted scarf with appliquéd flowers and beads had a big beautiful blue rosette on it. Nuno felting, for those of you who are not familiar with it, is an incredibly labor intensive process whereby the cashmere is actually pounded hundreds and hundreds of times, in this case, through a silk scarf. The end result is the softest scarf you can imagine with a delightfully puckered texture. For the next ten minutes we talked about the thrill of getting a well deserved blue ribbon and a point in fact, just as she had wished, she had won something.

Once again, we picked up our knitting and continued talking about our favorite goats. Amazingly Hatie and I never have a discussion about whether her goats are better than my goats; we have an understanding that we each have the best goats. I seem to remember turning to Hatie and saying, "Why don't you head off to the bathroom and see if you can get another blue ribbon while you're gone—hehe."

So Hatie got up and actually went to check out the pig races I believe, but didn't get ten feet from the booth before she came flying back yelping like someone with twins. "I got another blue ribbon!"

So we did the obligatory jumping up and down and general merriment scene again and I once again settled back down to my socks. Hatie was so consumed by her repeat victory she forgot all about the pigs. Meanwhile, our Coastal Cashmere booth was enjoying a nice stream of sales punctuated by Hatie's intermittent victories and I was progressing with my socks when I seem to recall one of the "Big Judge types" coming over and asking Hatie if that was indeed her handspun cashmere sweater in the contest and, when Hatie confirmed it, the judge replied that it was one of the most beautiful items she had ever, ever seen and then sort of gave Hatie a knowing grin.

Hatie was immediately out of the chair again and over to the judging table and there was this gigantic blue ribbon that was labeled "Best in Show," strewn across her sweater for all the world to see. It was amazing, not only had the sweater earned high honors but there was yet another blue ribbon on the baby bonnet and booties as well. Hatie was so darn excited at this point I think that she had trouble catching her breath. Of course there was a wonderful commotion going on in the tent at this point and people were running over like the bulls in Pamplona (well, sort of) to see Hatie and her lovely cashmere creations. Face it, she was a celebrity.



This sweater is one of Hatie's creations. It is made from 100% handspun cashmere and decorated with hand dyed and burned silk.

But the judging wasn't over. At a table practically right next to our display they were judging the handspun skeins.

"You know," she said in a whisper leaning over to me, "What really counts is the spinning. That's the foundation of everything. If your spinning isn't good then your garment isn't either." I looked at her as much as if to say—don't tell me you're going to pout if you don't win another blue ribbon! But, I agreed, handspinning is really where our pride and talent starts and as the judge was the former president of the Maine Spinners Registry—she knew her skeins. We could see her examine every one, looking at twist, checking for balance. It was like watching the judge on the final night of Westminster. Hatie kept trying to peer over the table to monitor the activity but it was difficult to be unobtrusive. It was a large table and there were a lot of skeins.

Once again, I resumed my knitting while Hatie busily sold more cashmere mice. "Oh my God! I won another blue ribbon!" came the cry of the day.

I didn't jump up and down; I was getting tired of jumping up and down. But I was genuinely thrilled. Hatie went over and inspected the table and not only was there yet another blue ribbon on her skein, but a big blue "Best in Show" rosette as well. I thought she was going to faint. And all she had said was "Oh, I hope I

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"I Hope..."

Continued from previous page

win something." I guess what she had really been saying was "Oh, I really hope I blow everyone else out of the water." And so she did.

I am sharing this story with you for several reasons. First, my boss (that would be the editor) asked me to write about it. Second, it's important for all of us to see that cashmere is getting the attention it deserves particularly when it's in the hands of someone who is as creative and talented as Hatie. Third, I couldn't resist poking a little fun at both my friend and business partner. I trust all who read this will do so with the appropriate lightness and humor with which it was written. Hatie has never pouted, demanded, annoyed, begrudged or belittled even once in the thousands of miles we have traveled together. In fact if she had not won something that day, as she had so desired when we set off that morning, I personally would have pulled the twist out of every judge there. After all, isn't that what good friends are for?

