

Applied Best Practices from the Improving Goat Health Management for Increased Income Project



The project entitled “Improving Goat Health Management for Increased Income” provides technologies developed by ACIAR to increase income of goat raisers. It is implemented in the barangays of Yanaya, Owac and Villasuerte in the municipality of Bilar, Bohol Province.

Breeding Selection

Goats reach puberty from 4 to 18 months. They are best bred starting at the age of 10 months, depending on their body condition. Breeding too early often results to infertility or poor breeding performance. Moreover young bucks should not breed more than 15 females in a year. Older bucks can breed up to 25 females in a year. Recommended breeders include Anglo Nubians and Boer.



Waste Management

Proper disposal and management of goat waste is another essential aspect of goat management. Goat wastes are a source of diseases and parasites. However, goat wastes are also useful for improving crop production such that the potential of using the manure and other wastes for crops need to be evaluated with farmers. These ideas are delivered through trainings and informal interactions during visits.



Record Keeping

To facilitate management of goats, a proper and well-kept recording system is necessary. The record reflects all the raisers to make right decisions on how to properly manage essential data of individual animals. Good records help goat raisers to make right decisions on how to properly manage their animals.



Marketing

Goats can be marketed after five months. Prices are determined based on the weight of the goat.



Health Management

Disease control and prevention practices include proper feeding management, proper housing, waste management and application of appropriate medication at the right dosage.

Providing adequate housing is necessary, whether goats are grazed or confined. A goat house or shed must be built to provide protection. Goats need to be protected from adverse weather (rain, heat and cold) as well as contaminated / dirty areas. When exposed to these conditions, goats are prone to diseases and parasites. Goats also need to be protected from injury either due to fighting or improperly constructed houses (e.g. floors with slats that are too wide apart or sharp objects in the goat house).

Elevated platforms arranged like a staircase allows for more exercise and prevents fighting. A good goat house must be adequately ventilated, well-drained, and easy to clean. Moreover, good housing should include provisions to prevent fighting and unwanted breeding. Young kids often require brooding boxes as they are more sensitive to cold temperatures. Adequate floor and feeding space should be provided.

Goats' hooves often become overgrown. This leads to improper foot position which can cause lameness and foot rot. These conditions affect their growth, breeding and feeding ability. Trimming is thus required.

Dehorning is another essential practice especially for breeding goats. A dehorned animal is more docile than a horned one. It will also eliminate unnecessary wounds due to fighting.



Feeding Management

Goats require adequate amount and quality of feeds. Often, they could not get all the nutrients they require due to limited grazing area or feeding time. Thus, they often need supplementary feeding using cut forages and commercial or farmer-formulated feeds. Farmers can easily integrate planted forages in their own farms. Grasses like Paragrass, Stargrass, Napier Grass, and Guinea Grass as well as legumes like Centrosema are commonly planted forages. Moreover, goats love to feed on leaves of shrubs and trees like kakawate or Madre De Cacao and ipil-ipil.



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