

Goatvetoz Winter Newsletter

Goat Veterinary Consultancies - goatvetoz

Winter 2020

Kidding Season

As does start to get bigger and bigger, it is time to start preparing for kidding season. It starts with getting together a kidding box full of what you need to assist a doe in trouble or a weak kid. Let's look at what is in mine.

- Obstetrical lubricant
- A 60 ml syringe with some plastic tubing on the end so you can get the lubricant behind the stuck kid.
- Gloves for you to wear
- Antiseptic
- A lambing tool, stockings, rope or thick shoelaces to loop onto a kid's leg if you need to push it back in to correct a malposition.
- Antibiotic pessary (from your regular vet). Most vets will sell you one if they know you are experienced enough to help with kidding. This means you can add one after checking there is no kids left to prevent any infection.
- Quickeze (for a calcium burst). Check your goat likes the flavour. In the USA they use Tumms, which is the equivalent.



- Glycerine, propylene glycol or a commercial

pregnancy toxemia preparation such as Ceton.

And for the newborn kid:

- Iodine solution to dip the kid's naval cord.
- Bottle and teat and stomach tube to make sure the kid gets colostrum if too weak to suckle properly.
- Hot water bottle with a wool/fleece cover.
- Colostrum. It is essential kids get quality colostrum in the first couple of hours.

Colostrum can be taken direct from the doe but be prepared & have an alternative in case the doe has none due to illness.

The best alternative is frozen colostrum from a doe in your own herd or another goat herd that is regularly tested for CAE Johne's disease or ideally in the relevant accreditation schemes. Thaw the colostrum slowly in warm water, not a microwave.

Second best is cow's colostrum (which will be CAE free) but the whole herd must be tested for Johne's disease. In Australia this would mean a JBAS 8 herd.

Third best is powdered colostrum replacer or if not available, colostrum supplement. These can be purchased on-line.

A doe's uterus is fragile compared to a cow's. Great care must be taken when

Urinary Calculi

There are a range of different types of urinary calculi or stones. Prevention is different depending on the composition of the stones. It is essential therefore to keep any stones and send them off for analysis. Vets in the USA can make use of a free service provided by the University of Minnesota. See

<https://vetmed.umn.edu/centers-programs/minnesota-urolith-center> . In Australia there is a cost and samples should be sent to a vet lab.

The stone should be washed then air-dried then carefully packed in a ziplock bag or bottle. Don't put in formalin or any liquid.

The most common stones are:

- Calcium carbonate
- Phosphates – which can be calcium, magnesium &/or ammonium
- Oxalates (often if on tropical pastures).
- Silica (often associated with sandy soils and short pastures)

Other factors are genetics, vitamin A deficiency and bladder infections. Adding salt to the diet can help in preventing all types of urinary calculi as it increases water intake. Up to 4% of the dry matter intake can be salt – add to grain & spray hay with a salt solution.

assisting at a birth. Use lots of lubrication. If unsure you are skilled enough, then get veterinary assistance ASAP. A vet can give an epidural block and muscle relaxants and if needed, a caesarean. Remember the 30 minute rules – if no progress, get a vet.

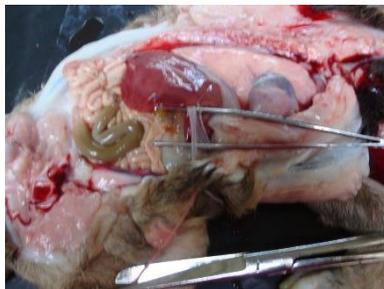
When using the lambing tool, pass it over the kid's head but make sure the cord goes into the mouth and not around the neck – as shown below.



Joint-ill

It is critical that all kids born in confinement have their naval cords dipped in iodine immediately after birth. Most people have heard of

cord blood from human babies. This is because the naval cord has 2 large blood vessels (an artery & a vein) & a tube to the kid's bladder. As shown in the photo below the naval connects directly to the kid's blood supply.



This means bacteria can transfer from the dirt on the kids naval directly into the kid's blood stream. These bacteria can then settle into all the kid's joints. Weeks later, the joints swell & become very painful due to an infection, called joint-ill. Sometimes there is also an increase in body temperature.

Treating joint-ill is very difficult as most antibiotics find it difficult to diffuse inside the joints. Also a whole range of bacteria could be responsible. Very high antibiotic doses are needed & sometimes joints need to be flushed out by a vet using sterile techniques. Joint-ill occurs in many animals and the prognosis is generally poor. Prevention is therefore essential.

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Vitamin A deficiency

Vitamin A deficiency can cause a wide range of signs in goats including, night blindness, eye discharges, male infertility and wasting. Research in Egypt found that supplementing pregnant goats with Vit. A resulted in lower kid mortality rates compared to untreated controls. Kids born to does given injections of Vit. A had higher rectal temperatures, higher birth weights and grew at higher rates than kids from control does (Eldaima et al, 2015). Research in dairy ewes showed that ewes on a Vit. A deficient diet has less subclinical and clinical cases of mastitis if given Vit. A (150,000 IU) every 3 months starting in pregnancy (Koutsoumpas et al, 2013). The somatic cells counts in their milk were also lower.

Vitamin A keeps the lining of internal organs healthy. In the bladder it prevents dead cells being sloughed off and acting as a nidus for growing urinary calculi.

Goats can store Vitamin A in their livers along with the other fat soluble vitamins (D and E). They can store up to 6 months' worth, so generally Vit. A deficiency only occurs during droughts. Fresh green grass, green lucerne (alfalfa) hay, carrots and pumpkins are all great sources of Vit. A for goats. Pregnant does need a lot more Vit. A than do dry does because colostrum contains high amounts. Kids are born with no Vit. A & get it via the colostrum.

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