Hatie Clingerman is native of Maine and has been raising cashmere goats for the past six years. Her talent with fiber truly knows no bounds as evidenced by a growing collection of blue ribbons for both spinning and design. Hatie has participated and conducted numerous workshops in dyeing, felting, spinning, and plying exotic fibers although cashmere is obviously her first preference. In addition to her own garments, she is kept busy full time handspinning for a select clientele. Virtually all of Hatie's knowledge of spinning has been self-taught. If something doesn't come out just right, either she'll rip it out or figure an even better way to use it. One wouldn't guess that someone this creative started out as a jet engine mechanic living in Alaska!

Hatie currently resides in Winterport along with thirty-two cashmere goats and her husband Dan.

Check out Hatie's and Linda's cashmere creations at their web site at: <http://www.coastalcashmere.com>

The GOAT Magazine



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Sturdy cover
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Animal Shipping Requirements Who Ya 'Gonna Call? 1-800-545-8732



Suppose you need to transport two goats and a parakeet from Oregon to West Virginia. You haven't transported animals before and want to know the rules. You haven't decided if you will ship them by air, truck or just load them in the back of the family sedan and hit the road. What do the animals need for tests and shots, what do you need for paperwork and will it be legal to just put them in the back of the family sedan? And how about the parakeet—does she need a separate cage or can you just let her fly around in the back with the goats? Are there things you need to get working on two weeks before shipment date or can you just procrastinate until the last minute like usual and still meet the requirements?

A good place to start your search for information is the USDA:APHIS:VS. You know already from the confusing acronym that it's a government deal. The USDA Center for Epidemiology and Animal Health has developed a Voice Response System (VRS), which means you will spend a lot of time trying to keep track of too many choices and poke numbers on the telephone until you are crazy. The good news is that you won't have to wait on hold for several hours for a live person to make time to talk to you, and you can call at 3 AM if you feel like it. The bad news is, there will be no live person to assist you when your needs fall outside the general information range.

The VRS menu on the next page is the road map through the system, although a recorded guide will lead you through the menu as well. When I checked out the system, I noticed there had been additions to the menu, but the little voice in the phone will tell you about that.

You get into the system by dialing 1-800-545-USDA—or 1-800-545-8732 for those of us who don't like to figure out which tiny little letter is which number on the telephone. From here, you poke another number to take you to you menu item of choice. You can check out emergency notices (there are none right now), state regulations, animal care, Scrapie information and an interesting-sounding 1999 study about vesicular stomatitis. Before you get too excited about checking out the new study, be warned that you are only able to leave a message and they will call you back.

When you enter the "State Reg" menu, you will be prompted for a state postal code (you'll use those tiny letters on the key pad again) and a species code—1 for cattle, 2 for horses, 3 for pets, 4 for poultry, 5 for sheep and goats,

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USDA VRS

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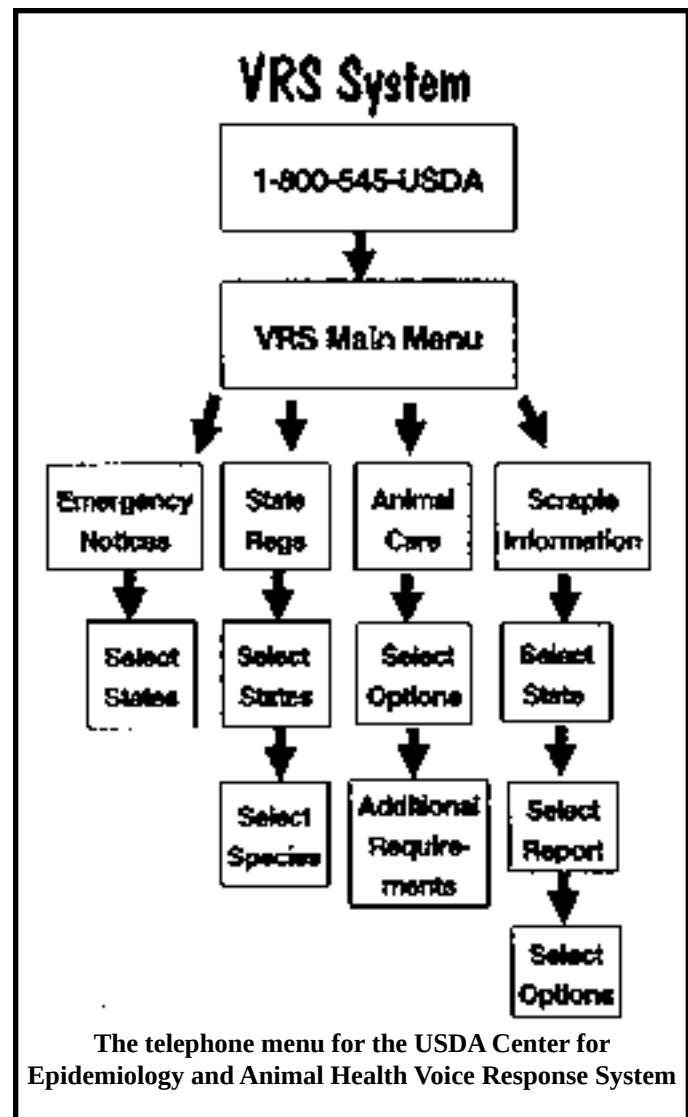
horses, 3 for pets, 4 for poultry, 5 for sheep and goats, 6 for swine, 7 for semen and embryos, 8 for other, and 9 for fish. No need to memorize these; they'll tell you. Recorded information tells you about each state's import requirements. For example, "OR" will get you the Oregon import requirements for each species and provide you with two telephone numbers for live people during business hours.

