



Northwest Cashmere Association

Dear Member,

Well, here it is February already. Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow and predicted six more weeks of wintry weather. How can a little groundhog do that! Well, we are in the closing pangs of winter. Here at Caprette Cashmere it has been windy and rainy. Mud is commonplace and the sun, when it shines, is very welcoming. If for no other reason it helps to dry out the mud on our miniscule farm. I have heard that in the northwest there has been rain and snow and some of our members may have needed to dig out a bit, others not so much.

Kidding season is here. From what I have seen on social media, there are some real future champions being born. Good luck to all who have more kidding to come. I have included a couple of articles about kidding, you may find the information helpful.

The coming year promises to be interesting and active for us cashmere goat owners. There will be fiber shows and festivals, like Black Sheep Gathering, where our products may be sold. Remember Black Sheep is in June and will be here before you know it. Contact Diana Walker, she will need help to man the booth. There will be Cashmere Goat shows at the Oregon State Fair, Oregon Flock and Fiber Festival, and California State Fair. I hope to have more information on those events in a later letter.

Be on the lookout for the Northwest Cashmere Association booth or booths of members in other places besides Black Sheep. It is possible it may be spotted at the Fat Lamb Festival in Scio Oregon at the end of May. I know of members have had booths at other festivals, so keep an eye out for them. . Caprette Cashmere will have its booth at the Natural Fiber Fair in Arcata, California in September. If you know of any other fiber festivals, let us know

At this time, I must ask, have you paid your dues for this year? If not, please do so. As you know, for any organization to accomplish its goat goals and/or put on any events it must have the funds to do so. Your dues will help us to do so.

If you, the membership, are interested in promoting your farms and educating people about cashmere, cashmere goats and products made from cashmere, by showing your animals, please let me know, yes or no, and please let me know about which way you would want to register your animals.

Also, I would be very interested in what other events you would like to see the Northwest Cashmere Association do. Please respond to this letter my sending your responses to me at rbfiorica@frontiernet.net,

To keep within our mission to promote education, I was perusing some past issues of Goat Journal, CASHMIRROR, and other publications, here are a few articles about kidding that might interest you. Without meaning to promote the magazine, the Goat Journal has had some really good articles, I shall morn its demise. I hope you find the information useful.

Thank you,

Ron Fiorica

Ron Fiorica, President
Northwest Cashmere Association

CARING FOR REJECTED KID GOATS by JANET GARMAN



WHATEVER THE reason behind it, a rejected kid goat needs care right away. There isn't much we can do to prevent rejection but we can be ready to step in when necessary. If a doe refuses to care for the newborn, it is a life and death matter for that kid. It's intense at first. Baby goats eat frequently throughout the day and even require night feeding. Dehydration, scours and a general failure to thrive can occur. One of the cutest things you will ever encounter in farm living is a baby goat drinking from a baby bottle. Those tiny kid goats can really work hard to receive the nutrition they need. Unless you love being sleep-deprived, the cuteness wears a little thin after a few nights. Because of this, most goat breeders hope that the does will all be wonderful, nurturing mothers after delivery. The causes of rejection could be a number of factors. Some of these can be quickly remedied and the kid then allowed to nurse naturally. Other times, nothing we try will coax a doe into accepting the hungry Timber Creek Farm newborn. Take a look at some of the factors which come into play.

HEREDITY Maternal instinct is a strong urge. When a new mom sees her kid, she instinctively takes over the care and protection. The doe will encourage her kid to nurse after she has cleaned it off from delivery. Keeping records of this behavior for your breeding does is helpful. When you notice that a particular doe is not as strong as she should be in the maternal qualities, that could be a trait passed down in her genetics. This is a good question to ask when purchasing a future breeding doe. If the doe was a bottle baby because her mother refused to care for her, take that information into consideration. HEALTH OF THE DOE Was the doe in top condition heading into goat gestation? If a doe is not healthy, she may reject her kid. Healthy, strong does will make better mothers.

DIFFICULT LABOR AND BIRTH OR INFECTIONS

Did the doe have a tough time of delivering her kid? Especially with a first time mom, a difficult delivery or lengthy labor can leave them confused and depleted. Offering grain to nibble, and warm water sweetened with molasses, might bring her around and restore her energy. Then you can try to get her to accept the kid goat, again. Infections of the teats or udder can cause a doe to kick the kid away. If it hurts her to be nursed, she isn't going to be a willing mom. An infection on only one side may cause her to reject one twin. The causes of rejection are varied and sometimes unknown. There are some tactics you can use to try to get the doe to accept the baby. Keep a careful watch as you try any of the following ideas. A kid goat can be harmed and seriously injured by a mother that wants no part of being a mom. Give the doe some space. If you can, hand-milk colostrum and bottle feed it to the kid while staying close

