

# Bringing your new pygmy goat home



## Bringing your new Pygmy goat babies home....

1. Your babies will be scared in their new home and surroundings. Be sure to put them in a small enclosure where you can catch them easily without chasing them. A dog crate works well for the first few days or a dog run.
2. Spend lots of time loving them and holding them so they know they are loved and no one is going to hurt them.
3. Make sure they have fresh water, hay and a little barley/corn. We feed barley/corn but you can feed a commercial goat ration like Purina. Feed good alfalfa hay free choice. They should also have available a goat mineral, baking soda and loose salt free choice. It should be kept dry and out of the elements. They will eat it as they need it.
4. Sometime from the stress they can get diarrhea **normally** they don't but in case they do you can give them Pepto Bismol do not use anything else.

*Controls diarrhea in kids under one month old. Use up to 2 cc every four to six hours for newborns; 5 cc over the same timeframe for kids approaching one month old. Follow up with oral ruminant get Probios to repopulate the gut with vital live bacteria used for digestion. Do not use Immodium AD to control diarrhea in goats, because it stops the peristaltic action of the gut and death is a likely result of its use.*

5. Your babies need to be on a coccidia prevention program. This is important for their health and growth. Please see the Vaccination schedule.
6. Observation is important. If your babies are off or do not eat well. The first thing you need to do is take their temperature. It should be 102-104. Goats are normally very healthy animals.
7. Teaching your baby goat to lead.

You can start training your baby by tying your baby to a post. It's much more effective if you are the post though. The first lesson you are going to teach him/her to stand next to you. Use a collar your baby cannot slip out of.

Always use small jerks on the lead. Stand in one spot and teach your baby that the best place is beside you. When he/she turns away or moves away, give him/her a quick jerk towards you. Give him/her immediate slack and praise him/her. The slack and praise are his/her reward. When first starting out make it simple. Praise him/her and give him/her slack if he is willing to stand facing you with slack in the lead. Once he/she does this with consistency ask that he/she stand closer. By the end of the lesson he should stand next to you.

During the next lesson teach him/her to walk with you. Once you've taught your baby to lead you can get him/her used to different surroundings. You want to teach your baby to walk with his head high and confident. Your baby should be well behaved and walk with his/her shoulder at your leg. Teach him/her to stand still and accept people touching his legs, back and face. Teach him to stand still, with his feet placed where you ask him/her. If you show him/her step away from his body so the judges can see all sides of him.

8. Wethers – it is a good idea to feed Ammonium Chloride to bucks and wethers as a preventative measure.

Calculi occur frequently in bucks, especially castrated males. The common symptom is difficult urination, indicated by stretching and straining to urinate with little or no success. Providing fresh water, free-choice nutrients, will help prevent this problem. Over-graining should be avoided. Ammonium Chloride may be used as a preventive and a treatment for urinary tract problems. (Up to 128 1/4-oz. doses)

These are free catalogs just email, call or write for a copy they are a good to have on hand and many have good information in them. They also carry items not found at local feed stores.

Caprine Supply <http://www.caprinesupply.com/>

Hoegers Supply <http://www.hoeggergoatsupply.com/>

Pipestone - <http://www.pipevet.com/>

PBS Vet Supply <http://www.pbsanimalhealth.com/>

Revival Animal health <http://www.revivalanimal.com/>

There are many more out there but these are my favorites.

9. Goats love to have you push on their head with your hand, which may seem like a fun game while they are babies but when they get older they will use their heads to butte you which will no longer be fun or safe. Never play this game with any baby goat.
10. It is a good idea to locate a vet that knows and treats goats prior to needing one.

## Supplies to Have On Hand For the Arrival of Your Baby Goat(s)

### General Supplies to Have On Hand

Blood Stop Powder		
Thermometer	<b>A Must – Human Digital works</b>	
Spectam Sour Halt	I like this product a lot you can also you Pepto-Bismol	Diarrhea
Shear Magic Small Hoof Shears	Works Great	Trimming Hoofs Need to be