The "Animal Care" menu allows you to access three sub-menus on transportation requirements, records requirements and identification requirements. The transportation requirements option lets you access seven more sub-menus of information about age requirements for shipping, cage size requirements, which animals and how many may be caged together, food and water requirements, temperature requirements, handling requirements during transport and shipping documentation. There are different requirements for air and ground transportation. There are also specifications for cage and animal labelling during transport as well as water and food dishes in the cage.

Throughout the system, you will find different requirements for personal pets, animals going to shows and animals being moved into the state to a processing facility. For legal interpretations of the various requirements, you are referred the individual state's veterinary office.

The VRS is a good place to start for general information about animal transport. It is designed to be used by veterinarians, livestock officials, dealers, exhibitors, carriers and intermediate handlers. If you've never shipped or transported animals before, you will want to spend time with this system learning the general requirements for handling and transport. We've found this a good place to visit before taking animals to our Veterinarian for inspection and testing required for transport. At least this can give us an idea of the lead time requirement so that we know how early before shipment we need to start preparing. Veterinarian inspections and tests are only valid for a certain length of time after completion, so not only is there a lead time before shipment to be worried about, there is a time limit after requirements are completed when shipment must occur or you get to do it all over again.

So, what about our scenario with the two goats and the parakeet travelling together (?) from Oregon to West Virginia? Animals can only travel together if they are "compatible." Compatibility is defined as "same species" unless the animals are private pets. If a female animal is in heat, it will **not** be defined as "compatible" to be travelling with a male animal. So, it's beginning to sound like unless the parakeet and goats are "private pets" (you might want to get an interpretation on this), they'd better have separate cages. And don't forget that the parakeet's cage must be large enough so that her head won't touch the ceiling. It is OK for the tips of her ears brush the cage ceiling.



Ideas to Make the VRS More Personable (Let's pretend we're not talking about government)

1. Have each state's message delivered by a native of the state. This would add a homey touch as well as making the site useful for people who have heard a particular accent and would like to track down the individual's state of origin.
2. Have a way to get back to the previous menu when the only choice is to leave a message. The system doesn't recognize "0" as a "get me outta here" response. It dutifully records it as part of the message and then you have to hang up and call back.
3. Make the information less vague. Several areas specify that I can't ship dry ice with the animal, but how about ice cubes? How about a jug of cold water?
4. Change the name of the system from VRS to NRS (N is for "No" or "Number"). Why should it be called a Voice Response System when they are not responding to your voice at all? The only thing that triggers a response is when you pound on your telephone number keys.

Goat

a
d
g
d
e
t
s

The Watering Wagon

Designed and Constructed by Don Moore

Do you have difficulty transporting buckets of water to needed locations which happen to be far from the water source? You can probably lug two half-full 5-gallon buckets for a distance if you have to. And you might as well start with them half full because if you don't, they will only be half full when you arrive. The dumped half will end up on your shoes.

Linda's friend Don Moore was obviously worried that Linda would end up with knuckles dragging the ground from lugging heavy buckets to thirsty goats, because he found a solution. Using only cast off parts from the junk pile (I mean the carefully arranged and categorized stack of gadget parts waiting to find an appropriate use) in Linda's barn, he retrieved parts and constructed a Water Wagon. For transport, Linda can fill the buckets to the brim, top them with lids held secure by a bungee cord strapped over a board and head for the barn.

