

# *Goat Guide*

To assist FFA & 4-H members in  
raising a successful market goat  
project.

Prepared by Jim Missildine

Oct. 2008

*Revised Oct. 31, 2013*

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Facilities .....	3
Equipment.....	4
Selection.....	5-8
Nutrition .....	8-9
Health.....	9-10
Daily Management.....	10-12
Fitting.....	12-13
Showing.....	13-15
Conclusion.....	16

*This guide was developed with the Texas FFA/4-H market goat program in mind. Some of the information included may not be practical or relevant to market goat shows in other States.*

## **Introduction**

Welcome to a very rewarding project program. The 4-H and FFA goat project will help you develop skills that are important and relative to many future endeavors in your life. You will learn responsibility, time management, animal husbandry skills, sportsmanship, finance and record keeping-just to name a few. This project program also creates a family purpose where all members of the family can work together for a common goal. Good luck with your goat project. I hope that your experience becomes a part of your lifestyle.

## **Facilities**

Goats can be effectively raised in fairly simple facilities. Goats need a living arrangement that includes protection from the weather in a barn or shed and a pen for exposure to the sun and exercise. Whether you are using existing facilities or are building a new facility, you will want to consider additional information to include:

- Determine the largest number of goats that you would have on feed at any given time.
- A minimum of 15 square feet of barn space per goat and a minimum of 40 square feet of pen space per goat.
- Arrangement of the pens that allows ease in working with the goats on a daily basis.
- The barn should be open to the south and closed to the north.
- Proper ventilation- year round
- Feed and equipment storage
- Washing and Grooming facilities
- Lighting
- Adequate plumbing
- Base material in pens
- Access to an exercise track or pen
- Fencing for pens that is predator proof

I recommend **visiting a family that is already in the goat business** to look at their facilities and ask for recommendations.

Your pens need to be ready to go prior to purchasing your goats. Plan ahead.

## ***Equipment***

Goats can be raised on a minimal amount of equipment. Several required items include:

- Feeders
- Waterer/water bucket
- Halter/chain
- Blanket/sock
- Drench gun
- Brush
- Syringe/needles-(6 ml/ 18 gauge x 1” for most applications)
- Pill gun-small
- Hoof trimmer
- Tools to clean pens

Additional equipment may include:

- Blow dryer
- Clippers/blades
- Show box
- Scale
- Fans
- Trimming table
- Trailer or crate

The list of “additional equipment” may be available through your local 4-H club or FFA chapter. Ask your Advisor if this equipment is available for use. If so, make sure you **reserve** the equipment in advance so it is available when you need it.

These products can also be purchased at your local feed store. You can also check the web for used equipment by searching club goats or show goats and looking through the variety of websites that support the goat project program.

## ***Selection***

The selection of your goat is a very important decision. You have several questions to consider prior to shopping. These include:

- Personal goals for success- is your goal to simply “place” and make the sale or are you trying to win the “Grand Champion” of the show. Is it important for you to make a profit on your project, break even or is it acceptable to lose money? How much risk are you willing to take in terms of investment versus return?
- How much am I willing to spend? Goats typically start out on the ***low end*** at about \$100.00 per head. The sky is the limit on the upper end with some goats selling for thousands of dollars. Research your market before you attend a sale or visit a breeder. You need to know if the goats sold will be in your price range. This includes the lowest acceptable bid allowed at a sale and the low and high price range at the farm.
- What is my projected return? Know what the goats will sale for at your local youth livestock shows premium sales or major stock shows premium sales that you plan on attending. Look at the percentage that “make the sale” at these shows to help you analyze your risk. Some local shows are set up so that every participate qualifies for the “premium sale” while others only “place” a certain number of entries or a percentage of entries. Many local shows in Texas allow you to sell your premium placing at the local youth show and retain ownership of your goat so that you can exhibit the goat at the major stock shows. This allows you to show the goat two times for profit.

