

Signs of kidding

Three to five days prior to kidding the udder rapidly enlarges, a hollow develops on either side of the tail head and there is a vaginal discharge.

On the day of kidding the following signs appear:

1. Doe becomes restless, frequently lying down and getting up.
2. Bleating
3. Pawing the ground or bedding
4. The water bag appears and breaks
5. Abdominal contractions
6. Appearance of the muzzle and fore hooves in normal presentation.



Boer doe with newborn kid. Afterbirth is still hanging from birth canal

Management of doe and newborn

1. Ensure mouth and nostrils clear of mucus
2. If difficulty in breathing, hold kid firmly by hind legs and swing through the air. The shock causes kid to gasp and start breathing.
3. Dip navel in tincture of iodine.
4. Ensure kid gets colostrum (first milk) as soon as possible after birth.
5. Provide doe with plenty of hay and fresh clean water.
6. Deworm doe
7. Record date of birth and weight of kids
8. Doe should pass afterbirth within 6 hours after kidding. Call veterinarian if difficulty arises.

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Goat Production



Practical Guidelines for Management from Breeding to Kidding

Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries
Research & Development Division
Livestock Research & Improvement Division
Animal Nutrition and Forage Research

Management of the Breeding Herd

Management prior to breeding

Select does for your breeding herd that is not more than 2 years old (1—2 pairs of permanent teeth). Avoid old does (may have bad habits). Does should have shiny coat, straight legs, good conformation and alert eyes. Avoid animals with weak legs, bad hooves, thin bones, dull coat, cough, nasal discharge, or other signs of ill health.

Breeding season

Goats generally tend to be seasonal breeders. The temperate breeds tend to cycle between June and January with peak heats occurring between July and October. The Native goat will cycle all year with peak heats occurring between April and January. It's best to breed young does at 7— 8 months of age (80 lbs. Boer, 70 lbs. Nubian, 60 lbs. Native).



A good selection of does for breeding

Preparation for breeding

Flushing - Two to three weeks prior to breeding, does should be exposed to extra grain or fresh pasture to stimulate ovulation and increase the chance of producing twins.

Deworming - Deworm and delouse all does and bucks prior to breeding.

Signs of estrus (heat)

1. Constant bleating.
2. Twitching of tail.
3. Riding of other does or stands to be ridden
4. Increased interest in buck.
5. Reduced appetite.

The heat cycle occurs every 21 days and lasts for 24-48 hours. It's best to have the doe served 12 hours after onset of heat.



Does showing increased interest to the buck

Mating System

On pasture - The buck is allowed to run with the does during the breeding season for at least 6 weeks (2 heat cycles), at a ratio of 1 buck to 35 does. Tipped does are easily identified if bucks are equipped with a marking harness. Additionally, farmer must record date of introduction and removal of buck to forecast kidding dates.

In confinement—Does on heat are taken to the preselected buck for service. The date of service, buck and doe identification is recorded.

Management of Pregnant Doe

Recording of service date facilitates accurate forecasting of kidding date (gestation is 5 months). Check does 21 days after service for returns to heat. This can be done using a restrained buck.

Preparation for parturition (kidding)

1. Observe pregnant doe 3 times per day 2 weeks prior to kidding.
2. Prepare maternity pen—a clean, well bedded area in the goat house or fresh pasture.
3. Feed additional grain/supplement during the last month of pregnancy to allow for fetal development, weight gain in the doe, and prevention of pregnancy toxemia.