Not only can you lug The Water Wagon around wearing normal barn attire, you can feel comfortable transporting water in your dress and heels. An added bonus is that persistent goats can catch a ride down the hill to the barn if they are steady on their feet.



Another simple gadget which we found at Yvonne Taylor's Black Locust Farm in Washington, Maine is a simple way to attach water buckets to a fence so that goats can't knock them over. Use one of those small metal clips. Easier and much more elegant solution than a bungee cord or a piece of twine.



The water wagon can easily accommodate two 5-gallon plastic buckets filled with water, or whatever. As you can see The Water Wagon looks nice with casual clothing as well as with dressier attire (see below). There are not too many goat gadgets that can easily make the transition from casual accompaniment to dress up accessory, but we believe this one can do it!



Linda Cortright pulls The Water Wagon down the hill from her house to her barn. Mr. Jingles leads the parade while an acrobatic kid balances on the top. Watering goats has never been so much fun! Photograph by Don Moore.

OFFF Cashmere Goat Show

September 25, 1999
Canby, Oregon

Grand Champion Buck

Moon Shadow Farm, Banks, OR

Reserve Grand Champion Buck

Moon Shadow Farm, Banks, OR

Grand Champion Doe

Moon Shadow Farm, Banks, OR

Reserve Grand Champion Doe

Sun-Up Farm, Oregon City, OR

Wethers, less than 12 months old

1st Sun-Up Farm, Oregon City, OR

2nd Sun-Up Farm, Oregon City, OR

Bucks, less than 9 months old

1st Moon Shadow Farm, Banks, OR

2nd Moon Shadow Farm, Banks, OR

3rd Sun-Up Farm, Oregon City, OR

4th Feral Fibre, Oakland, OR

5th Feral Fibre, Oakland, OR

Does, less than 12 months

1st Moon Shadow Farm, Banks, OR

2nd Moon Shadow Farm, Banks, OR

3rd Feral Fibre, Oakland, OR

4th Brookfield Farm, Maple Falls, WA

5th Brookfield Farm, Maple Falls, WA

Does, less than 24 month

1st Sun-Up Farm, Oregon City, OR

2nd Sun-Up Farm, Oregon City, OR

Does, 2-4 years

2nd Feral Fibre, Oakland, OR

3rd Ober-D-Rainbow, Oregon City, OR

Best Herd, 1 buck and 2 does, any age

Moon Shadow Farm, Banks, OR



Supreme Champion Buck: Windshadow's Merlin and Linda Garrett, Garrett Ranch.

Oregon Flock & Fiber Festival Selected Goat and Sheep Contest Winners

Supreme Champion Doe Diamond Award (All goat breeds)

Pygora goat, Windshadow Farm, Banks, OR

Supreme Champion Buck Diamond Award (All goat breeds)

Pygora goat, Garrett Ranch, Camas, WA

Supreme Champion Ewe Diamond Award (All sheep breeds)

Medium wool ewe, Spinning Ewe Farm, Beavercreek, OR

Supreme Champion Ram Diamond Award (All sheep breeds)

Romney ram, Silver Creek Lambscapes, Silverton, OR

Grand Champion Pygora Buck

Garret Ranch, Camas, Wa

Grand Champion Colored Angora Buck

Coon Hollow, Stevensville, MT

Grand Champion White Angora Buck

Coon Hollow, Stevensville, MT

Grand Champion Pygora Doe

Windshadow Farm, Banks, OR

Grand Champion Crossbreed Doe

Carolyn Wright, The Dalles, OR

Grand Champion Colored Angora Doe

Coon Hollow, Stevensville, MT

Grand Champion White Angora Doe

Coon Hollow, Stevensville, MT

Selected Fiber Competition Winners

Homespun Gallery Diamond Award (Best of Show)

Connie McWilliams, Jacobs fleece sweater

Raw Fiber Competition Diamond Award

Raul and Nicole Perez, Llama fleece

Skein Competition Diamond Award

Sally McCarrick, Pygora goat yarn

Juried Fiber Arts Show Diamond Award

Jan Clark, "Tidepool Bowl"

Grand Champion Fleece, All Fiber Goats

Carol and Carrie Spencer, Foxmoor Farm, cashmere fleece



Supreme Champion Doe, Windshadow's Jessica and Diana Bratton, Windshadow Farm.