- What type of competition will I face? The competition at local shows and state shows differs with the number of entries and quality. I have seen county shows that are as competitive as the major shows when you analyze the top end of the competition. Obviously, the major stock shows are very competitive and a large number of very good market wethers “miss the cut” and are loaded out for market price.
- What type of goat do I need? Judges have different priorities in selecting goats. Research your show and find out who is judging the show and what his priorities are in selecting or placing the goats. Most county and major show judges also judge prospect shows. It is wise to attend these prospect shows to get your goats analyzed ahead of time. Maximize your opportunity for success by purchasing a goat that fits the judge that is judging your show.
- What age should the goat be? Most market wethers range in age from 6 months to 12 months old when they are exhibited. All stock shows have weight limits and many have age requirements based on the goats teeth. Find out what the bottom or lightest weight that is allowed and the heaviest weight that is allowed. Some shows may have a “tooth rule” that disallows any permanent incisors. Goats will usually lose their center two baby teeth that are replaced with permanent incisors at 11-12 months of age. Always make sure you check your goats teeth prior to going to the show if it is included in the rules. Goats with permanent incisors will be sifted for market price if it is included in the rules and they have lost their baby teeth.

Goats can be purchased several ways:

- Show Goat Sales- special show goat auctions where individual producers or groups of producers bring their prospects together for you to inspect, compare and buy. These sales sell the goats to the highest bidder. They will always have a minimum starting bid. As mentioned earlier, find out if the sell will fit into your budget prior to attending.
- Private treaty sales- set up an appointment with a Breeder and purchase the goat at the farm. When you call to set up an appointment, ask the Breeder about the ages of his goats and the price range.
- Local auction barn- most counties have a local livestock auction barn that acts as a commission agent to sell animals for area producers. These sells are usually held the same day of the week throughout the year. Call them for the time that goats sell. This is an outside chance at finding a quality show goat, but for someone that has the time to shop, could offer a bargain.

If you have limited knowledge in selecting a quality show goat, you should seek advice. Agricultural Science Teachers and County Extension Agents can assist you in your selection. Additionally, I have found that the successful goat feeders in your community will normally go

out of their way to assist new feeders. Find the family that wins consistently and seek their advice.

Breeders can assist in your selection as well. Let them know up front that you would like their assistance in the selection process.

Another option is to use a **trader** that buys and sells goats. They travel to sells and farms and purchase goats for re-sale. The majority of these traders are very good in selecting quality goats and give you the opportunity to see a variety of goats from different breeders at one time without excessive traveling. Many traders will also assist with the feeding and fitting part of the program.

### **Selecting the winning goat**

Whether you select the goat yourself or you have assistance, several factors are consistent in a good market goat. These include:

**Structural Correctness-** this is the skeletal system/ bone structure of the animal. Look for a goat that is heavy boned, level topped and level in his hip. Note the goat's movement as he walks away from you and look for the goat that stands and walks out wide off of his front legs and back legs. Pay attention to the rear legs and avoid any goats that might walk with their back hocks pointing in or out. Check the goat's pasterns, making sure that they do not flex excessively in their pasterns.

**Muscle-** muscle will always be one of the primary factors for success. The purpose of a market wether is to provide meat for consumption. Consequently, judges will prioritize muscle as a major factor in placing. A goat that is wide based in structure is going to be heavier muscled than a narrow based goat. Have someone hold the goat in a driving position and handle the top of the goat right behind the shoulder and across the loin. You want as much width as you can get. Analyze the rear leg muscle by watching the goat walk away from you. Look for the width and depth of the leg muscle to compare. Look for a goat that has a large forearm muscle.

**Volume and capacity-** this refers to the width of the body and rib shape. Goats that are shallow in their body with a tight rib shape are not going to eat, gain and grow as well as a goat that is deeper bodied with more spring of rib. On the reverse side, goats with excessive middle are not desirable because of the waste in dressing percentage when they are processed. "Show goats" have to have enough rib shape and capacity to be productive, but they also have to be shallow enough in their depth of rib to have that "show" look that the judges are looking for.