		done frequently (See Health Schedule)
Betadine Surgical Scrub		
Nolvasan Ointment	For Surface scratches or cuts	
Collar and Lead		
Nutri-Drench for Goats		
Terramycin Eye Ointment		
<b>Health Maintenance Babies (See Health Schedule)</b>		
Coccidiosis Medicine	Sul-Q-Nox or Albon Prescription Sul-Q-Nox ( <a href="http://www.pipevet.com">www.pipevet.com</a> )	See Health Schedule
Goat Wormer	I recommend Dextomax (injectable) and Ivomec Plus (Injectable)	Babies need to be wormed frequently (See Health Schedule)
C&D/Tetanus Toxoid Vaccine	Unless your vet will be giving all shots and worming	See Health Schedule
Disposable Syringes	Unless your vet will be giving all shots and worming	I like 1 cc with out needles and 10cc luer lock without needles
Disposable Needles	I prefer 20 gauge 1" and ½" And 18 gauge 1"	
Epinephrine	For shot reactions – A Must Prescription	
<b>Feed</b>		
Alfalfa Hay	The finer stem and leafy work the best	Feed Free Choice
Goat Mineral	Purina Makes One	Feed Free Choice
Baking soda	Buy at Costco or Grocery Store	Feed Free Choice
Salt iodized	Buy at feed store	Loose works better than a block Feed Free Choice
Grain	We feed barley/corn but you can buy a commercial goat ration such as Purina	
Feed contain	Something to feed the goat grain in off the ground	
Hay Container	Something to feed hay in and keep it off the ground	

### Normal Pygmy Goat Values

Rectal temperature 102.5 – 104 °F (39.3 – 40 °C)

Pulse 60 – 80 per minute

Respiration 15 – 30 per minute

Puberty 4 – 12 months

Estrous cycle 18 – 23 days Estrum 12 – 36 hours

Gestation 145 – 153 days

## Conversions

1 ml (milliliter) = 1 cc (cubic centimeter)  
1 teaspoon = 5 ml (cc)  
1 Tablespoon = 15 ml (3 teaspoons), 1/2oz  
1 ounce = 30 ml (2 Tablespoons)

1 ml (milliliter) is equivalent to 1 cc (cubic centimeter)

Approximate Household Measures for oral administration:

1 teaspoon = 5 ml (cc)  
1 Tablespoon = 15 ml (3 teaspoons), 1/2oz  
1 ounce = 30 ml (2 Tablespoons)  
1 cup = 16 tablespoons = 240 ml  
1 liter (l) = 1,000 ml (cc), 1.06 quarts

Kg (kilogram) - Doses for many medications and supplements are written in kilograms (kg).

1 kg equals 2.2 pounds, 1,000 grams  
1 pound = 0.454 kg., or 454 grams.  
1 gram weighs about the same as one regular paper clip.

To convert pounds to kilograms: pounds x 0.4536 = kilograms

### Other conversions:

1mg = 1000 ug or mcg (ug & mcg= micrograms)  
1,000 mg = 1 gram (g)  
1,000 g = 1 kilogram or 2.2 pounds

**SYRINGES:** 3ml, 6ml, 12ml, 20ml, 30ml, 60 ml. (**6ml & 12ml** most used)

I prefer the Luer Lock syringes rather than the Luer Slip. You can buy syringes with a "feeding tip", a larger tapered tip that is used for dosing liquids and or [tubing weak newborns](#) (also see [catheter](#) below). It's a good idea to have one or two 30ml or 60 ml feeding tip syringes for giving oral medications.

**NEEDLES:** 20 X 3/4" or 20 x 1" [most useful, all purpose]. Can take thicker medications.

22 X 1/2 " or 22 X 3/4" are less painful, I use for babies and thin liquids. Optional, but handy.

18 X 1" for very thick medications can be used for bucks and larger does, and for painful injections where you want to inject rapidly.

## Here are some questions and answers about Pygmy Goats

It is always better to know some pygmy goat facts, before learning some pygmy goat info related to their care. Pygmy goats have originated in Africa and made their way as pets in American homes during the 1950's. [Pygmy goats as pets](#) for children are very popular today. there are two pygmy [goat breeds](#) that are registered as dwarf breeds. These include the Nigerian Dwarf and the African pygmy goat.

The African pygmy goat is the common member of petting zoos. They are about 20 to 25 inches tall and weigh about 50 to 60 pounds. Their milk contains about 6% more butterfat than any other goat milk. The [Nigerian dwarf goat](#) is only 17 to 20 inches tall and weighs around 75 pounds. They can produce one quart milk every day and are happy in 1/3rd of the living space that is basically required for any other full size goat breed.

The pygmy goats have a herd mentality and what more can you expect out of an IQ of just 60? If you bring home just one goat, it will become sad and lonely, bleat constantly and try to run away at all times. So, it is always better you bring home a pair, for their peace of mind as well as yours. They are very easy to care for, playful and lovable pets.

Note: When I traqnsfered this it ran words together I am working on fixing this.

