

Goats

Celebrating America's Favorite Farm Animals with Popular Farming Series: Goats

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Caprine Calling

Goats are one of America's favorite farm animals, especially among small farmers.

Not only are they adorable and lovable, they are also quite versatile and offer many uses on the farm.

Goats can be used to graze and clear fencerows and fields of obnoxious weeds.

In addition to their grazing prowess, they also provide meat, milk and fiber that we can use to nourish and protect our bodies.

Whether you are interested in meat goats, dairy goats, fiber goats or some of each, Popular Farming's Goats issue has everything you need to know to start raising goats or to tackle new adventures with your goat herd.

With beautiful photos and in-depth articles, Goats is a must-have for any caprine enthusiast's library or for the small farmer who is considering adding goats to their farm.

[Top](#)

What You'll Find

As an all-encompassing guide to raising goats, you'll find helpful and interesting information about all aspects of goat husbandry, breeds, caprine breeding and kidding, daily chores, and even how to insure your goats have quality pasture and browse to feed on, such as the advice offered in "Browse Buffet."

"If you already keep goats, you've probably noticed that these animals bear no resemblance to the eat-everything-in-sight, tin-can consumers of farm mythology. For one, I don't believe their mouths open wide enough to swallow a can, although they may chew the paper label because it contains wood pulp. But seriously, the goat's small mouth and mobile lips help make this animal a more selective feeder than a large-mouthed cow or horse. Although they eat many plant types, goats rarely devour the entire plant or ingest every species in sight; instead they excel at selecting the most nutritious parts and picking out the palatable plants from the nasty ones." –Cherie Langlois

Goats has all the information you need to get started with your caprine herd or to learn more about your existing goat herd.

[Top](#)

Meet Your Goat

There are a lot of possibilities when it comes to choosing what type of goats to raise.

From meat goats, such as the Boer goat, to dairy goats, such as Nubians, to fiber goats, such as Pygoras, Goats takes a detailed look at every type of goat and each of the breeds within that type.

Meat goats in particular have gained noticeable popularity with small farmers because of the demand for goat meat is steadily rising. From Boer goats to Savanna goats to rare Myotonic goats and crossbred goats, a breed profile describes the qualities of each while offering husbandry tips to have happy, healthy meat goats.

Meat goats, dairy goats, fiber goats and pet goats are presented in the same detailed format such as that presented in "Get Your Fiber."

“Pygoras are the smallest of the fiber breeds, with a minimum height of 18 inches at the withers for does and 23 inches for bucks. They are prolific breeders, with twins being the average each year. They also tend to have excellent milk production. These characteristics are likely inherited from their Pygmy goat ancestors, who were selected for their reproductive traits rather than their fiber ... The Pygora also gets most its well-muscled body style from its Pygmy genetics rather than from the more willowy Angora. They are extremely hardy and have oodles of personality. They are probably too small for meat production, but their fleece is well identified and defined.” –Ellie Winslow

If you are still looking for more information about breeds, breeding, kidding or taking care of goats, each article provides links and sources, but you can also turn to the Resources section for an in-depth listing of breed organizations, supply houses, veterinarian organizations, periodicals, and much more.

Top

How To ...

From kidding to milking to making goat cheese to building a stanchion or recognizing a sick goat, there's a lot to know about keeping goats. Popular Farming's Goats issue can offer help.

Get detailed do-it-yourself plans and instructions about how to build a stanchion, a manger and a field shelter—essential equipment for anyone with goats. Also, get a veterinarian's advice on how to recognize sick goats as well as how to treat and prevent the top 10 most common illnesses in your herd in “To Your Goat's Health.”

“It is difficult to bear when a member of your goat herd is sick. But even more difficult is noticing when a goat is ill. How do you know if your goat is sick? Many illnesses show only subtle signs, but the attentive herd manager knows his animals so well that those subtle changes in attitude and behavior will get his or her attention. Early detection can be followed up with a more thorough evaluation of the animal's condition.” –Lorrie Boldrick, DVM

Learn how to milk your goat, make goat cheese and butter, care for your herd, plus get great goat fiber and much, much more in Goats.

Top

The Dynamic Goat

Although raising goats is enjoyable in of itself, there is a lot of fun to be had outside the farm as well—and there are number of ways to do it!

You can start by showing your goats with your local 4-H club or in region shows and state fairs. Goats will give you the details and resources you need to your goat on the road to all the shows in “A Goat of All Trades.”

“When it comes to 4-H, goats are among the most fun and rewarding for projects. These projects are designed to teach young animal-keepers the best way to care for and enjoy their charges ... Showing is one of the most popular activities involved with 4-H goat projects ... Adult handlers can also join in on exhibition fun. State fairs offer an excellent chance to be involved in showing goats.” –Audrey Pavia

Or how about pack goats? Goats are one of the best animals to use as pack goats because of their size and ease of handling. Learn how to teach your goat to carry packs on a day hike or a backpacking trip in to the backcountry.

If you're looking for something a little slower-paced, try volunteering your favorite goat as a therapy animal for troubled children or the elderly. And of course, all goat lovers enjoy caprine collectibles, such as vintage photos of goats with carts, old goat bells, spinning wheels, milking machines or vintage prints. Discover the many ways to enjoy your goats.

There's a lot to learn about goats; Popular Farming's Goats is loaded with information from goat lingo to breeder resources and goat first-aid kits—it's an essential resource for anyone interested in raising goats.

Top

Contents

The World According To Goats

For centuries goats have been central to human life. Learn more about their role in world history.

By Sue Weaver

Meet the Meat Goats

Meat goats are the money makers of the goat world. Find out if these brawny breeds are right for your hobby farm.

By Sue Weaver

Dairy Delights

Dairy goats provide delectably nutritious milk. Discover how to raise, milk and start a business with your dairy herd.

By Cherie Langlois

Get Your Fiber

Interested in spinning fiber goats into your farm? Read on to see if you need a little fiber in your life.

By Ellie Winslow

Caprine Care

Goats are quite independent, but don't be fooled—they still need your love and care. Learn the caprine care basics with this guide.

By Cherie Langlois

Browse Buffet

Goats are picky eaters, but they can still nibble on things they shouldn't. Keep your caprines healthy with this pasture primer.

By Cherie Langlois

Gimme Goat Shelter

Goats are tough, but they still need reliable shelter and equipment to be managed properly. Custom-build your own goat equipment with this step-by-step guide.

By John Barbagello

Breeding Basics

There's a lot to know about breeding goats. Be sure to understand the breeding basics before you have herds of cuddlesome kids.

By Susan Schoenian

To Your Goat's Health

Goats can suffer a variety of illnesses. Get a vet's advice on how to keep your goats happy and healthy.

By Lorrie Boldrick, D.V.M.

Milk That Goat: Dairying 101

Goat's milk is popular for its nutritional value, great taste and digestibility. Learn how to make your own goat milk products.

By Carol Ekarius

Lather Up With Goat's Milk

Make your own soap and discover how goat's milk nourishes us—inside and out.

By Gina Napoli

A Goat of all Trades

From 4-H show goats to pack goats to pet goats—there's nothing goats can't do!

By Audrey Pavia

Caprine Collector

If you love goats, you'll love goat collectibles. Explore what you can add to your caprine collection.

By Autumn Foushée

Glossary

Goat jargon explained.

Resources

Check out these caprine resources to help you learn all about goats, plus find some nifty goat supplies.

Test Your Caprine IQ

Try this crossword puzzle to see how much you know about your four-legged friends!

[Why We Love Goats...](#)

[Top](#)

[Back to All Popular Farming Series Publications](#)

[All Publications](#)