1999 Oregon Flock & Fiber Festival

September 25 - 26, 1999
Canby, Oregon

The third annual Oregon Flock & Fiber Festival, September 25th and 26th, was deemed another huge success by festival organizers. This Festival is dedicated to providing education about fiber, fiber products and the animals and plants which provide them.

Clackamas County Fairgrounds, the site of the festival, offers a beautiful setting for the livestock shows which were ongoing both days in four separate arenas. This year the Festival housed over 700 fiber-producing animals including a wide variety of sheep and goat breeds, llamas, alpacas and rabbits. A total of 20 livestock shows included a nationally sanctioned llama show, a 4-H llama show and a cashmere goat show.

A large Fiber and Fiber Art Show with more than 400 entries featured a Juried Art Show. New this year was the Fiber Art Invitational Gallery which showcased the work of three talented fiber artists. Monica Steziol-Phillips creates large, unique pieces using wool tapestry and carved wood. Donna Sakamoto Crispin uses natural plant fibers, such as cedar bark, to produce exceptional baskets. Ann Dooling of Montana Knits designs and manufactures an exquisite line of machine-knitted cashmere adult and infant wear.

Vendors from Oregon, Washington, Montana and California displayed beautiful and unusual items on the two floors of the main pavilion, sharing space with workshops, demonstrations, contests and kids' activities. Of course, there were spinning circles which you could join to regroup when your feet were tired of traversing the festival grounds.

Contests included animal shows, raw fleece contests, a hand-spun skein competition, a homespun gallery competition, a juried fiber arts show, spinning contests and photo and poster contests.

The festival workshops actually started the day before. An impressive array of workshops and demonstrations over the three days included needle felting, spinning angora rabbit, shearing sheep, wool combing, dehairing cashmere, rope making, silk worms, basketry, cheater felt, wool grading and classing, reproductive technology (AI) and a style show of natural fiber products. There were also many activities to keep human kids busy including paper making, basket making, cattail mats and dreamcatchers. If anyone of any age could not find something of interest at this festival, it was because they were asleep.

This is an excellent festival for a fiber newcomer to gain exposure to a wide range of fiber animals, fleeces and fiber products. It is also a great place for old fiber fiends to seek out other fiber obsessors to confirm with each other that they aren't quite as



OFFF panel of Goat Show Judges, from left to right: Sharon Chestnut, Angoras and Colored Angoras, Jackie Liner, Pygoras and crossbreeds and Cynthia Heeren, cashmeres. The three judges team-judged for the Supreme Champion Doe and Buck. Photographs here and on previous page by Diana Jordan.

obsessive as their spouse has indicated that they might be. If you're looking for animals or raw fleeces to purchase, this was the place. This was also the place to find ready to spin fiber, yarns and peripheral spinning and weaving equipment. If you couldn't find it here, you probably didn't need it.

Visitors to the Festival commented on the relaxed atmosphere, the friendly, helpful people and the wonderful opportunity to get close to beautiful fiber animals. Winners of the cashmere goat show and cashmere fleece competition and the grand champion winners of the other contests can be found on the previous page.

To find more information about the festival, its directors, contest results and peruse an album of photographs taken at the festival, check out their website at: www.flockandfiberfestival.com.

The New York Sheep and Wool Festival
Rhinebeck, New York
Photographs by Marilyn Ackley



Wes Ackley (Bessey Place Cashmere, Buckfield, Maine) and the girls heading off for ice cream. Did they hold out for chocolate?



Most Amazing—The mohair goat show. They don't use lead lines for mohair goats! They move them about by applying pressure on the adam's apple while using wads of curls for steering. Judge for the show was Texan, Fritz Kuebel.



Pam Haendle loading her mob for the drive home to Hermit Pond Farm, West Edmeston, New York. Looks like a pretty cushy place to ride.