to the doe. Attempt to bond the pair after the doe has had something to eat and drink. Make sure no other goats are bothering her while she recovers. This is why it's good to use birthing stalls. The other curious goats can make the doe nervous and cause her to forget what her job is. Rub a drop of vanilla on the doe's lip and on the rejected kid's anal opening to disguise any scent that might be bothering the doe. Don't let people who wear heavy perfume or cologne handle the kids. Hobble the doe and see if she will let the rejected kid nurse. This might take more than one person if the doe becomes agitated. Use a halter and a milking stand as another method of restraining the doe. Often, a few days of repeated forced feedings will convince the doe to accept and feed the rejected kid goat. Grafting the rejected kid to another calm, accepting doe sometimes works out. Of course, this situation will be different for every flock and might be different from year to year with the same One of the cutest things you will ever encounter in farm living is a baby goat drinking from a baby bottle. Those tiny kid goats can really work hard to receive the nutrition they need. Also, keep in mind that the doe that rejects her kid one year might be a first rate mom the next time that goat kids. Some farmers use a combination of dam raising and bottle-feeding. This practice preserves the bond between the doe and her kids. The kids continue to reap health benefits of dam raising, while the farmer provides a security plan in case the kid goats have to be removed from the dam. Sometimes dams will not accept her kid. The doe may be aggressive toward the kid and, for it's own safety, it may be brought into the house for the first few days. Once the kid was eating well, and strong, he is returned to the barn so he could grow up as a goat. Although he is continued to bottle-feed throughout the day, he often may try to nurse from the other does when their kids were eating. Some farmers keep colostrum in the freezer for such occurrences and uses either milk replacer or fresh goat milk from her herd to bottle-feed the rejected kid. Some farms leave the kids with the herd from day one, even if they are being bottle-fed. The argument for this is that the kid goats learn to eat food, drink water and nibble hay earlier if left in the herd. Unless there is a serious health concern, this should work. Smaller farms often do what Feather and Scale Farm does and make sure things are going well for a day or two before returning the rejected kid to the herd. For normal goat behavior to develop, it is important for the kid to learn from the herd.

USING MILK REPLACER WHEN CARING FOR A REJECTED KID When you have a rejected kid, feeding is your job for the next few weeks. The choices for bottle feeding are commercial goat kid milk replacer, a homemade milk replacer mix, or fresh goat milk benefits. Obtaining fresh goat milk can become costly if you don't yet have an established herd. We were fortunate to have a natural grocer nearby from which we could buy goat milk. Although it was not an economical choice, it worked and we made the sacrifice. The powdered milk replacer, available from the farm supply store, was not working for our rejected kid. Carrissa Larsen recommends Advance Milk Replacer for Kids, as an option. You can also try to obtain fresh goat milk from a clean-tested goat dairy farm near your home.

THE DOE CODE It's No Coincidence That Goat Delivery is Called "Kidding"



The Goat Code GJ March 2019

OH, THE GAME IS STRONG with this experienced one ... she knows the Doe Code all too well! Contractions are about a minute apart. Why is our goat in labor tonight? Dutchess came to us bred, so we don't know her due date. It is the perfect setup to activate the Doe Code.

Because it is snowing after more than a week of springlike weather ... because it is an hour until midnight ... because my husband is coming home from a week in Alaska and will be landing just about the time she lands these kids.

But we have been played before, and the Doe Code mandates false alarms. So she is in the kidding pen and not the pasture, and a barn cam broadcasts every move to the warmth of the office. We casually bring in the suitcases and catch up. Did she kid? Of course not. We were too calm, too ready. That violates every tenet of the Code. Catch them unprepared. Avenge the silly costumes, medications, tricks imposed on goats everywhere.

Dutchess crossed her legs and smugly stared into the barn cam. Game on. No more contractions tonight. We would be wise to have the treats ready for morning.

She held her hostages for 28 more days. Temperatures plummeted, life outside of her whims ceased. And I, the experienced midwife, was unable to delay a business trip any further and left town for a week. In the wee morning hours, with my husband alone in the house, she delivered quietly so as not to disturb his

sleep. Quintuplets. He didn't discover them until he was dressed for the office, leaving for work. I was unavailable by phone. Well-played, Dutchess, well-played.

We've delivered our fair share of kids at Kopf Canyon Ranch. Depending on the breed, goat gestation falls between 145 and 155 days. They cycle every 18 to 24 days, are in estrus between 12 and 48 hours, and ovulate from nine to 72 hours after estrus begins. With all of that known, we can roughly calculate a due date. We can tell you the physical signs that indicate goat delivery is near: the ligaments at her tail relax, her udder fills and the teats strut to the sides, her vulva swells and she begins losing the mucous plug. She will go off alone, vocalize, paw the ground ... but don't be fooled. These are not true labor signs according to the Doe Code. It is not by coincidence that goat delivery is called kidding. You see, they give all of the indications of impending birth so you cancel plans to live life outside the pasture. Grocery shopping, celebrations, trips — not happening. Then, when you are near, they'll go right back to business as usual. "Just kidding!" "

A due date is an estimate, not a promise," cautions Catherine Salazar of Happy Bleats Dairy Farm in Texas, who has 13 years experience with the Code. "Goats have their own rule book and refuse to share it." Her advice to bring a goat into labor, "Go grab a suitcase. Step outside and speaking loudly say ... 'I'm not going to be home this week ... sure looks like rain. Wow! Is that snow I feel? Sure hope they don't kid yet,' then walk away. Sneak back in and wait. She will kid any minute after that."

