

## Farmer Skill and Knowledge Checklist: Goat Producers

*Developed by Richard Brzozowski, Program Administrator University of Maine Cooperative Extension, and  
Colt Knight, Livestock Specialist University of Maine Cooperative Extension*

The purpose of this list is to help goat producers in Maine recognize that they possess or need to obtain specific skills or knowledge related to goats. Having this knowledge and these skills should improve their chances of managing a profitable and successful goat enterprise.

learn more. Stay diligent, keep your pesticide knowledge fresh, and don't let your certification(s) lapse.

**Circle your current and desired (target) competence using this scale:**

- 1= No knowledge/skill
- 2= Some knowledge/skill
- 3= Well-informed/experienced

**Circle your priority to learn the skills that are not well-informed or high level of experience.**

- 1= Learn immediately
- 2= Learn within 1 to 2 years
- 3= Learn after other skills are mastered

Recommended knowledge	My current level			Priority to Learn		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Goat Health</b>						
Be able to recognize a healthy goat or kid.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to take a rectal temperature.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to recognize the signs and symptoms of a sick animal.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Become familiar with common goat diseases.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to design, initiate and maintain a goat herd health program for their operation.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to give an intramuscular injection (IM).	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to give a subcutaneous injection (sub-Q). Be able to administer an oral dose of medicine or dewormer.	1	2	3	1	2	3

Be able to calculate the proper dosage for an individual animal.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to properly store vaccines and other medicines for goats.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to develop a biosecurity plan for their herd.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Become familiar with suitable disinfectants for their farm animals, buildings and materials	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to take a fecal sample for accurate analysis.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how and when to properly disbud a kid.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how and when to properly castrate a kid buck.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to recognize common diseases of goats such as Caseous Lymphadinitis (CL), Caprine arthritis and encephalitis (CAE), Sore mouth, pneumonia, footrot, mastitis.	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Goat Reproduction and Breeding</b>						
Become familiar with common goat breeds (characteristics and attributes).	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to identify common goat breeds.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to identify the reproductive body parts of a doe and buck.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Understand the functions of the reproductive body parts for does and bucks.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to detect heat (estrous) in a doe.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Understand the basics of artificial insemination.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to select a buck for specific traits or qualities.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to properly assist a doe at birthing.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Recognize dystocia (abnormal birth) and how to assist.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to list components of a birthing kit for does/kids.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to properly handle and care for a newborn kid.						
Know how to extract colostrum from the doe.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to handle and store colostrum.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to stomach tube feed a kid.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to train a kid to feed from a bottle.	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Goat Nutrition</b>						
Know how to develop a ration for pregnant does.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to develop a ration for lactating does.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to develop a ration for breeding bucks.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to develop a ration for growing kids.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to develop a ration for finishing kids.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to use the Pearson Square for ration balancing.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to recognize common nutritional disorders in goats.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to read and interpret a feed tag for goat grains/concentrates.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know about the mineral requirements for goats at different production stages.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to provide the proper minerals to goats.	1	2	3	1	2	3

Be able to take a forage sample for analysis.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know the importance of clean, fresh water in the diet of goats.	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Pasturing Goats</b>						
Know about different fencing systems for goats.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to effectively pasture goats.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to troubleshoot an electric fencing system.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know about different watering systems for goats at pasture.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to identify common forages in Maine (grasses and legumes).	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to identify plants poisonous to goats.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to control weeds in pasture situations.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to keep a pasture productive (when to move goats to new pasture).	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to recognize stress of pasture plants.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to take a soil sample for pastures.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to interpret soil test results.						
<b>Goat Handling and Behavior</b>						
Know how to catch and hold a goat.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to lead a goat with a collar.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to handle and move a mature buck.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to effectively move a herd of goats.	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Facilities for Goats</b>						
Know the space requirements for goats at different ages and stages.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to efficiently provide feed (hay, grain, minerals and water) to goats.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to provide proper ventilation to goats in a barn.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to provide proper winter care for goats.	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Goat Product Marketing and Sales</b>						
Be able to develop a marketing plan for your goats and goat products.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Become familiar with goat sales options.	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Financial Management of the Goat-Based Enterprise</b>						
Become familiar with goat-based enterprise budgets.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how do complete a goat enterprise budget, balance sheets, and cash flow sheets.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to fill out a loan application form.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Understand the difference between short term, intermediate, and long term assets and liabilities.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to determine net worth.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to keep effective financial records.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to figure break-even point for a specific enterprise.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to analyze a goat-based enterprise so to make wise decisions.	1	2	3	1	2	3