**Style and balance-** this refers to the combination of muscle and structure that gives the goat that "show" look. You might own a show goat with a lot of muscle and capacity, but if the goat does not have the right "look", you probably will not win the class. This selection factor takes time to learn. Generally, look for the goat with a long neck that blends smoothly into the shoulders, a smooth and level top and a level hip (few goats have a perfectly level hip/ avoid excessive

steepness). The goat should be “smooth” shouldered with a trim middle section. The underline should be level. Balance also refers to the length of body in relationship to the height of the goat. I have found that a goat that is 2-3” longer from the back of his neck to the end of his rump than he is in height from the ground to the top of his shoulder balances very well from the profile view. I also try to avoid excessively long bodied goats as well as short bodied goats. The longer bodied goats will usually break in their top. Short bodied goats do not balance well from the side view.

**Size potential-** all goats will mature at different weights depending on genetics. Most shows have many classes broken into weight ranges. Each class has a winner. I never encourage target weights on market goats. I believe that you should feed your goat to his full potential and manage his weight at the end to fit into a desirable weight class. You will want to consider show weight when you analyze the previous weight breaks from the show you are attending and look at how the show sets up the Divisions. The majority of the shows will show several classes (3-5 usually) and then select a Division Champion from the winners. They may end up with 3 or more Division Champions that will compete for the Grand/ Reserve Grand Champion goat of the show. For example consider this scenario: At my show, the first three classes will compete for the Division I champion. My goat is weighing 78 lbs at home the week prior to the show. I know from last year’s weight breaks that class 3 goats weighed 74-77 lbs. If I can weigh my goat into class 3 and win the class, I have a great chance to win the first division and make a run at the Grand for the show. If I weigh in class 4, my chances of winning the second Division will be less likely because I have to compete against heavier goats from classes 5 & 6 to win the second Division.

I fed my goat to his genetic potential at 78 lbs. It will not hurt to pull a few pounds (up to 5% of the goats full bodyweight is a safe bet) to try to maximize my chances for success.

Be careful- many goats have been ruined by pulling too much weight off of their full body weight in anticipation of competing in a lighter class. Many factors come into play in pulling weight off of your goat. If you pull to much weight, you will lose muscle and probably hinder your chances for success. Seek advice and understand the probable results of limiting feed and water prior to a show.

As I previously mentioned- if you are not experienced in selecting show goats, seek advise. Two opinions are better than one. Find knowledgeable assistance when you select your market goat project. It costs just as much to feed a bad one as it does to feed a great one and takes just as much time.

## **Nutrition**

Goats require six nutrients that include water, protein, fat, carbohydrates, minerals and vitamins.



Common sense feeding recommendations involves purchasing a commercially manufactured goat feed. All major feed distributors will have a goat ration that was developed through research to supply all of the feed nutrients needed by the goat.

Add a clean water source to complete the ration.

Many feed companies also offer a “show” line of feeds. Purina makes two exceptional show goat feeds:

- Honor Show Chow X-clamation goat feed
- Honor Impulse goat feed

Which feed you select will be based on your own experience or recommendations from experts. Find a reputable feed dealer that you want to do business with and choose the feed that will work for you. Your local feed dealer can also assist with recommendations and many support their customers at the local livestock show auction sales.

What to look for in a goat ration- all feeds require the manufacturer to provide information on the feed tag. Look for the following guarantees.

Protein will range from 15%-18%- protein supplies the essential amino acids for muscle growth and development.

Fat will range from 2.5%- 4%- fats and carbohydrates provide energy. Increased fat may be needed for extra condition when you get closer to showing.

Fiber will range from 15-19%- fiber is very important in the diet for rumen function.

Minerals- calcium, phosphorus, salt and copper should be listed. These will all be included in appropriate levels for optimal use in the goat’s diet.

Vitamins- Selenium and Vitamins A,D and E are normally included.

The feed tag will also include a list of ingredients and feeding directions.

Goat rations also commonly include a coccidiostat for the prevention of coccidiosis. Common drugs added include decoquinate and monensin.

Most rations do not have any feed withdrawal required before slaughter, however, it is the exhibitors responsibility to assure that the goat meets all withdrawal requirements prior to slaughter.

