

Youth Livestock Safety for the Meat Goat Project

4-H Lifeskills:

Personal safety

Making decisions

Objectives:

Meat goat project members will:

Describe how you can be injured while working with meat goats

Describe appropriate personal protection equipment and clothing choices for working with meat goats at home and at shows

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Lesson 1: Take Good Care of Yourself

Overview

Livestock are involved in many youth injuries every year. Because goats are small animals and tend to tame down easily their potential to cause injury may be deceptive. Young people who raise or purchase goats to show must keep in mind that regardless of size all livestock are capable of causing injury. This lesson is designed to teach best practices for personal safety when working with meat goats raised or purchased for the purpose of showing at livestock exhibitions. It should be used with other meat goat project materials.

Experience

Watch the video clip entitled "Take Good Care of Yourself" and work through the discussion questions at the end of the video. If you choose not to use the video, take turns reading this lesson out loud; then move to the discussion questions.

Take Good Care of Yourself

Safe working habits include protecting yourself, your animals, and others. The most common injuries from working with and showing meat goats are:

- Slips / Falls
- Bruises, cuts, and scrapes from being hit by a jumping goat, kicked, or stepped on
- Muscle and/or back strain
- Blisters and burns from lead ropes or chains and electrical appliances such as clippers

Rare injuries from working with and showing meat goats:

- Breathing problems from inhaling dust, animal dander, or grooming products
- Serious injury – such as broken bones or puncture wounds

Practice personal safety by using personal protection equipment and developing safe working habits when working with meat goats. Personal protection equipment includes:

- Closed-toe shoes or boots – sturdy, preferably leather with non-slip soles – provide the best protection for feet and ankles

Try This!

Practice safe lifting and carrying to protect your back.

Here's how:

Stand close to object to be lifted

Spread your feet wide enough to straddle the object

Squat, bending your knees and hips

Keep your head up and your back straight

Hold in your stomach muscles

Lift using your leg muscles

Keep the load close to your body with a firm grip

Turn your feet, not your back, in the direction you are going

- Gloves – Different jobs require different gloves
 - Leather gloves protect hands from rope burns or pinches from chains while leading your meat goat at home. They also protect your hands while clipping.
 - Latex or rubber gloves will provide the best protection for your hands and forearms while washing, grooming, or doctoring.
- Long sleeves and long pants protect your skin from being exposed to too much sunlight and dirt and dander from your meat goat's coat and hide.
- Safety glasses provide maximum protection for your eyes from hair clippings, dirt, and grooming products. When working in bright sunlight, try tinted safety glasses to protect your eyes from ultraviolet rays.
- Ear plugs offer the best protection for your ears when using motorized equipment, such as the clippers or blower and when working in an enclosed area where noises are loud.
- Sunscreen will protect exposed skin from sun damage.
- Frequent hand washing with soap protects your skin whenever you work with livestock. Animals can easily spread disease to humans. Frequent contact with the animal's hide, dander, and feces – especially from feeding, washing, and grooming tasks – creates an opportunity for disease to pass from your meat goat to you. An example is ring worm. When not wearing long sleeves and long pants, please remember to wash all exposed skin with soap and water.
- Learn first aid and keep a first aid kit in your show box and in the barn or building where you house your meat goats.

Do I Really Need Protection? – How You Can Be Hurt Working with Meat Goats

- The goat can be frightened and run, jump, butt, or kick.
- You can slip, trip, or fall over things left laying around, on a slick walkway, in a pen, or on an uneven surface (such as in sand in the show ring or uneven surfaces in the lot).
- You can get kicked, stepped on, butted, or tripped while leading, moving, feeding, or grooming your goat.
- You can get a burn from the lead rope or pinched in the links of a neck chain.
- You can be burned by the hot motor of clippers or blowers.

How much is 15% of your body weight?

Use this simple formula.

Take your weight
times 0.15

For example, if you weigh
100 pounds, the most you
should lift is 15 pounds.

$$\begin{array}{r} 100 \text{ lbs.} \times 0.15 \\ = \\ 15 \text{ lbs.} \end{array}$$

Do the math for yourself to
calculate how many pounds
you can safely carry.