Frequently Asked Questions About Pygmy Goats	
How Long do Pygmy Goats Live?	Approximately 8 to 12 years. Goats which are well cared for live past 15
How tall do pygmy goats get?	DOES: 16-22 3/8" at the withers. Bucks 16-23 5/8" at the withers
What do Pygmy goats weigh?	Females, called does, 51 to 75 lb and males, called bucks, weigh 60 to 86 lb.
What about Pygmy goat reproduction?	Pygmy goats are precocious and polyestrous breeders; bearing one to four young every nine to twelve months after a five month gestation period. Does are usually bred for the first time at about twelve to eighteen months, although they may conceive as early as two months if care is not taken to separate them early from bucklings. Newborn kids will nurse almost immediately, begin eating grain and roughage within a week, and are weaned by three months of age.  Polyestrous sexual behavior means that they experience heat and can be freshened year-

	<p>round. If milking is a priority, a continuous supply of milk can be obtained by breeding two or more pygmy does alternately. Though some full-size dairy breeds are also noted for polyestrous sexual behavior.</p>
<p><b>Where did pygmy goats come from?</b></p>	<p>Pygmy goats originated in the <a href="#">Cameroon</a> Valley of <a href="#">West Africa</a>. They were imported into the United States from European zoos in the 1950s for use in zoos as well as research animals. They were eventually acquired by private breeders and quickly gained popularity as pets and exhibition animals due to their good-natured personalities, friendliness and hardy constitution. Today you can find them as house pets and at petting zoos.</p>
<p><b>What care and housing do pygmy goats need?</b></p>	<p>Pygmy goats are adaptable to most climates. Their primary diet consists of greens and grains. They enjoy having items to jump on and may be able to leap onto small vehicles. They are also in need of a shed and open area accessible at all times. They also need a companion that doesn't necessarily have to be its own species. They are prey animals and should therefore be sheltered in a predator-proof area -especially at night. Goats require fresh water at all times or they won't drink it. Pygmy goats are often affectionate if they are treated with respect. They can also be trained, though it requires quite a bit of work.</p>
<p><b>What general information is available on pygmy goats.</b></p>	<p>Average lifespan 10-15 years</p> <p>Normal body temperature 102-104°F (39.1 - 40°C)</p> <p>Normal pulse rate 70-95 beats per minute (faster for kids)</p> <p>Normal respiration rate 20-24 per minute</p> <p>Rumen movement 1-1.5 per minute</p> <p>Gestation period 145-157 days (average 150 days)</p> <p>Heat (oestrus) cycle 18-24 days (average 21 days)</p> <p>Length of heat 12-48 hours (average 1 day)</p> <p>Weaning age (recommended) 6 - 12 weeks</p> <p>Males sexually mature 10-12 weeks</p> <p>Females onset of heat 7-12 months*</p> <p>Dehorning (by veterinary surgeon) By 7 days</p> <p>Castration; Using elastrator ring 7 days</p> <p>Surgical method (by vet) No age limit</p>
<p><b>When do you wean the</b></p>	

<b>young?</b>	Ideally between around 8 weeks... Some breeders wean as young as 4 weeks.
<b>Can they Kid Tokay?</b>	A goat giving birth is called "kidding". Pygmies are more prone to problems than other goat breeds, especially first time moms. Make sure someone is there when she goes into labor and keep a close eye on her. Be ready to call the vet if necessary.
<b>How long before they give birth from the time of breeding?</b>	145 - 155 days (approx. 5 months)
<b>How old do you breed them?</b>	Some breeders will say 1 year, 14 months is even better so that mom is more mature and less likely to experience kidding problems. In any case it is a good idea if you plan to breed them to do it before they turn 2 years of age.
<b>Odor /Cleanliness</b>	Because their diet contains no meat, goat "droppings" do not have the unpleasant odor that other pets' manure has. Goat droppings are small pellets that can easily be raked or swept and disposed of or used as fertilizer for your garden or flower box. Pygmy goats prefer to be clean and dry and will seek out those places to rest; they do not like rain and will run for shelter when the first drops fall. Although uncastrated males can have an unpleasant smell about them, neutered males (wethers) and females have no such odor at all. A single pygmy goat kept as a pet has none of the objectionable odors typically associated with livestock simply because they are so small and are not kept in a barnyard environment with large numbers of other animals.
<b>Do they have heat cycles or do they just get pregnant at any time?</b>	They have heat cycles approximately every 3 weeks (will vary). Some goat breeds only have heat cycles during certain seasons, but pygmies will have heat cycles every few weeks, year round.
<b>After they have babies how long before they</b>	They *can* and will breed within days or weeks. I personally feel that it's better to give them some time off and only breed them once per year, again to avoid problems for the doe and kids. Pygmies can have two kidding's a year.



