

Newborn Kid Care

Now that you have those sweet little kids on the ground, take good care of them. The most important thing you can do to insure healthy kids is to make sure they receive colostrum within the first half hour to hour after birth.

When the doe has kidded and is standing, strip each teat of a stream or two of milk to make sure her teats are not clogged. Most kids will get around to nursing but occasional a doe will not stand. You may need to restrain the doe in a head lock or have a second person hold her while you help the kid find the teat. If you are not sure the kid has nursed, milk some colostrum out into a baby bottle and hand feed it. That precious first meal of colostrum can make the difference between a healthy kid and a kid that barely manages to hang on.

I like to group similar does about a week after kidding. I make groups of 10 to 15 does with similar size kids. There will be some fighting as the does establish a pecking order. Make a "creep" area in the pen in a warm corner. Arrange panels in such a way that the kids can get into the creep area but the does can not. This creep area will allow the kids to escape or rest without the risk of being tramped or butted by another doe. Once you have a creep area, it is the perfect place to put a little feed trough with a little good quality grass hay and some grain.

You should dis-bud your kids at 1 to 2 weeks of age depending on the horn growth. There are dis-budding boxes that can make the job a lot less stressful for you and for the kid. If you only have a goat kid or two you may want to make arrangements with a local breeder to dis-bud your kids. I like to tattoo at the same time. It seems stressing the kid all at once and getting it over with is easier for them to handle than 2 or 3 days of one stressor after another.

Kids should be vaccinated for Clostridium and tetanus at about 30 days. The Clostridium prevents the two most common types of overeating disease, types C and D. Follow the label instructions for the vaccine, making sure you give the second dose on time, for the best results.

Kidding can become your favorite season if you can train yourself and your employees to be observant and clean.

<http://extension.psu.edu/courses/meat-goat/reproduction/breeding-and-kidding-management/newborn-kid-care>