Your weight X 0.15 =
The heaviest load you
should carry by yourself

_____ X 0.15 = _____

The next lesson is about
goat behavior.

- Your fingers can get pinched in a gate latch; poked by a wire, the blades on the clippers, or the teeth on a scotch or curry comb.
- You can strain muscles in your arms, legs, or back by carrying heavy show boxes or buckets of feed. Washing and grooming can cause muscle strains from frequently repeated movements, as in the up and down, back and forth of clipping and combing.

Did You Know?

Ergonomists (scientists who study work and the human body) say the three worst problems for agriculture are: full body stoop (bending forward and down from the waist, as when picking up feed bags, buckets, or show boxes); lifting/moving heavy objects (greater than 15% of body weight, i.e. feed bags, show boxes, pulling on a show animal's lead rope); and repetitive handwork (washing and grooming).

Did You Know?

You are more likely to hurt your back when:

- Lifting more than 15% of your body weight
- Carrying a load more than 10-15 yards

Use wheels to help carry loads; such as a wheeled dolly, a feed cart, a wheel barrow, or a wheeled utility cart.

Discussion Questions

With your project group members, discuss how you stay safe working with your meat goat.

Share

- How did you feel the very first time you worked with your meat goat?

Process

- How can you be injured when working with your meat goat?
- How do you keep yourself and people helping you safe while working with your meat goat?

Generalize

- Why is protecting yourself important?

Apply

- How can you use what you've learned about personal protection to help you in other activities?

Youth Livestock Safety for the Meat Goat Project

4-H Lifeskills: Solving problems

Making decisions

Objectives:

Meat goat project members
will:

Understand how animals react
in a variety of environments

Understand how to keep
yourself and others safe at
home and at public shows

Experience

Watch the video clip
"Behavior Basics" or take
turns reading aloud the
information below. When
you're finished, move on to
the discussion questions.

Lesson 2: Behavior Basics: Getting to Know Your Show Goat

To work safely with your meat goat, you should have a basic understanding of animal behavior in general, and the behavior patterns of goats in particular. Goats tend to be gentle animals that tame down easily with regular human contact. Keep in mind that, as with all animals, some meat goats are naturally gentle while others may take more time to tame and train for show.

- A meat goat's behavior is determined by genetics and experience. Work with your goat regularly and you will experience positive results. Goats that are handled gently and quietly will have smaller flight zones and be easier to handle than goats that have been handled roughly or have little human contact.
- Meat goats, like all ruminant animals, have a strong "herding instinct" and prefer to be with other goats. Many breeders will strongly suggest that you have more than one meat goat even if you only intend to show one.
- When separated from their pen mates or their herd, a meat goat will become stressed and worked up. Minimize this stress by keeping goats together as much as possible.
- Meat goats tend to organize into family-type groupings and, if present, an older doe will likely be the group leader.
- Meat goats are naturally curious and like to explore using their senses of smell and taste. Their curiosity allows goats to readily find weak spots in fences and handling equipment. The goat will escape when it finds the weak spot.
- Meat goats have a strong sense of hearing and may be distracted by loud noises or sudden movements. Keep this in mind when taking the goat to the fair.
- Meat goats have a wide field of vision, which means they can see nearly everything around them without moving their head. A goat can also see well into the distance.
- Halter or collar breaking is a good way to begin to tame your meat goat to get it ready for showing. Allow time

for the goat to adjust to the feel of the halter or collar on its head or neck. Then work slowly and deliberately at teaching it to lead and most goats will respond positively.

- Your meat goat may be gentle at home in familiar surroundings, but may become aggressive or stubborn when taken to a different location with new, strange sights, smells, and sounds, such as the county fairgrounds.
- Do your best to make your goat's first experience in a different location a positive one. For example, when moving it to a new pen have some feed in a pan waiting. You could also bring some water from home to help it adjust to the taste of new water at the show.
- Fear typically causes an animal to run away from whatever scared it, but your meat goat may lie down and refuse to move when scared.
- Many shows will require meat goats to be clipped. Allow time for your goat to calm down after you have caught it and before you begin to clip. Work slowly and carefully so the goat adjusts to the sound and feel of the clippers on its hide, which will help keep it calm, and avoid cuts to it or you.