Feed Additives

There are a variety of feed additives available in the show goat market. Some are practical and economical and some are ridiculously priced. I recommend following these **common sense** solutions when considering feed additives.

- If you are feeding a manufactured show feed by a reputable company, the ration is supplying all of the nutritional needs of the show goat.
- If your goat is thin (lacking fat cover), you can add a fat source to increase the fat content in the feed and quicken the fattening process.
- If your goat is fat, you can add a protein source to burn fat and increase muscle.
- If your are considering using any other type of feed additive, contact the manufacturer and ask for solid research results that indicate the product provides the results you seek.
- **Do not** feed any type of feed additive that is not labeled for use for market goats. Products like ractopamine hydrochloride are **illegal** to use in feeding goats.
- **Do not** try a new feed product for the first time at the stock show. If you are going to feed any additional product when you get to the show, try it at home a month or so in advance to make sure that you get the results that you are looking for and that it does not affect your goat adversely.

### ***Health Issues***

It is important to have a preventative health program. The following health issues should be addressed.

**Enterotoxemia**- also known as overeating disease. Usually caused by changes in feeding which cause the clostridial organism to grow rapidly producing toxins and death. Most goats have been vaccinated by the breeder. The goats should have two injections- 21-28 days apart.

If you purchase a goat and do not know if the goat has been vaccinated, proceed with the proper vaccination procedures. Purchase Clostridium perfringens C&D at your local feed store and follow the directions on the label.

**Internal Parasites/ worms:** Goats are very susceptible to internal parasites. It is recommended to de-worm your goat when you first get it and establish a de-worming program every 21 days. I

recommend taking a stool sample to your veterinarian to verify if the goat has internal parasites, and, if so, what type. This way the proper treatment and product can be determined.

**Urinary Calculi-** this is a metabolic disease of male goats which includes the formation of calcium stones in the urinary tract. Symptoms include restlessness, kicking at the belly, and continued attempts to urinate. Balanced feed rations will have a 2:1 calcium/ phosphorus ratio and ammonium chloride added to the feed for prevention. Ammonium chloride can be added to the drinking water as a preventative in areas where problems exist.

**Coccidiosis-** this is an infection in the intestinal tract characterized by bloody diarrhea, dehydration, weight loss and weakness. Sick goats should be separated and treated. One effective method of treatment, which can be purchased at your local feed store, is to use amprolium 9.6% drench. As mentioned earlier, most commercial show rations contain a coccidiostat for prevention.

**Soremouth-** this is a viral infection characterized by scabs on the lips and mouth. It is very contagious. Most breeders will vaccinate the kids to prevent this problem. If your goat develops soremouth, you can effectively treat the area with iodine. Precaution must be taken when handling goats with soremouth so that you do not infect yourself.

**Ringworm/ skin infections-** Skin problems resulting from ringworm and other types of skin infections have increased in severity over the past few years with exhibitors showing at prospect shows. Contagious animals spread the skin infections to other animals through contact. Once the animals have become contaminated, extended treatment is needed to clear up the skin. I recommend that you seek advice from your local veterinarian for treatment.

The best policy in dealing with these skin irritations is to establish a preventative program. This involves treating the animals and all equipment with disinfectants and fungicides after each show.

Skin infections have become a major issue with show goats over recent years. I have seen infected goats that never recovered after many different types of treatment. It might be wise to stop showing at prospect shows early enough to allow time to overcome these issues, should they occur, prior to your county or state show.

Other Health Issues exist that I will not address in this guide. Always contact your veterinarian to establish a health program for your goat operation.

### **Daily Management**

Daily management involves a number of important tasks. Your goat depends on you for proper care. Make it a priority in your schedule to provide the daily nutrition and care needed to **produce a champion.**

**Feeding-** you can feed your goats utilizing a self feeder or you can hand feed your goats.

- The self feeder is used when the goats are young and growing. This method offers feed to the goats at all times. The positive aspect of a self feeder is that the goats can eat whenever they are hungry, which maximizes gain. A negative aspect to the self feeder is that the goats can overeat using this method, resulting in scours and treatment. In addition, if a goat is off feed and not eating at all, you may not notice until the matter gets complicated.