Calendar of Events

Association Contacts

November 19 - 20, 1999

Alternative Marketing Skills Conference for Farmers & Ranchers, Lincoln, NE. Hands-on conference designed to help develop skills and supportive relationships to create and sustain successful new marketing ventures. Info: Lisa Bauer, 402-472-0265, email: lbauer2@unl.edu or Mary Hanks, 651-296-1277, email: Mary.Hanks@state.mn.us

November 20, 1999

Handspun-Handwoven Show & Sale, sponsored by Weavers Guild of Miami Valley at Bryan Center, 100 Dayton St., Yellow Springs. Info: Kay Bertrand, 937-667-3033.

December 3, 1999

Texas Cashmere Association Cashmere Goat Show Brownwood Livestock Pavilion, Brownwood, Texas There will be an associated sale, with non-TCA members allowed to enter. For info: Contact Bob Stone, 915-739-3733 or Dee Broyles, 806-489-7645

January 13, 2000

Cashmere Goat Show,
National Western Stock Show & Rodeo, 4655 Humboldt St, Denver, Colorado, 80216-2818, phone 303-297-1166, Website for detailed calendar of events: <http://www.nationalwestern.com>

Entry deadline December 15, 1999, entry fee \$20/goat, stalls provided. CaPrA sanctioned show held under the rules, bylaws and point system approved by CaPrA.

January 15, 2000

Pygora Goat Show & Fiber Frenzy (6th annual) Fiber, fleeces, vendors, goat show, demonstrations, free admission, 10 AM to 4 PM, Washington County Fairgrounds, The Armory Building, Hillsboro, Oregon.

Info: Lisa Roskopf, 503-985-3331, email: lisa@hmrpygoras.com

May 15 - 20, 2000

Conference internationale sur les caprins (7th International Conference on Goats), Tours, France. Sponsored by the International Goat Association. Official working languages of the Conference: French and English.

Diversified scientific program of worldwide interest including round tables, conventions on special

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)

Kris McGuire, President, 970-493-6015

email: krisvadale@aol.com

Membership info: Marilyn Burbank, PO Box 2067, Rogue River, OR 97537, email: burbank@cadsnet.net

Colorado Cashmere and Angora Goat Association (CCAGA)

Carol Kromer, Club Contact, 719-347-2329

Eastern Cashmere Association (ECA)

Gloria Rubino, President, 570-629-6946

Toadhaven@aol.com

North West Cashmere Association (NWCA)

Guy Triplett, President, 541-388-1988

harvest@empnet.com

Professional Cashmere Marketers' Association

(PCMA), Tom and Ann Dooling

406-683-5445

ann@MontanaKnits.com

Pygora Breeders Association (PBA)

Inga Gonzales, Secretary

PO Box 565, Knightsen, CA 94548

phone: 925-625-7869

email: Igonozo@goldstate.net

Texas Cashmere Association (TCA)

Dee Broyles, President

806-489-7645 office

806-489-7959 home

Wild Goat Women

Debbie Walstead, Chairperson, 719-495-2962



Breeders

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AIRYKNOLL FARMS, INC.

Richard & Harriet Jensen
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Cozad, NE 69310
308-784-3312

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Mitchell, NE 69357
308-623-2627
email: ajbecker@PrairieWeb.COM

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email: cashmere@phonewave.net

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email: cashmere@bitterroot.net

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503-632-3615
razberi@teleport.com

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Hood River, OR 97031
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Message: 503-873-5430
email: foxmoorfarm@juno.com

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Continued on next page

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Continued from previous page

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Fax: 360-428-4946
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Graham, WA 98338
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Internet listing of these breeders can
be found on the net at:
<http://www.teleport.com/~goatknol/breeders.htm>



Sydney, a Maremma cross, and Hinge, the cashmere goat, have a disagreement over who gets to eat the dog's food at Brookfield Farm. Hinge was persistent, but the dog won. Photograph by Ian Balsillie, Maple Falls, Washington.

Coming Attractions!
December issue

BOCC V
Conference Coverage

Mild Goat Men Meeting
Did they actually
Do something this year???

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Scientists Sleuth Forage Secrets

By Marcia Wood

From the ARS internet pages at:
<http://www.ars.usda.gov>

How do certain forage plants coax cattle, sheep and goats into coming back for more? Scientists at the Agricultural Research Service are sleuthing the secrets of how to tempt the palates of these ruminants.