<b>can breed again at minimum?</b>	
<b>How soon are pygmy bucks fertile?</b>	Pygmy buckling's can be fertile as early as 8 weeks and some have impregnated their mothers at this young age. It's important to wether them before this age if they are not going to be used as breeders. If they are going to be breeders, they need to be separated from mom and all other does at 8 weeks except for supervised feedings.
<b>When Do Does Start to Come Into Heat?</b>	Doeling s usually have their first heat around 5 months of age, but there have been reports of 2 month olds getting pregnant.
<b>Signs Your doe Is in Heat</b>	Signs of estrus are numerous, some obvious, some more discreet. The doe usually flags her tail side-to-side when around a buck, presumably to send attractive pheromones from her reproductive tract into the environment that a buck finds attractive. Her vulva may be more pink than normal, appear swollen, and have some clear or white-colored discharge with the consistency of egg white. This discharge usually starts clear and becomes whiter as the heat progresses. Others signs include more frequent urination and restless behavior. She may also talk more than usual, sometimes bleating very loudly at the edge of the fence line nearest the buck. Decreased appetite and milk production are also reported. The doe is in a standing heat when she stands willingly and lets a buck mount. Standing heat usually lasts from 1-24 hours. If a buck is not present, does often mount their herd mates or stand for other does to mount them.
<b>Personality</b>	Pygmy Goats are friendly when they want to be and always comical if you have a good sense of humor. Sometimes they will do things that you don't necessarily think is cute but it is rather difficult to train them to stop doing goat things, But it is not impossible, because after all a goat does have an I.Q. of 60. By goat things I mean, like jumping on your car, pulling your clothes off your clothes line, or eating your favorite rose bush. Of course they do these things only because they are curious, not because they don't like you. You can however; goat-proof your yard and everyone will be happy. All in all goats do make really nice pets, and I know that you would enjoy having some. I say some because goats are herd animals and are not happy unless they have a friend. Does not necessarily have to be another goat but they do prefer them.

<b>Housing</b>	A sturdy, well ventilated, draft-free barn is a must for your pygmy goat. They really hate to sleep outside in the cold months and they actually panic if it rains on them. Without these qualities in your barn there is a chance that your animal will become ill.
<b>Fencing</b>	Standard woven livestock fencing--47 inches high with openings smaller on the bottom (4"x6") and larger on top (6"x6"). If you have babies younger than 3 months, you may have to keep a cardboard collar on them until they grow too large to squeeze through the holes. If you have bucks, you may need to run a strand of hot wire about 12" off the ground to keep them from tearing down the fence or use heavy duty cattle panels (this is what I use).
<b>Can I Get Only One Pygmy?</b>	Goats are herd animals and are happiest with other goats. A minimum number is two goats.
<b>Can I Keep A Buck As A Pet</b>	An unneutered male is a smelly animal. In order to make themselves attractive to females, they urinate on themselves. They also grow long hair and exhibit 'odd' behavior--blubbering, snorting. Etc. This is normal for a buck. Bucks do not make good pets. Often, bucks that are treated as a pet become aggressive as adults. If you need a buck for breeding purposes, provide a separate pen and a wether as a companion and do not treat it as a pet! Neutered males, called wethers, however, make wonderful pets. They will look very similar to a doe, won't smell and can have wonderful temperaments.
<b>Can Bucks and Does Live Together?</b>	Bucks should be kept in a separate pen. If housed together with does, the buck will breed the does anytime they come into heat. This can result in does being bred too early (you wouldn't breed your 12 year old daughter just because she is 'old enough', would you?) or too frequently (I recommend breeding does no more than once a year.
<b>Do Pygmy Goats Get Along with Other Animals?</b>	Pygmy goats have a good-natured personality and get along well with other livestock. I have mine in with a horse, chickens and rabbits and have had sheep with them. The key is the temperament of the other livestock. I have sold goats to people with one horse who want companions for their horse and don't want to care for another large animal.
<b>How Expensive Are Pygmy goats to Keep?</b>	Pygmy goats are inexpensive animals to keep, especially wethers or does not being freshened. I feed my non-breeding animals only 1/2 to one cup of feed per day and grass hay. Does that are nursing get 4 cups of feed a day and alfalfa mixed with their grass hay and growing kids get alfalfa in a creep feeder. They also have access to loose mineral salt and get selenium crumbles