A self feeder should be checked daily for feed and cleanliness. Goats are very finicky eaters. Just because there is feed in the feeder does not mean that they are eating. If the feed gets contaminated, it must be cleaned or replaced.

- Hand feeding involves feeding each goat separate. The advantage of this method is that you know exactly how much each goat is eating each day. You can also control the amount of feed that is fed from small amounts to full feed. A disadvantage to hand feeding is that each goat needs a separate pen. If you are hand feeding your goats, you need to be consistent and feed the same time every day with a minimum of two feedings per day.

Full feed for goats is estimated at 3.5% of their body weight daily. Simply multiply the goats weight by .035 to determine the amount. 2% of the body weight is considered a maintenance ration- this would be used to “hold” the goat and prevent excessive weight gain.

Most goats will benefit from **combining** a self feeding program and hand feeding program during the feeding period.

**Water-** Clean the water bucket and fill with clean water daily.

**Pens-** Clean the pens on a daily basis to improve health conditions and minimize fly problems. The method of cleaning the pens will depend on the type of material you have in your pens.

### **Walking your goats-**

Halter Breaking/ Chain Breaking/ Leading- I like to start by halter breaking the goats. I will halter the goat and tie them to a fence or drop ( a chain suspended from the roof with a rubber strap attached) . It is very important that you stay with the goats during this procedure. They will usually fight pretty hard which may include jumping and falling. Make sure that there are no objects close by that they can run into and injure themselves. In the beginning- keep it short. After the goat stops fighting the rope and stands still, let them go and repeat the next day. After a few days, the goats will stand tied to the halter without fighting. They are now “halter broke”.

The next step is to teach them to lead. This can be very frustrating. It usually does not work well to pull on the halter. The goat has a natural reaction to pull back when you pull on his head. It

works better to stand beside or behind the goat and let the goat walk forward, controlling him with the end of the halter. It will take several attempts to teach the goat to walk with the halter.

The final step is to “chain break” the goat and teach the goat to lead with a chain. The chain is placed around the goats neck- loose enough so that you can grab the chain and have room to work the chain, but tight enough so that the goat does not easily pull out of the chain. You can purchase a show chain at your local feed dealer or make your own. You can attach a double end chain clip to the chain so that you can secure the goat to the fence.

Driving the goat- “driving or bracing” is an accepted practice in showing goats to maximize their muscle expression. The majority of the judges will allow you to drive your goat in competition. If you are unable to drive your goat during the competition, you place yourself and your goat in a definite disadvantage.

After the goat has learned to walk, you should start working with the goat to drive (brace). This involves moving to the front of the goat, placing the inside part of your left leg into the front shoulder of the goat and pushing into the goat. The goat “drives” when he learns to push back into you. The proper procedure includes:

- stop walking your goat with all four feet square.
- step in front of the goat and control his neck and head holding his head upright and forward while you set his front two feet square and then place his rear legs square.
- step into the goat with your left leg braced into the right shoulder of the goat with the goats neck stretched up your leg and his head held level and looking forward in a comfortable position.
- slightly push into the front of the goat to make him drive back into your leg. The harder you push, the harder the goat should drive.
- there should be minimal pressure on the goats head and his neck should be straight and in-line with his body.

It works to take the goat away from the pens/barn when you start teaching him to drive and be headed back to the barn. They usually will drive more effectively because they are headed back to where they want to go.

**Exercise-** an exercise program is important to build muscle. The amount of exercise needed will vary on each animal. I like to start the exercise program about 45 days prior to the show. You need to have some condition on the goats when you start the exercise program because they are going to burn fat with the increased exercise.

