

# Where to Kid?

## By Jack Mauldin

Our focus on selecting a kidding location involves:

- isolating the does preparing to kid
- easy access to does for checking their status
- clean area

### **Isolating Doe**

We normally can tell within 8 hours of when a doe will go into labor. The weather will always play a key roll in our preparation for kidding. We will always have the appropriate type of shelter available for does to get out of the weather. This shelter could be from heat, rain, cold, etc. Once we see the signs of a doe getting close to labor, we will isolate her into a small pasture or pen area. They like to go off by their self during labor and we do not want other goats bothering her and causing her to have to move around more than necessary. The isolated area may have several does close to labor. Some breeders will have a small pasture for does about to kid. If the weather is bad, we will put the doe in the barn away from cold, rain, snow, wind while she is kidding.

### **Easy Access**

We try to be with every doe when she kids. That is not always possible but about 85% of the time we are at their side in case they need assistance. We can't stay with a doe for 8 hours waiting for them to start serious labor. Therefore, when we isolate them, we want this area to be easy to monitor. Most of the time, we can sit in the kitchen and see the area from the window. If the weather does not allow this, we will have them in a barn nearby where they can be checked hourly.

### **Clean Area**

When we first started raising boers, we tried to have each doe in a separate pen inside our barn for kidding. We found out that this can cause bacteria build up in the pen and potentially cause future problems. It is difficult to sanitize these pens inside barns, especially if it is a dirt floor. Sunshine is one of the best ways of sanitizing an area, therefore our first choice for kidding is outside in an area that has not been heavily used by other goats recently. If we cannot be outside because of the weather we will use pens inside the barn but take extra care to clean the areas prior to and after any kidding.

- Our barns have a "road base" floor. The manure packs down and turns into a very hard surface. Pens will be swept out prior to moving doe into the pen.
- We will cover the floor of the pen area with some old hay or straw. This helps absorb much of the fluids and material resulting from the kidding.
- This can later be cleaned up and removed from the barn.
- We ensure there is sufficient air flow in the barn
- We remove all afterbirth material quickly.