	<p>on their feed every day. Pygmy goats are very healthy animals for the most part and I have rarely had to take them to the vet.</p>
<p><b>Why does it seem that there are different types of Pygmy goats? Some are taller and have different heads than others I have seen.</b></p>	<p>Just as in any animal, let the buyer beware. I have seen many smaller goats sold as "pygmy" goats that are actually Pygora goats or some mixture of Pygmy and other goat breeds. Pygmy goats are a distinct breed of goat, and the only way to be sure that you are getting a true Pygmy goat is to buy registered goats from a reputable breeder. Also, within Pygmy goats, there are many different-looking goats, depending on the quality of breeding stock and how much effort the breeder is making to breed animals that look like the breed standard established by the National Pygmy Goat Association (NPGA).</p>
<p><b>Can A Pygmy goat Be Potty Trained?</b></p>	<p>Pygmy goats are a great, exotic animal. Though they're best kept in a wide roaming area, such as on an acreage or farm, pygmy goats are a great domesticated pet and a fun addition to any family. Females grow to around 60 pounds and males grow to around 80 pounds. They grow to an average of 23 inches. This makes it feasible for a pygmy goat to live in a home. Unfortunately, goat feces have a pungent aroma, and goats often drop feces where they stand. This cannot be avoided, but urination can be trained. Training should start with a new baby goat for the best circumstances. Read more: <a href="http://www.ehow.co.uk/how_5703986_potty-train-pygmy-goat.html#ixzz10FjsgOak">How to Potty Train a Pygmy Goat   eHow.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.ehow.co.uk/how_5703986_potty-train-pygmy-goat.html#ixzz10FjsgOak">http://www.ehow.co.uk/how_5703986_potty-train-pygmy-goat.html#ixzz10FjsgOak</a></p>
<p><b>What are your county's regulations on livestock?</b></p>	<p>Pygmies are considered livestock. You can't necessarily stick one in your backyard. First check with your county's regulations office to see if you can legally own them.</p>

<p><b>Do pygmy goats play?</b></p>	<p>YES! Pygmies are absolutely the clowns of the barnyard. They will stand up on their hind legs and simultaneously come down and head butt each other. They talk to each other constantly. Provide them with benches to climb on or wooden cable spools and they will hop up and down on them. A bored goat is not a happy goat, so be sure to provide a stimulating environment.</p> <p>For us, pygmy goats make great pets. They can be loud, however, so be a good neighbor and communicate with the people around you. We went to our immediate neighbors and asked if they would object to our having goats, and they all gave us the green light. Since ours are the only ones on the block, so to speak, they're celebrities in their own right. Our neighbors bring them treats and little kids love to come to our very own petting zoo.</p> <p>Do your research and find out if pygmy goats would be the right pets for your family. It's a big commitment, so be sure your entire family is on board. I guarantee though, that at minimum, they will make you laugh.</p>
<p><b>What is C.A.E. and why is it important to buy from a tested herd?</b></p>	<p>Caprine Arthritis Encephalitis (CAE) is a virus that affects goats in multiple ways. Most often characterized by big knees, the virus also does irreparable damage to the lungs as well and affects the immune system leaving the goat defenseless against most common ailments. CAE is the bane of many goat producers and much emphasis is placed on raising "CAE free" goats.</p>
<p><b>What is Johne's disease and what causes it and why it is important to buy from a tested herd?</b></p>	<p>Johne's disease is a serious wasting disease of goats, which can lead to loss of production and death. The disease affects animals by causing thickening of the intestinal wall resulting in a reduction in the normal absorption of food. The disease is caused by a bacterium (<i>Mycobacterium paratuberculosis</i>) that lives mainly in animal intestines, but can also survive in the outside environment for several months. The disease is seen more often in dairy goats than meat or fibre goats, but all breeds may be infected if they come into contact with the bacterium. Goats acquire infection at an early age through eating contaminated pasture, or drinking contaminated milk or water. The signs of disease develop slowly and the disease is rarely seen in young animals.</p>
<p><b>Safety</b></p>	<p>Pygmy goats are not aggressive by nature but are very playful. Like other ruminant (multi-stomach) animals, they have lower teeth but none on top; even if they were to bite, which they do not, it would be nothing more than a slight pinch — nothing at all like a dog or a cat bite. There has not been a single documented case of anyone's being killed or even seriously injured by a pygmy goat! When threatened, a pygmy is likely to stand on its hind feet, lower or cock its head to one side and stand its hair on end — or run and hide.</p> <p>Pygmy goats are not prime carriers of rabies or other diseases transmissible to humans or other animals.</p>