Don't confuse the exercise program with walking the goats. The goats need to be walked throughout the feeding program for training purposes. The exercise program is designed to trim excess fat and tone muscle. Several methods can be effective:

- **Exercise track and dog-** many feeders use a trained track dog to run the goats in an enclosed track. This method is very effective. You will need to consider the cost of the exercise track and the cost of owning and maintaining an exercise dog. The number of days to run and amount of time to run will all vary depending on each individual goat.
- **Chariot-** you can build or purchase a chariot that pulls behind a lawnmower. I like to use a chariot that has a reversible hitch. When we are training the goats to walk, we use the chariot in the traditional way where the goat's feet are on the chariot base and the goat walks with his rear legs only. When we are using the chariot for exercise, I like to reverse the hitch and have all four feet on the ground.

A chariot works great because the goat is secured to a head piece which makes him keep his head at the correct height for showing. You can also control the speed so that it matches the same speed that you will walk in the show ring. You can also add a harness with weights to increase the amount of the workout. A chariot with four headpieces allows you to work four goats at one time.

- **Hand exercise-** no track, no chariot- you can still exercise by devising a harness to put around the goats body (dog harness) and have the goat pull weights as you walk the goat. I recommend starting at 5 lbs and increasing up to as much as 20 lbs.

### ***Fitting***

Fitting involves preparing the goat for the show. The first item of importance is to acquire a copy of the rules for the stock show you are planning to attend and read the rules concerning fitting the goats.

The majority of the shows require that the goats be slick sheared with hair length not exceed a certain measurement- usually 1/2" in length.

**Shearing-** as it may sound simple, shearing methods will differ among exhibitors. I like to experiment ahead of time to find the right procedure to use. For those that show at a lot of prospect shows, practice makes perfect and they will know what works the best.

### Steps to shearing:

1) Blow out all of the dirt from the body with a blow dryer. Note: Goats do not like water. We do not generally wash the goats unless they are extremely dirty or muddy. We manage skin and hair daily by keeping the goats in a clean pen with a light weight blanket. We catch the goats daily, put them on a table and blow out their hair to clean the hair and hide. Apply a light coat of Show Sheen to condition the hair. Brush the hair with a soft brush to work in the conditioner and train the hair.

2) Secure the goat on a trimming table.

3) Shear the goat- I like to start at the rear hock and shear up towards the back. Repeat for the front leg- knee up to the back. Shear the back and sides forward from the tail to the neck. Shear the neck from the shoulders and brisket- up and forward towards the head.

Shear the inside of the back leg from the hock up. Shear the underline to include between the front legs. Shear the head last. Hair will be left on the legs from the hock/knee down and the tail.

4) Trim the hair around the hoof line on each leg.

5) Block out the tail.

6) Apply a skin conditioner.

7) Blanket or sock the goat.

8) Return to a clean and dry pen.

### Helpful hints:

- Make sure your goat has been on a shearing table and has been sheared several times prior to shearing for the show. Practice makes perfection.
- I like to shear with Lister or Premier covercoat blades the day before the show. Do not shear the day of the show. The goat will get tired and you will normally have clipper tracks in the hair coat.
- Freshly sheared goats can sunburn easily. Put on a sock or blanket or keep the goat out of the sunlight. Animal sun-block products can also be used and are available at your local feed store.

## *Showmanship*

It does not matter how good the goats is that you raised if you do not possess the skills to present the goat to the judge. *Showmanship wins shows*. Showmanship skills must be developed and practiced continually. If you are a beginner, check with your local 4-H leaders, County Agents or Agricultural Science instructors to see if any show clinics are planned. If none have been planned, ask them if they can put one together. You can also look for a veteran exhibitor in your club or chapter and ask them if they would assist you in learning how to show.

Practice, practice, practice. Set up a weekly schedule that includes walking and showing your goats several days a week. Make sure you train your goat to stand and drive for long periods of time so that he does not stop showing on you during the competition. Plan ahead and make sure that your parents know when you want to practice so that they can assist.

Attend as many prospect shows as you can. Not only will you improve with every show, but you will train your goats to handle the stress of traveling and perfect their show ring presence. Additionally, the more you show, the more you will get to visit with other exhibitors and share and learn information about your goat project.