Knowing more about the culinary cues should mean healthier animals that make better weight gains and bigger profits. Research studies should also help plant breeders develop new forages that appeal to animals, according to ARS soil scientist Henry F. Mayland. He leads the forage-preferences investigations at the agency's Northwest Irrigation and Soils Research Laboratory in Kimberly, Idaho.

Earlier, Mayland and ARS colleagues Dwight S. Fisher at Watkinsville, Ga., and Joseph C. Burns at Raleigh, N.C., showed that cattle, sheep and goats prefer tall fescue hays harvested in the afternoon to tall fescues cut in the morning. Their study was likely the first to show up to a 50-percent difference in forage preferences based on time of cutting.

Now, follow-up studies by ARS scientists and their hay preferences university colleagues are showing the same trend with alfalfa hay.

Animals apparently discriminate on the basis of total nonstructural carbohydrates, that is, easily digestible starches and sugars, in the forage.

Other experiments to probe chemical and physical characteristics of forages indicate that cattle prefer tall fescues with high levels of a natural chemical known as 6-methyl-5-hepten-2-one.

Investigations probing the influence of minerals like calcium, magnesium and potassium on animals' forage choices are also underway. For details, see the story in the September issue of Agricultural Research magazine on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/AR/archive/sep99/buds0999.htm> (which is conveniently printed in the next column—Ed.)

ARS is the chief research agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Scientific contact: Henry F. Mayland, ARS Northwest Irrigation and Soils Research Laboratory, Kimberly, Idaho, phone (208) 423-6517, fax (208) 423-6555, mayland@kimberly.ars.pn.usbr.gov.

Grazing Animals Prefer Afternoon Hay

By Jill Lee

From the ARS internet pages at:
<http://www.ars.usda.gov>

If farmers want their livestock to eat more and gain more weight, they'd better make hay while the afternoon sun shines.

Scientists with USDA's Agricultural Research Service say a new study shows that sheep, goats and cattle all prefer grass hays harvested in the afternoon compared with those cut in the morning.

One possible explanation: Plants' carbohydrate production is at its peak at midday. The animals may remember afternoon-harvested hay is easier to digest and gives them more energy. Other studies have shown animals can be conditioned to choose higher-energy feeds.

It's long been known that livestock grazing tends to peak in the afternoon. This led researchers to explore whether cutting hay later in the day could boost consumption.

Scientists let the animals try afternoon-cut hay and morning-cut hay before offering both in a side-by-side comparison. Sheep, goats and cattle all consumed an average of 50 percent more of the preferred hays. Their preference held true even though the hay offered was from harvests on three different days.

The scientists also noted the livestock's top picks among the afternoon hays to make sure cutting time was the key factor in the animals' choices. Each hay underwent 15 comparisons.

Scientific contact: Dwight Fisher, USDA-ARS Plant Science Research, Raleigh, N.C., phone (919) 515-7597, e-mail Dwight_Fisher@ncsu.edu



A Hachenberger doe guarding a stack of, what we presume must be, afternoon-cut hay.

