

## Cabochoon Farm - Basic Goat Care

### Feed

1. Water-fresh water in a clean bucket at all times
  - a. Goats really enjoy warm water in the winter
  - b. A splash of apple cider vinegar (raw with mother) is enjoyed and good for their health as well
  - c. Hot water with molasses should be provided to a doe after kidding
2. Hay-green and sweet smelling with no mold at all times (Please avoid hay sold as "goat" hay, it's usually poor quality hay. Look for "horse" hay.)
  - a. Low quality grass hay will not meet nutrient requirements of pregnant, lactating, or growing goats
  - b. Plan to feed 5% of your goats' body weight per day in hay, this allows for some inevitable waste and rejected hay.
3. Loose minerals (a "salt block" or "mineral lick" will not provide enough mineral for a goat)
  - a. Goat minerals (with copper) should be available free choice (Do not feed "all-stock" mineral. They are designed for sheep and do not have enough copper for goats.)
  - b. Baking soda should be offered free choice to animals receiving grain
  - c. Kelp can be provided free choice (preferred) or top dressed on feed and is recommended if your feed store sells it
4. Supplemental grain for growing kids and milking does only
  - a. Dry does, bucks and adult wethers usually do not need grain
  - b. Grain for growing wethers or breeding bucks should have ammonium chloride added to prevent urinary stones. Some grains, such as Noble Goat, are medicated with ammonium chloride
  - c. Milking Nigerian Dwarf does will need ½ -2 cups of grain twice a day depending on body condition and the amount of milk she is giving-adjust by ½ cup at a time several days apart
  - d. Growing Nigerian kids should have ¼-½ cup of grain per day until 6 months old. Mini-Alpines should have ½-1 cup grain daily until 6 months old.
  - e. Goats enjoy an occasional treat such as raisins, apple pieces, carrot slices, etc

### Care

1. Regular hoof trimming every 6-8 weeks
2. Deworming is generally done 3-4 times per year as needed
  - a. Does should always be dewormed the day after kidding
  - b. A vet can do a fecal exam to determine the effectiveness of your deworming program
  - c. We have very good results with "Molly's Herbals" brand herbal dewormer, available online
3. Yearly immunization booster for CDT, 4-6 weeks before kidding for does
4. Copper bolus 2-4 times/year. 2g for a 40 lb goat; 4g for an 80lb goat.
5. Consider Selenium & Vitamin E supplementation, talk with your vet about conditions in your area
6. Goats are herd animals and need companions- if keeping a buck separately from does, please provide a companion wether for him
7. Find a local vet that is willing to see goats and make a well-care appointment so that you have a pre-established relationship should you need medical care in the future.

### Shelter

1. Goats need dry, draft free shelter and they prefer to be up off the ground
2. Secure fencing 48" high keeps goats in and predators, like roaming dogs, out
3. Make sure there are no poisonous plants in the pen (azaleas, rhododendrons, mountain laurel, Japanese yew, hydrangea—these can kill a goat)

## Enjoying Your Goat

1. Goats love to climb & play. An internet search for “goat playground” will provide lots of ideas!
2. Goats love to spend time with people. Be sure to reserve some time to spend with your goats apart from daily care chores. Go for a walk together, sit down on a bench or a bucket and snuggle with the babies, scratch the does, it’s good therapy for you and they’ll love it.
3. Consider showing your goats, it’s easy and fun and beginners are always welcome

## Resources

1. [fiascofarm.com](http://fiascofarm.com) – comprehensive reference site for goat care
2. [familycow.proboards.com](http://familycow.proboards.com) – bulletin board with cow, goat, poultry and more experts willing and able to answer any question and provide helpful advice
3. [sheepandgoat.com](http://sheepandgoat.com) – Maryland Small Ruminant Page extension articles on just about everything goat related. Their recorded webinars are excellent and highly recommended
4. [faintinggoatguild.com/husbandryreproduction.htm](http://faintinggoatguild.com/husbandryreproduction.htm) – a “must read” reference for birthing
5. [jefferspet.com](http://jefferspet.com) – livestock supplies
6. [valleyvet.com](http://valleyvet.com) – livestock supplies
7. [hoeggerfarmyard.com](http://hoeggerfarmyard.com) – goat supplies and educational blog
8. [adga.org](http://adga.org) – American Dairy Goat Association
9. [dairygoatjournal.com](http://dairygoatjournal.com) – dairy goat magazine
10. [nigeriandwarfcolors.weebly.com](http://nigeriandwarfcolors.weebly.com) – all about colors and patterns of Nigerian Dwarf goats

And me -- email anytime you have questions about your new goats!