



KIDS CONNECTION

Outgoing Goats

Goats are Amazing!

Goats are stout-bodied mammals with horns and cloven hooves. There are two types of goats: domestic goats (*Capra hircus*), which are raised and bred as farm animals; and mountain goats (*Oreamnos americanus*), which live in steep, rocky areas in the American Northwest.

Goats were one of the first livestock species domesticated by humans over 9,000 years ago! Today more people consume the meat and milk from goats than any other animal worldwide.

There are over 200 breeds of domestic goats so size and purpose vary greatly. In the United States:

Boer goats are the most popular breed for meat.

Nubian goats are the most popular breed for dairy.

In addition to providing meat and milk, goats are often used by farmers to clean up pastures used for other grazing animals.

Fun Fact!

There are over 43,000 meat goats and 4,200 dairy goats in Kansas!



Unscramble the definitions!

1. kubc - a male goat; also known as a billy
2. rboe - a breed of goat primarily raised for meat
3. ode - a female goat
6. tnsoeigat - length of time a goat is pregnant
7. rhed - a group of five goats or more
8. kdi - a young goat
9. didikng - when a female goat gives birth

Growing a Goat

1.



Female goats have a gestation period of five months.

Kids, young goats, are typically born between January and August.

2.



A **doe**, or female, can have anywhere between one and five kids at a time; however, it is common for a doe to have twins.

Kids can walk within minutes of being born.

3.



Kids stay with their mother 10-12 weeks. Then they are weaned off their mother's milk and **fed hay, grain, and graze on a pasture** until they reach 35-90 pounds, which is market weight.

4.



When the kids reach market weight, they are sold for meat or to produce milk and dairy products.

5.



Goat meat is found in grocery stores, specialty markets, and restaurants. Goat dairy products include milk and cheese, which are also found at grocery stores and in restaurants.

Do Goats Graze?

Goats are **ruminant** animals, which means they have with four stomach compartments: a reticulum, omasum, abomasum, and rumen. This allows them to digest a variety of plants that humans cannot. Roughage or grasses that are high in fiber, like hay, silage, trees, shrubs, and prairie grasses are the primary diet of goats.

Goats grab food with their lips and bring it into their mouths. The upper jaw is wider than the lower jaw, so they can only use one side of their mouths to grind the food. This causes the rotary movement that is seen when a goat is chewing.

Goats are very curious, which means they will get into and eat just about anything! Goats are known as **non-selective browsers** because they eat a wide variety of plants. They are inclined to eat a plant from the top down which makes them good at controlling undesirable plants and shrubs in pastures. They can also plants that are toxic to a lot of other animals.



Fun Fact!

Kids can eat hay at just two days old! That is faster than a calf, which takes about 6 weeks.



Goats at the Grocery Store

In the United States, there are many goat products found in our grocery store aisles.

Dairy goats produce milk, which is used to make cheese, soaps, and yogurt. If you're allergic to milk from a cow, you may drink goat's milk as a replacement.

Goat meat is an important source of animal protein. Goats are inexpensive to raise and their meat packs a nutritious punch! Goat meat contains only 122 calories per serving and includes 23 grams of protein and 32 grams of iron. It is lower in fat and calories than chicken, beef, pork, and lamb.

Goat Products and Coproducts



Milk

Cheese, yogurt, kefir, lotions and soaps. Goat milk is also used to make paint and can repel flies.



Meat

Compared to other meat, goat is lower in fat with similar amounts of iron, zinc. It is the most popular red meat consumed in the world.



Bone, blood, horn and offal

They are used, like any slaughtering byproducts, for meal, fertilizer, and glue.



Hair

Some goats have hair that is used to make mohair fabrics which are soft, warm, and long lasting.



Leather

Soft and water resitant, goat leather is used for gloves, bags, and clothing.

Fun Fact!
In bright light, the pupil in a goat's eye is rectangular rather than round.

Goats in Kansas



There are **46 million acres** of farm ground in Kansas.

Grazing goats keep pastures free of unwanted plants and weeds. They help prevent wildfires by eating plants that other grazing animals do not eat. This helps keep the vegetation low to the ground.

There are many different **meat goats** breeds found in Kansas, including Boer and Kiko. These goats are popular because they are well muscled, have a broad chest and larger body size. The demand for 'chevon' or 'goat meat' in the United States is so high that producers can't keep up. About 1.5 million pounds of goat meat is imported every week.

Dairy goats common in Kansas are Nubian, Alpine and Saanen. The Nubian goat was developed in Great Britain but has origins in the Middle East and North Africa, and is exceptionally adaptable to extreme heat and has a prolonged breeding season which means that they can produce milk nearly year round.

Nubian goats milk is very flavorful and high in butterfat making it perfect for cheese production.

The Nubian goat is very social and outgoing. They love being around humans and are known to call for their owner.

Careers

Goat farmer – goat farmers and ranchers raise and care for their goats to ultimately produce meat or milk for consumers.

Agricultural extension agent – these specialized educators help develop and deliver educational programs and resources about goats to farmers, ranchers and consumers.

Veterinarian – veterinarians give vaccines, provide regular care and emergency care, and help ensure goats and all other animals are in good condition and healthy.

Nutritionist – nutritionists make sure the animals are given a well-balanced diet. They also assist in the development of feed products to ensure goats are given a healthy diet.



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