Prior to attending your County Youth Show or Major Show, your goat should be trained to perfection. It is difficult enough to win a County Show or place at Major Show without any showmanship mistakes, let alone, with mistakes. Be prepared to show flawlessly.

Have complete knowledge of your project and know the answers to any questions that the judge could ask in a market class or showmanship class. Some questions may include:

- Weight
- Breed
- age
- How many pounds of feed are fed daily.
- What is the percent protein, fat and fiber of the feed.
- What feed additives do you use and why.
- Be able to point out body parts.
- What type of injections are used on goats and where would you give the injection.



- What is the ideal finish in tenths of an inch over the ribs and how much fat cover does your goat have.

What your goat needs to be trained to do:

- Walk on command with your control using a chain around the neck. The goat should be at your right side with his head slightly in front of you. His neck should be extended out of his shoulder and his head should be level.
- Stop on command with all four feet set square.
- Drive on command for extended periods of time.
- Stand still for extended periods of time.

Show Ring expectations:

- Dress properly- jeans, a collared shirt and shoes or boots will work fine. Some exhibitors like to wear a bright colored shirt to catch the judge's eye. Establish your "show clothes" ahead of time and be dressed and ready to show when the time arises.
- Avoid tennis shoes and t-shirts. Avoid overdressing- be practical.
- If the show ring is available the night before the show or the morning before the show, take your goat into the ring and go through a quick show ring workout ahead of time.
- Know how the judge works the ring. If you are not in the first class of the day, watch a class or two prior to showing so that you will know exactly what to expect when you get in the ring. If you are in the first class, ask the ring steward how they plan on working the ring.
- Be on time. I believe it is an advantage to enter the ring first for two reasons. First, we all know that goats follow easy, but sometimes do not like to lead the way. If your goat walks perfect, as he should, you will set the example for the class, and, undoubtedly get a very good look from the judge. Secondly, since you are in the front of the line, you will not have to move up and reset your goat continually if the judge uses a bottom end pulling method of judging (as most do).
- If you are lined up in between goats to enter the ring, pause prior to entering and give yourself a little room behind the goat in front of you. Goats have a tendency to stop and go. You want to avoid having to do so yourself. It is to your advantage to keep your goat walking.
- Whether you initially set up on a rear view or profile, give yourself enough room to present your goat without getting hid by the goats on either side of you.

- Set your goat up as quickly as possible. You never want the judge to see your goat out of show position.
- Never get stuck in a corner. If you do, move your goat to another position. On the other hand, if the judge has already handled your goat, it is not advisable to move out of your position in line. Work effectively to get your goat in a position to be easily seen.
- Relax when the judge is on the other end of the ring. Keep your goat set correctly, but avoid continually driving the goat at all times so that the goat does not wear out on you.
- Show confidence- attitude is important. Know that you are going to win the class. Acknowledge the judge with eye contact and a smile. Answer questions in complete sentences.
- Never stop showing. Even when the class placing has been established and especially if you won the class. You never want the judge to see your goat when he does not look his very best.
- If applicable, thank the judge and shake his hand.
- Always exhibit friendly showmanship skills- be humble when you win and gracious if you lose. Do not over react to any situation.
- Walk the goat out of the ring and out of other exhibitors path prior to changing halters or transferring to your parents.
- After the show is over, thank your parents, adult leaders, Teachers and Agents for their help. I also think it is a great idea to thank the show officials for their efforts in hosting the show.
- Have fun.

### **Conclusion**

The market goat project is a very rewarding program that allows the entire family to work together for a common cause. You should establish the goals that you want to achieve prior to purchasing your goats and develop a daily maintenance schedule to maximize your chances for success. Hard work and perseverance pays off.

I am sure that you will have fun and enjoy the family time shared and success that can be achieved with this project program

Good Luck.

*Jim Missildine*

*Retired Agricultural Science Instructor*

*Show goat business as a producer*

*Judge Goat shows*

*Texas State University Teacher- Selection and Evaluation of Livestock*

*Honor Show Chow National Goat Ambassador*