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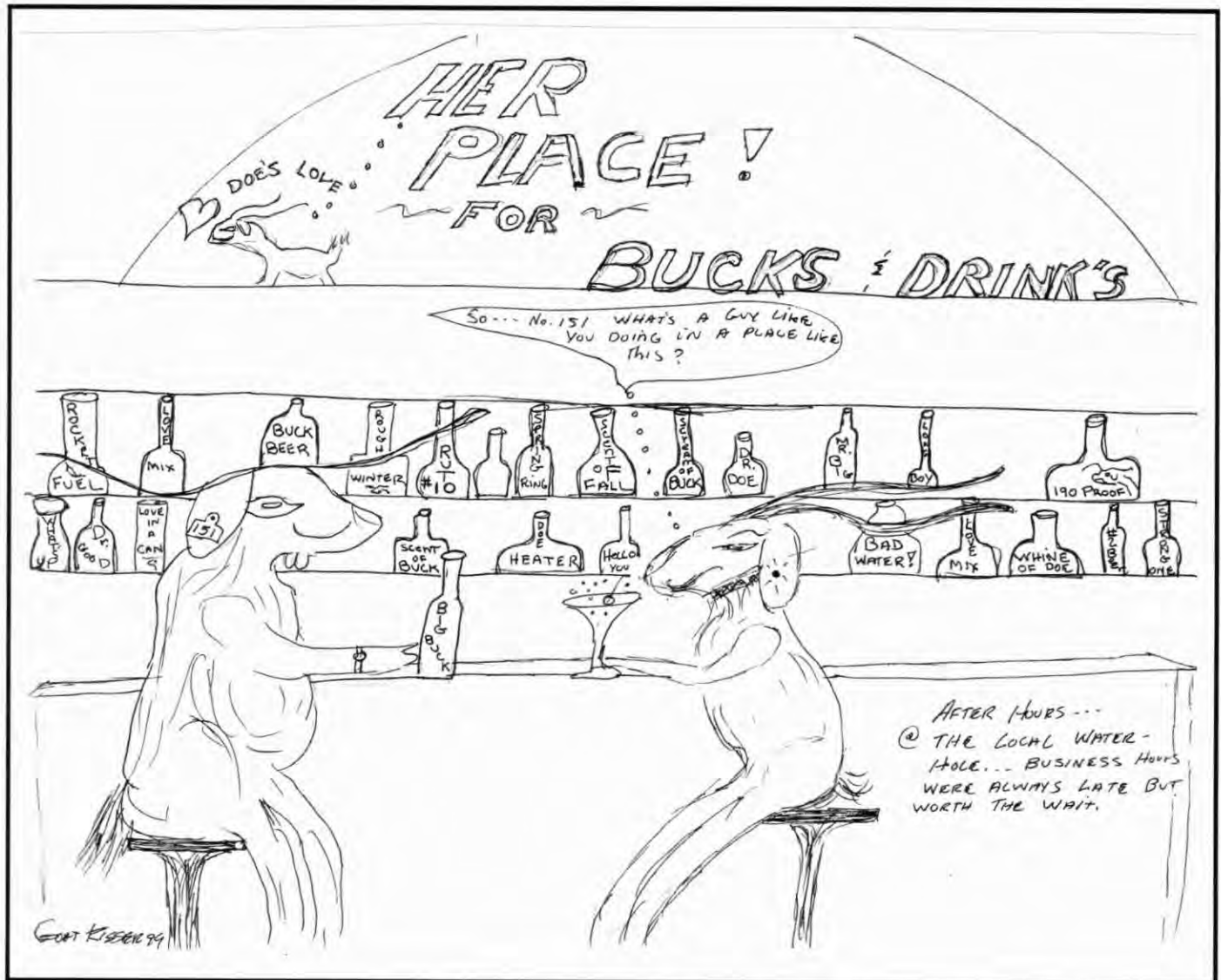
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Children's book by Paul G. Johnson, CM Ace Reporter. 66 pages, includes photographs. Suitable for read-aloud for young children, 3rd to 4th grade reading level, or for brightening the lives of bored adults. Guaranteed only happy endings. To order, send \$7.50 (includes shipping) to CashMirror Publications.

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"The secret to great farm records is graph paper."

...Marilyn Ackley

"My ideal cashmere goat is a 100 lb. doe with a square body, wide at the brisket and hip, with 2-1/2", style 3 cashmere which does not exceed 17µ as an adult with 2-5/8" guard hair and cashmere coverage from brisket to tail."

...Wes Ackley

"Those dogs can't eat that grass!"

...A freeway rest stop attendant in California talking about two young doelings on leashes grazing in the rest area (10/24/99).

Hawks Mt. ad

The Deadlines:

Articles, photographs, advertising and other information submitted must be received by the 25th of the month prior to magazine issue date.

If you need assistance designing or laying out a display ad, or fine-tuning an article, earlier is appreciated.

Serving northern
California, Idaho, Nevada,
Oregon,
Washington and
western Canada

Membership includes
NWCA Quarterly
Newsletter



Northwest Cashmere Association

NWCA Annual Dues only \$25
Cynthia Heeren, Membership Coordinator
22260 East Hwy 20, Bend, OR 97701
541-388-1988, email: hokulani@bendnet.com



The small (yet efficient) little American cashmere garment factory in Montana is still buying raw cashmere fleece—in any quantities.

Competitive Prices:

1999 prices: \$32.50/lb. yield for white fleeces

\$30.00/lb. for colors, \$7.50/lb. for cashgora

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Free Classing of Fleeces Provided

Call Ann for more information

We can help put your goats' coats in an American-made cashmere garment today.

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