	<p>The few diseases or maladies that afflict pygmy goats, while rare, are usually limited to that particular animal or are “species specific” (confined only to goats)</p>
<p><b>What is C.L. and why should I buy from a tested herd</b></p>	<p>Caseous Lymphadenitis is a chronic bacterial infection that causes external and internal lumps in sheep and goats. It is caused by a bacteria, <i>Corynebacterium Pseudotuberculosis</i>, which enters the body through a wound in the skin causing an infection and a slow growing, firm abscess. This infection may also travel to the regional lymph nodes causing a localized abscess there.</p> <p>The disease is infectious and, under certain circumstances, can spread quickly through your herd. Not all abscesses are caused by this bacteria! In fact, relatively few abscesses are actually C.L. In order for the disease to be present, you must first have the bacteria in your herd or on your ranch. This usually occurs when an infected animal is brought into the herd. Secondly, there must be an entrance wound for the animal to get the bacteria into their systems. It is not necessarily true that an animal with no abscesses will not be carrying the bacteria, because the lesions can be on any part of the body including the internal organs. Usually the disease is diagnosed when several animals in the herd are noticed to have a lump or string of lumps in the area of the lymph nodes. Abscesses can be removed or carefully cleaned out and, if there is no lymph node involvement, may not return. A sample of the pus in the abscess or of the animal's blood can be sent to one of the laboratories, which specialize in diagnosing this type of disease, for analysis. Pus from draining abscesses contains very large numbers of bacteria and the organism can survive for long periods (months) in the environment. This disease is transmittable (although cases are rare) to humans! So if you suspect C.L., let your veterinarian be the one to handle the abscess.</p>
<p><b>Noise</b></p>	<p>Pygmy goats normally are not noisy animals; they may “baaa” once in a while when they see someone, but it’s a pleasant, “down home” sound. They won’ t keep your neighbors awake like a barking dog or a yowling tomcat. When darkness falls, pygmy goats go to their houses and quietly chew their cud or go to sleep. On dreary or rainy days, they prefer to stay in their houses and relax and chew their cud; and on bright, sunny days, they like to lie outside and sun bathe. Pygmies are very peaceful animals and do well in either residential or agricultural surroundings.</p>
<p><b>Territory</b></p>	<p>Pygmy goats are creatures of routine. Once they learn their “territory”, they normally are content to stay within it and do not tend to run off and annoy the neighbors. A fenced backyard is sufficient as long as the fence meets the ground so the goat cannot slip under it to sample the neighbor’s flowers.</p> <p>Pygmies are not great fence jumpers but do like to jump on top of doghouses or other structures to experience the “view from the top”. Be sure no such structures are next to the fence, as your goat may jump down from the structure on the wrong side of the fence and not be able to get back. Car hoods are tempting as well; so if you don’t want little hoof tracks on your shiny new car, park it somewhere else!</p>

<b>Space Requirements</b>	<p>A single pygmy goat kept as a pet needs relatively little space. A nice backyard is more than sufficient for a little goat. Goats are browsers rather than grazers and do not decimate your lawn; they prefer to pick the tasty clover, dandelions or broadleaf weeds and let the nice green grass grow. A common saying among goat breeders is that a goat would starve to death on a golf course — because there are no weeds to eat! If you have a thorny patch to clean up, a pygmy goat will do the work of that expensive weed killer for you. NOTE: Should you decide to invest in more than one pygmy goat, the space requirements are still very reasonable. An acre of ground can easily accommodate up to a dozen or more pygmies without fear of overgrazing. Unlike sheep, goats eat the tops off the weeds and grasses rather than pulling them up by the roots; thus, a goat pasture normally has an aesthetically pleasing, “manicured” appearance.</p>
<b>Residential Zoning</b>	<p>Many residential areas that have zoning restrictions on agricultural animals will allow a pygmy goat to be kept as a pet as long as it can be shown that the goat is not being kept for agricultural purposes. In other words, the goat is not being used for meat, milk production, fiber (wool) or commercial breeding. A pygmy goat, therefore, would meet the “pet” requirement; if you choose a male, however, we recommend neutering only because the male smell may be objectionable to your neighbors. And of course if your little goat is neutered, there can be no doubt he’s not being used for breeding.</p>
<b>Why do you want to get goats?</b>	<p>This is the first question we ask people who want to buy goats from us, and this is the most important thing to ask yourself before you get your goats. The answer to this question will help you decide which type of goat that would be suit your needs and which sex would be best for you.</p> <p>First, you need to know that goats are not lawnmowers with legs. Although a goat's digestive system is similar to that of other ruminants, such as cattle and sheep, who are "grazers" and eat grass, goats are more related to deer, who are "browsers". As browsers, goats are designed to eat, and prefer, brush and trees more than grass. Though goats will eat grass, if you are considering getting goats to be lawnmowers, you are going to be sorely disappointed, because they will eat your trees and roses before they will work on the lawn. Goats could be used to help reclaim grasslands that have been overgrown with brush. Our land was overrun with brambles, wild roses, honeysuckle and 100s of small pine tree when we moved here; these are all gone now. If you want to clear brushy land, a goat will be happy to help you with this project; if you want a lawnmower with legs, get a sheep, though a sheep probably will not be as loving and as smart of a pet as a goat will be.</p> <p>We did start out getting goats to help us clear our brushy land as well as supply us with milk. The land is quite clear now: the brush is long gone, but we still have our goats. Now, we keep our goats as milkers and pets; they supply us with milk, love and affection. We did not get into goats for the sole purpose of making money and I would never advise someone to get into goats for the intended purpose of making a profit from them. If you are lucky, after years of work, you might break even. The best reason to get into goats is because you love them and</p>