When you understand how your meat goat might react in different situations you can use that understanding to help make livestock shows safer for everyone – exhibitors as well as people who are watching the show. Keeping your meat goat calm is a good start. Other strategies to keep in mind at the show include:

- Be aware of where others are at the show – the general public (in the stands and walking around) and other exhibitors.
- Move slowly to and from the show ring with your meat goat. When you get excited or in a hurry, your goat will sense the change in your behavior, which might scare it. Remember that fear may cause a goat to lay down and not want to move.
- Get to know your meat goat's behavior patterns and help it adjust to new surroundings.
- Do the best you can to keep away from crowded areas while leading your meat goat to and from the ring. Because it is a relatively small animal, people do not understand how easy it is to scare a goat since it will look so calm when you are leading it.
- Practice, practice, practice show day activities – at home and again when you get to the show. Whether you show with a halter or collar practice haltering/

collaring; leading on halter/collar; jumping on and off the blocking stand; leading to the show ring; leading to and from the pen or stall; opening and closing gates; washing and grooming. Your meat goat will be much more comfortable doing activities it has practiced before and it will be less likely to be scared of the show ring if it's been in there before the show.

Discussion Questions

With your project group members, discuss how you stay safe when working with your meat goat.

Share

- Whether purchased or raised, how did your meat goat act the first time you led it with a halter or collar?

Process

- How does your behavior affect the way your meat goat behaves?

Generalize

- What can you do to make sure your meat goat is ready for the show ring?

Apply

- List some ways you can show others what you've learned about animal behavior?

The next lesson is about
safe facilities
and equipment for your
show goat.

Youth Livestock Safety for the Meat Goat Project

4-H Lifeskills:
Solving problems

Making decisions

Objectives:
Meat goat project members will:
Recognize how maintaining equipment and buildings affects personal safety and the show goats

Understand how to keep yourself and others safe at home and at public shows

Experience
Watch the video clip "Facilities and Equipment" and work through the discussion questions at the end of the video. If you choose not to watch the video, take turns reading out loud the information here; then move on to the discussion questions.

Lesson 3: Facilities and Equipment

Keeping yourself and your meat goat safe includes making sure buildings, pens/lots, and equipment are well maintained and in proper working order. The facilities you use to house and work your goats should be designed for ease of entry and exit, well-ventilated, sturdy, and safe for you and your animals.

- Keep buildings, alleys, and lots neat and tidy. Remember: Slips, trips, and falls cause many injuries when working with livestock. Make sure you have a place to put all your supplies, equipment, and feed and keep all of those items in their proper place. Clean up spills as soon as they happen. Don't allow manure or feed to accumulate in alleyways or chutes.
- Meat goats are often called "escape artists" They are excellent climbers and because of their natural curiosity can easily find weaknesses in fences and handling systems. To ensure they stay in their pen, fences and gates may need to be higher and stronger for goats than for sheep.
- Keep mechanical equipment clean and well maintained. Clean and sanitize grooming tools regularly, not only to keep them operating properly, but also to remove any bacteria that can spread disease or infection. Be extra careful cleaning clipper blades because they are sharp.
- Inspect electrical cords on clippers and blowers often. Replace cords that have exposed wires.
- Make sure the clipper blades are sharp. Clipping with dull blades presents a safety hazard to you and your meat goat.
- Use only electrical outlets with three-pronged receptacles. If outlets are located outdoors, make sure they are waterproof and have ground fault circuit interrupters to keep you and your meat goat from getting an electric shock.
- Maintain good lighting for indoor and outdoor areas where you will be working with your meat goat. Lighting should be bright and not create shadowy areas. Goats will be hesitant to go from a brightly lit area to a dark shadowy area.

