

Feeding the Buck

The feeding of the buck is critical.

Providing high quality nutrition to the buck is a crucial part of a meat goat operation.

This animal is one that may be forgotten at feeding time and left go. This is common on many farms. The Buck is a very important animal on the farm. If he is not able or willing to breed then there will be a problem.

Have the Buck in good body condition for breeding season. A Buck that is too fat or too thin will not be aggressive during the breeding season. While he is breeding the does, he can eat the same ration as the does. They should all be receiving about 1/2 pound of grain a day to help maintain the bucks body condition and to stimulate ovulation in the nannies.

Even though you provide grain, the Buck will lose weight during breeding season. When he is removed from the does, be sure to place him on a ration that will allow him to gain the weight back that he has lost. Male goats are particularly prone to kidney stones, so grass hay is preferable to alfalfa hay. If you find you have problems with kidney stones, you can add ammonium chloride to the ration at a rate of .5% of the total ration. You may also want to check that the calcium phosphorus ration is between 1:1 and 2:1.

Water

Water is one of the most important nutrients that is needed when raising and feeding any animal. This nutrient is the cheapest and is often the one that is overlooked when evaluating a feeding program. The amount of water needed for bucks will vary throughout the year. The water needs to be clean and always available. The containers need to be cleaned at least once per week during the winter months and more often during the warm months. This will reduce the amount of algae present in the container. A small amount of disinfectant can be used to clean the containers.

Minerals

Goats need many minerals for basic body function and to achieve high production. Providing a free choice mineral formulated for goats is recommended. This will supplement the minerals in the grain and forage that the goats will be consuming. Place the minerals in a separate feeder designated for only minerals and be sure to keep the mix available to the goats at all times.

Paying close attention to the nutrition of the Billy will help to keep him in good breeding condition and can have a direct impact on the number of kids born each kidding season.

<http://extension.psu.edu/courses/meat-goat/nutrition/feeding-the-billy>