	<p>you want them to be a part of your life.</p>
<p><b>What about horns?</b></p>	<p>You <b>do not</b> want a goat with horns. It is your decision to make, of course, but I'm talking to you now as a friend, let me say that, from personal experience, and knowing human nature, goats and goat behavior very well, please, do not get a goat with horns or you may regret it later. If your goats have kids, please be responsible and <a href="#">disbud</a> them at the proper time. Yes, horns can be very beautiful, but they are also <b>very dangerous</b>, to you, your family and other goats. Even if the goat is a pet, and friendly, he/she can accidentally, or on purpose, seriously injure other goats, animals and humans. Goats learn to use their horns; they can, and will, use them on their herd mates (goat can, at times, be very violent with each other: it is their natural way). I know of a goat that gored her herd mate through the chest. A loving pet goat with horns could easily, even if accidentally, injure a child- it's just not worth the risk to your children. I hate to see a pet goat end up in the auction barn because they hurt their owner, their owners children, or their fellow herd mate.</p> <p>Horns can, and do, get caught in fences, which can be very dangerous for the goat, causing her to strangle him or herself, or leaving him/her open to attack by predators. I knew a goat that got their horns caught in a low basketball net. Don't think that if your goat has horns, he can/will defend himself against dogs (no matter what someone told you). If a dog wants to kill a goat, and he can get through your fence, he will kill the goat, with or without horns.</p> <p>If you are going to show your goat, or the goat is a 4-H project, he/she must be disbudded.</p> <p>Read more about this subject <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>If you get a goat with horns over 1/2 - 3/4 inch long... you are stuck with having horns. (<a href="#">read this link</a>)</p>
<p><b>Goat Names and Terminology</b></p>	<p>You will often hear goats referred to by the following: "Buck or Billy" - a male goat. "Doe or Nanny" - a female goat. "Kid" - a young goat. "Wether" - a castrated male goat. "Herd" - a group of goats. "Wattles" - little round balls of fur on a goats' neck close to its chin. Not all goats have wattles.</p>
<p><b>Origins of the Goat</b></p>	<p>Goats were one of the first animals to be tamed by humans and were being herded 9,000 years ago. They are a member of the cattle family and are believed to be descended from the wild goat, bezoar.</p>
<p><b>Breeds of Goats</b></p>	<p>There are over 210 breeds of goats with an estimated 450 million goats in the world (2001). Of the 450 million goats in the world, it is estimated that approximately 6 to 8 % of them are in</p>

	North America (2001). The majority of the world goat population can be found in the Mideast and Asia.
<b>Eating Habits</b>	<p>Goats are ruminants or cud chewing animals that eat cracked or ground corn mixed with oats, hay and grass. Most breeders and producers prefer to limit the amount of corn in a goat's diet, preferring to feed specialized goat feed mixes with the majority of the diet being made up in a mixed, grassy alfalfa and other weeds, browse and shrubs known to be compatible with a goat's nutritional needs.</p> <p>Goats also have specific mineral and vitamin requirements that determine their overall health and production. These requirements often vary between breeds of goats and coloration of the goat. Most people believe that goats will eat almost anything and this is simply not true. The goat has very sensitive lips and their natural curiosity gives them a habit of "mouthing" and "smelling" for food that is clean and tasty. Goats will not eat soiled food (unless they are pushed to the point of starvation - often preferring to starve).</p>
<b>Teeth</b>	<p>Goats have a lower set of teeth which meet a hard pad in the upper jaw, and 24 molars on the top and bottom in the back of their mouths. Kids have 8 small, sharp teeth in their lower front jaw, and like children, when their baby teeth fall out they are replaced by permanent teeth. The age of a goat can often be closely determined by their teeth.</p>
<b>Eyes</b>	<p>The pupil in a goat's eye is rectangular in shape instead of being round like those of other animals. It is believed that goats have excellent night vision and will often browse at night. The actual color of the goat's eyes is varied with the most common color being yellow or brown. Blue coloration is a bit rarer and often a characteristic many breeders will try to achieve.</p>
<b>Produce</b>	<p>The main products associated with goats are milk, cheese, meat, mohair, and cashmere. Large dairy does produce 3,000 to 5,000 pounds of milk each year. (On a daily basis they produce 2 or 3 quarts of milk). With the emphasis on genetics, it should be noted that breeders and producers are beginning to surpass previous levels of milk and meat production with daily yields often exceeding one gallon of milk per day.</p>