Suggested Activities for Project Meetings

Set up a practice show at a project meeting to practice show ring safety.

Take the Goat Safety Assessment Quiz at www.ylsp.bae.ksu.edu

Evaluate the safety of your livestock facilities using the Safety Audit Checklist. Make note of potential dangers and work with your parents to correct the dangers.

Visit and evaluate project members' facilities with an eye on safety preparedness.

Suggested guest speakers: veterinarian, meat goat producer, EMT, doctor, or nurse

- Keep fences, gates, doors, etc. repaired. Replace or repair equipment that doesn't work. Gates that are hard to open can cause muscle strains or can pinch you if you have to push hard and they open or close unexpectedly. Wire ties or nails poking out of fence boards can cause scrapes or puncture wounds – to you and your meat goat.
- Choose equipment that will help make working with your meat goat easier. A blocking stand with head restraint helps hold your goat while you groom and allows you easy access by elevating the goat to a better working height. Some blocking stands allow for variable table heights making it even easier to groom the goat at a height that is optimum for the person grooming.

Discussion Questions

Share

- What do you do with your buildings and pens to help you stay safe when working with your meat goat?
- How do you care for your equipment to help you stay safe when using it to work with your meat goat?

Process

- How can facilities contribute to a safer environment for you? For your meat goat?

Generalize

- Why are good housekeeping and proper maintenance necessary for personal safety?

Apply

- List some of the safety practices you do each day – in your home, at work or school?

Additional Safety Information

For Leaders and Parents

North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks (NAGCAT) Guidance

Ages 12-13 years – Youth should be constantly supervised by an adult when working with their beef project animal(s);

Ages 14-15 years – Nearly constant adult supervision progressing to intermittent (every few minutes) based on the individual's ability and successful demonstration that the youth understands his or her own limitations and animal behavior;

Ages 16+ years – Intermittent adult supervision progressing to periodic (check every 15-30 minutes) based on youth's ability to handle animal and successful demonstration of safe working habits and an understanding of animal behavior.

Tips For Including Youth With Disabilities: Making the Best Better

Learn all you can about the child's disability. Discuss with the child's parents the nature of the disability and how best to work with the child's limitations. You may also want to talk with other professionals who work with the child.

Involve the child in project meetings and events just as you would a child without special needs. Provide the same opportunities to develop life skills to all youth enrolled in the project. Everyone grows from the experience of "mainstreaming" a child with a disability. The 4-Her with a disability develops self-reliance and self-confidence by interacting as an equal with other project members. Project members learn that youth with disabilities are not much different than themselves – each has strengths, weaknesses, and unique abilities. Adult leaders and volunteers learn life skills for working with people with limitations. Everyone learns how to be more comfortable with people who are different than themselves.

When necessary, modify project activities to match the ability of the child. Modifications should be designed to meet the child's abilities, yet challenging enough for to improve his or her knowledge and skills. Not all activities need to be adapted. Promote participation instead of elimination. Never allow

Goat Safety References

Efficient Handling of Meat Goats, Susan Shoenian, Area Agent Sheep and Goats, Maryland Cooperative Extension, www.sheepandgoat.com/articles/handling.html

National 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System, Inc. Beef Series, 2005

Understanding Livestock Behavior, Agricultural Tailgate Safety Training, The Ohio State University Extension Agricultural Safety Program, <http://ohioline.osu.edu/atts/modules.html>

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Riffel Family, Marion County, Kansas

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modified activities to isolate the child who has a disability. The goal is meaningful inclusion.

In some cases, livestock show requirements may need to be modified. For example, a 4-Her in a wheelchair may need assistance from a fellow 4-Her to wash, groom, or feed an animal or in the show ring. Provide the opportunity for all youth to learn from experience. Pair abled 4-Hers (junior leaders or ambassadors) with the special needs 4-Her rather than adults. Promote cooperation instead of competition. Practice at project meetings so all project members will know how to be of assistance.

Help the 4-Her set realistic, attainable project goals. Always include the 4-Her in goal setting and project modifications.