A watched doe doesn't kid. Kara Matthews of Riverstone Goat Farm in Virginia tells, "I was determined not to miss her first kidding since another first freshener kidded and didn't tell anyone. I waited all day. I decided to take a small break and take a shower. I came out 20 minutes after I left her and she had given birth, cleaned them, and they were up nursing! Twenty minutes and she did all that! The Doe Code is very, very real!"

Who suffers more at the hands of the Code? Clearly goats are confident that they will not burst if they wait just one more day ... or three.

Weather is another truism in the Doe Code. Do not provide live radio in the barn. Any indication of a severe storm warning cues the does to deliver. Best to stick to a playlist.

Wendy Stookey, in Wyoming, relates (from her goat's perspective), "I know you have provided me warmth, shelter, and a clean barn, but I really prefer to drop my kids in the snow, with 40-mile-an-hour wind gusts, when the temperature is in the negatives and it's two o'clock in the morning. Just because!"

The Doe Code is universal. It doesn't matter where you live. Deanna O'Connor raises goats in Alaska. "Last year, I lost my favorite doe to pregnancy complications. Not wanting to risk any others, we brought her first-freshener daughter into the house for a week before her due date because it was so cold and we were concerned she would have them outside. I slept on the couch so I'd be handy to get any pees and poops before she made messes and made sure she knew I was more than ready to catch any babies the second she decided to have them. Days go by and she gets stir crazy. She begs so hard to go out that I relent and give her 15 minutes outside with the herd. No signs of impending labor, so I figure it can't hurt to give her some space. During that time, in single-digit temperatures, she squeezes out triplets. First timer, triplets, under 15 minutes, underneath a plastic toy fort. The one time in a week that she's unsupervised."

Often, it seems more like a hostage situation than a pregnancy, both for the kids and the caretakers. When we have offered adequate ransom, they release the hostages — us and the kids, on their terms. Some breeders laugh about resorting to hiring professional hostage negotiators. Treats every time we check on them, top notch accommodations, lavish attention, praise, promises, and cajoling might produce kids ... and it might not.

We have an Alpine doe, Poutine, that is a drama queen at delivery, unlike our stoic Kikos. As her time draws close, we pen her. She spent a week in the birthing suite, having her straw fluffed, meals prepared for one, regular visits with every need attended to, and treats. Another doe kidded triplets and Poutine was unceremoniously evicted to house the new family. Within hours, she was in the throes of labor and wanted her accommodations restored to her.

The Doe Code hinges on exhaustion of the breeder. Paula Smalling of Midget Meadows in Texas tells it best, as she gave us permission to share her real-time Facebook post. “I’m not ashamed of the abuse my doe has heaped upon me. I’ve had two hours of sleep in 48 hours. My hair is tangled. I can smell myself. My neck has a crick from dozing in a chair. I have dark circles under my eyes, my face is breaking out from the stress. My heart has raced at false moans, my arms are as empty as the promise of a new baby to cuddle and countless other cruel acts against my nurturing soul ... I’m coming forward in hopes that ALL victims of the Doe Code will be unashamed at the abuse we have had to endure at the hooves of our does and raise our voices together for more humane treatment.”

After Paula had slept outside for two nights and three days, her doe Four Socks began showing labor signs late on the last morning. By evening she hadn’t progressed so Paula called the vet at 8:00 p.m. for an emergency farm call. The vet’s headlights pulled into Do not provide live radio in the barn. Any indication of a severe storm warning cues the does to deliver. Best to stick to a playlist. . the driveway at 10:00. As he parked, Four Socks delivered ... and so did the vet — a \$400 bill. Paula says, “The Doe Code is real. It is a rite of passage for any goat owner.”

There are still unindoctrinated does, however. Does that breeders dream of. Kristen Jensen of Square Butte Meat Goats in Montana owns such a doe: #25.

#25 was due any time, but Kristen and her husband Matthew had made reservations for an overnight out of town and an all-day goat conference 400 miles away. They enjoyed the conference and drove straight home afterward, arriving at 1:00 in the morning. Exhausted, they went straight to bed and slept late the next morning. #25 twinned in the afternoon upon their return. No matter what our does put us through, if the outcome is baby goats, all is forgiven. There is nothing cuter than baby goats! We are delighted with doelings ... and secretly, so are they. In the quiet of the night, as all of the goats bed down, the mamas murmur ... and the Doe Code is passed to another generation.

Story by Karen Kopf

KAREN KOPF and her husband Dale own Kopf Canyon Ranch in Moscow, Idaho. They enjoy “goating” together and helping others goat. They raise Kikos primarily, but are experimenting with crosses for their new favorite goating experience: pack goats! You can learn more about them at Kopf Canyon Ranch on Facebook or kikogoats.org