Know how to complete an income tax Schedule F form.	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Production Record-keeping</b>						
Know how to keep paper or computer production records for individual goats.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to keep paper or computer production records for the herd.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to analyze production records for making wise decisions.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to develop a system for culling animals from the herd.	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Goat Management / Other</b>						
Know the different techniques for effectively controlling flies.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Become familiar with sources of goat-related information such as magazines, books, supply catalogs, and websites.	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Dairy Goat Enterprise</b>						
Know how to properly milk a goat by hand and by machine.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know when to dry off a goat.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to train a goat to the milking stand.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to detect mastitis.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to detect udder problems.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to properly store fresh milk for food safety.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to recognize a quality dairy goat (correct body composition).	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to properly use and maintain a milking machine for dairy goats.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to set an effective culling standard for a efficient dairy goat herd.	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Fiber Goat Enterprise</b>						
Know how to determine the quality of fiber.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to properly harvest fiber from the animal.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to properly prepare fiber for show or sale.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to recognize a quality fiber goat (correct body composition).	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to set an effective culling standard for a efficient fiber goat herd.	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Meat Goat Enterprise</b>						
Be able to calculate rate-of-gain for kids.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to recognize a quality meat goat (correct body composition).	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to assess the value of a meat goat at different ages and stages of growth.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be familiar with holy days and holidays when goat meat is typically at a premium price.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to place bucks with does for specific kidding schedule to take advantages of higher market prices for meat goats.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to set an effective culling standard for an efficient meat goat herd.	1	2	3	1	2	3

## Additional Resources

- Maine Extension Livestock Specialist, Dr. Colt Knight, [colt.knight@maine.edu](mailto:colt.knight@maine.edu)
- Maine Extension goat publications: <https://extensionpubs.umext.maine.edu/>
- [American Goat Federation resource list](https://americangoatfederation.org/resources/): <https://americangoatfederation.org/resources/>
- [Maryland Small Ruminant Page](https://www.sheepandgoat.com/): <https://www.sheepandgoat.com/>
- [Oklahoma Basic Meat Goat Manual](http://agecon.okstate.edu/meatgoat/manual.asp): <http://agecon.okstate.edu/meatgoat/manual.asp>
- [National Scrapie Eradication Program](http://www.eradicatescrapie.org/): <http://www.eradicatescrapie.org/>
- [Dairy Goat Management \(PDF\)](#), University Wisconsin
- [Guide to Starting Commercial Goat Dairy \(PDF\)](#), University Vermont
- [Sheep Housing & Equipment Handbook](#) by Midwest Plan Service
- [Raising Goats for Milk and Meat](#) by Heifer Project International
- [Goat Medicine](#) by Mary Smith
- [Sheep & Goat Medicine](#) by David Pugh
- [Goat Science and Production](#) by Sandra Solaiman (is available online)
- [Goat Resource Handbook](#) by Ohio State University (youth, but good for beginners)
- [Meat Goat Production Handbook](#) by Langston University
- [Nutrient Requirements of Small Ruminants](#) by NAP

*Information in this publication is provided purely for educational purposes. No responsibility is assumed for any problems associated with the use of products or services mentioned. No endorsement of products or companies is intended, nor is criticism of unnamed products or companies implied.*

© 2018

**Call 800.287.0274 (in Maine), or 207.581.3188, for information on publications and program offerings from University of Maine Cooperative Extension, or visit [extension.umaine.edu](http://extension.umaine.edu)**

The University of Maine is an EEO/AA employer, and does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran's status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: Sarah E. Harebo, Director of Equal Opportunity, 101 North Stevens Hall, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5754, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).