Be prepared to devote extra attention, time, and flexibility to the project. Remember to value each project member as an individual with unique and special talents.

Resources

National 4-H Curriculum Meat Goat Series materials, 4-HCCS BU-07909, BU-07910, BU-07911, BU-07912

Kansas Meat Goat Project Curriculum

Online Youth Meat Goat Project Safety Assessment, www.ylsp.bae.ksu.edu

NAGCAT Reference Sheets: Lifting; Working with large animals; Leading/grooming animals; Cleaning service alley; www.nagcat.org/nagcat/pages/default.aspx

National Ag Safety Database (NASD); <http://nasdonline.org>

A Perfect Fit: 4-H Involvement for Youth with Disabilities, Purdue University

Making 4-H More Accessible: Youth With Special Needs Leaders' Handbook, California 4-H Youth Development Program; www.ca4h.org/leadership/ambassador/03-04/CASA-Book.pdf

Inclusive 4-H, University of Wyoming, <https://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/wyo4h/Inclusive/intro.pdf>

SAFETY AUDIT CHECKLIST

This checklist will help identify potential hazards with your livestock handling equipment and facilities. Conduct the audit with your parents or project leader. Answer the questions by checking YES or NO. If the answer is YES, no further action is necessary. If the answer is NO, then a hazard may exist that should be corrected. Prioritize the level of risk represented by the hazard using the ranking terms of: Major, Serious, or Minor. Record the date the hazard is corrected and keep the checklist with your project records.

Priority Levels for Identified Hazards:

Major: Potentially life-threatening or serious injury potential; requires immediate action.

Serious: Injury or property damage possible; requires prompt action.

Minor: Not likely to cause serious injury or property loss; correct the hazard during the off-season or during down time.

ANIMAL HANDLING SAFETY	Yes	No	Level of Priority	Date Corrected
Are steps and walkways roughened to prevent slips and falls?				
Are walkways and aisles kept free of debris, manure, and feed?				
Are animal drugs and barn chemicals kept in a secure area in original containers?				
Are pens, gates, and fences in good condition, without protrusions?				
Do doors and gates open smoothly?				
Are there at least two exits from buildings?				
Do you make animals aware of your approach so as not to frighten them?				
Do you leave yourself an "out" when working in close quarters with animals?				
Are animals immunized as required?				
Is the grooming chute in good repair with a non-slip mat?				
Are electrical cords in good repair, no exposed wires?				
Is there adequate lighting in work and walking areas?				
Are all electrical outlets properly grounded with ground fault circuit interrupters?				
Are portable tools unplugged when not in use?				
Are faulty wiring and electrical equipment repaired or replaced immediately?				
Are extension cords used only for temporary work?				

ANIMAL HANDLING SAFETY (continued)	Yes	No	Level of Priority	Date Corrected
Is personal protective equipment available? (safety glasses, leather and rubber/latex gloves, and ear plugs)				
Do you wear sturdy leather boots, long sleeves, long pants, and gloves when handling animals?				
Are appropriate fire extinguishers located strategically for easy access in case of fire?				
Are fire extinguishers inspected regularly?				
Do you know how to operate a fire extinguisher?				

SAFE LIFTING AND MATERIALS HANDLING	Yes	No	Level of Priority	Date Corrected
Has everyone in the family received instruction on safe lifting techniques?				
Is the "bend your knees" rule always followed?				
Do you use assistance, such as a wheelbarrow, dolly, or wheeled cart, to move loads more than 10 yards or loads weighing more than 15% of your body weight?				
Do you check for a clear pathway before lifting and moving objects?				

FIRST AID / EMERGENCY ACTION	Yes	No	Level of Priority	Date Corrected
Do you maintain first-aid kits in the following locations:				
♦ Home?				
♦ Barn?				
♦ Pick-up?				
♦ Show box?				
Are first-aid kits periodically checked and replenished?				
Has anyone in your family received first-aid training in the last 3 years?				
Has anyone in your family received training in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation)?				

LIST YOUR OWN SAFETY CONCERNS	Yes	No	Level of Priority	Date Corrected