<b>My bottle baby seems hungry all the time should I feed her more often than her normal schedule?</b>	I prefer that bottle babies be put on a schedule especially if they are healthy. They need to start eating goat food not just the milk. Most bottle babies will eat until they pop once they get the hang of it. Too much milk will lead to diarrhea. And if the baby was on her mom, the mom would walk away when the feeding was over. So if you limit the amount, the baby will be more likely to eat hay and grain which she needs to do now. For now you can multiply the body weight by 4 and that is the max amount of milk to feed per day up to 20 to 24 ounces. She can divide that into as many feedings as she wants. So if the baby weighs 4#, then the most she should get per day is 16 ounces. I also find that my formula with the ½ cup cream per quart of goat's milk gives them more calories and they are not as hungry.
<b>How do I get started with goats?</b>	<p>Starting with goats should start with reading as much as you can about them. Talk to as many people as you can find that raise goats. Subscribe to a goat magazine. Get a place to keep the goats in before you go and buy them. READ, READ, READ!</p> <p>You never stop learning about these fascinating animals even if you have them for many years. Don't get discouraged - goat keeping has ups and downs just like everything else. Remember - there are no stupid questions!!</p>
<b>If we are milking our doe and she becomes pregnant again, do we need to stop milking at anytime during her gestation period?</b>	Yes. A doe should have at least 2 months rest from milking before she freshens again. It takes a lot out of a doe to produce milk. She needs this time off so that her body can recover and concentrate on nourishing the kids forming inside of her.
<b>How Often Should You Milk a Goat</b>	Milking takes dedication. It is very important to milk twice daily at 12-hour intervals to maintain production. When milk is in the udder for 18 hours, the milk producing cells (alveoli) begin to shut down due to pressure. Once this production is lost in a lactation, it cannot be regained. As we all know, goats definitely like their routine, so regular milking times keep them happy.
<b>Pygmy Goat Milk</b>	A general rule of thumb is that an average Pygmy doe should give about ½ gallon per day at the peak of her lactation. A gallon of average fat milk weighs 8.6#, but Pygmy milk weighs 8 lbs. because fat is lighter.
<b>Pygmy goat Milk</b>	Mention goat milk and many people grab their throats and gargle, "AAAGH!" Pygmy goat milk is extremely sweet and delicious. Does willingly give up to 2/3 gallon per day at the peak of their lactations. I feel a doe worth her keep should give half-a-gallon per day at her peak, but a quart a day is nothing to sniff at – that's nearly two gallons a week! The butterfat content of

	Pygmy milk in our herd ranges from 4.5% to over 11%. High butterfat content means the milk resists off-flavors due to dietary causes and helps maintain milk's sweet, delicious flavor longer in cold storage. Raw Pygmy goat milk has maintained its freshness and flavor in our refrigerator for 14 days. Pygmy milk is higher in calcium, phosphorus, potassium and iron than milk from dairy breeds, and is lower in sodium.
<b>Pygmy Goats As Companion Animals</b>	Frequently, Pygmy goats are kept as companion animals for other species of livestock and are often found at horse breeding facilities and race tracks. An article in Spring, 1983, Memo documents an elephant at the Indianapolis Zoo suffering acute loneliness and subsequently comforted by the presence of a Pygmy wether.
<b>What if the breeder I am buying my goat from does not test for CAE, CL or Johne's?</b>	Some breeders do not test for these diseases and have no idea of their herd's status. These are serious life threatening diseases that may not show up for weeks or even years and are difficult (if not impossible) to cure once they do show up. Some of them are very contagious to other goats and can even stay in the environment for years waiting to infect the next goat. Some are contagious to humans. Many show herds test for these diseases and buying from one of these breeders may help insure you are buying a healthy pet. It will cost you less in the long run even if you have to pay more initially.
<b>Pygmy Goats In Hot Climates</b>	It is well documented that certain animals are best suited to certain environments. Pygmy goats evolved in the tropics, but they seem to adapt well to almost any environment.