



















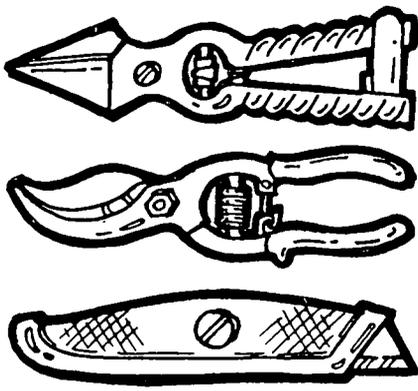






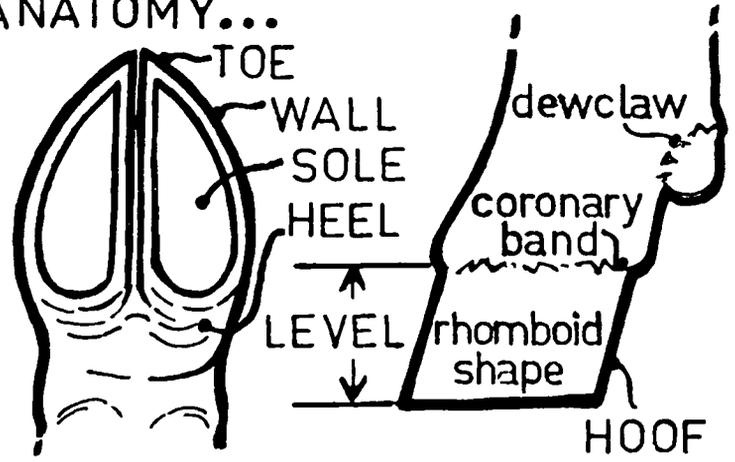


### TOOLS...



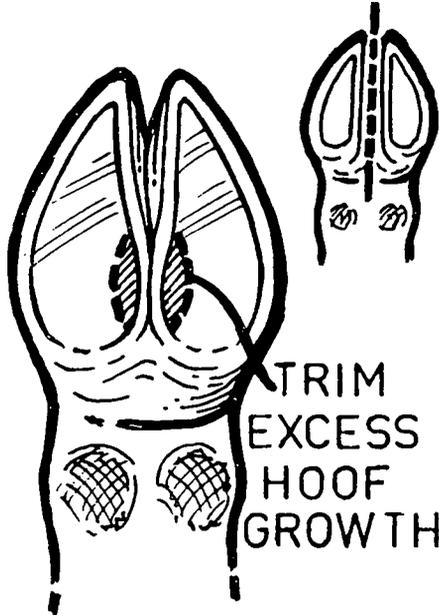
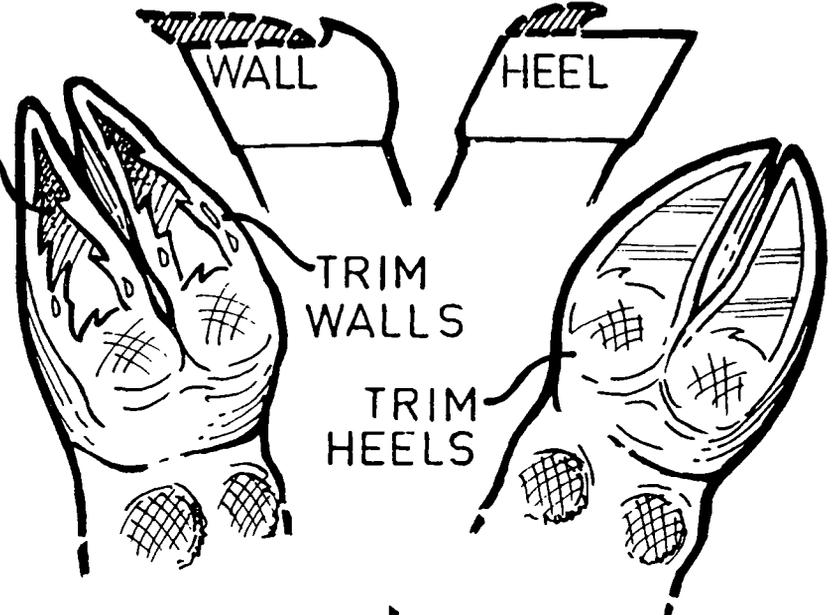
foot rot shears  
or  
pruning shears  
and  
utility knife

### ANATOMY...



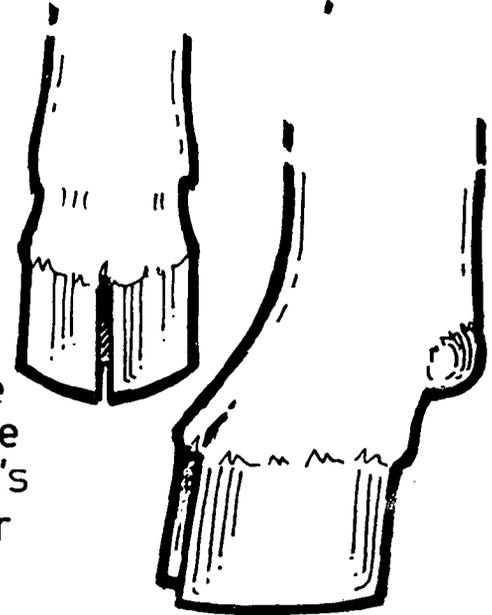
OVERGROWN

DIG OUT DIRT



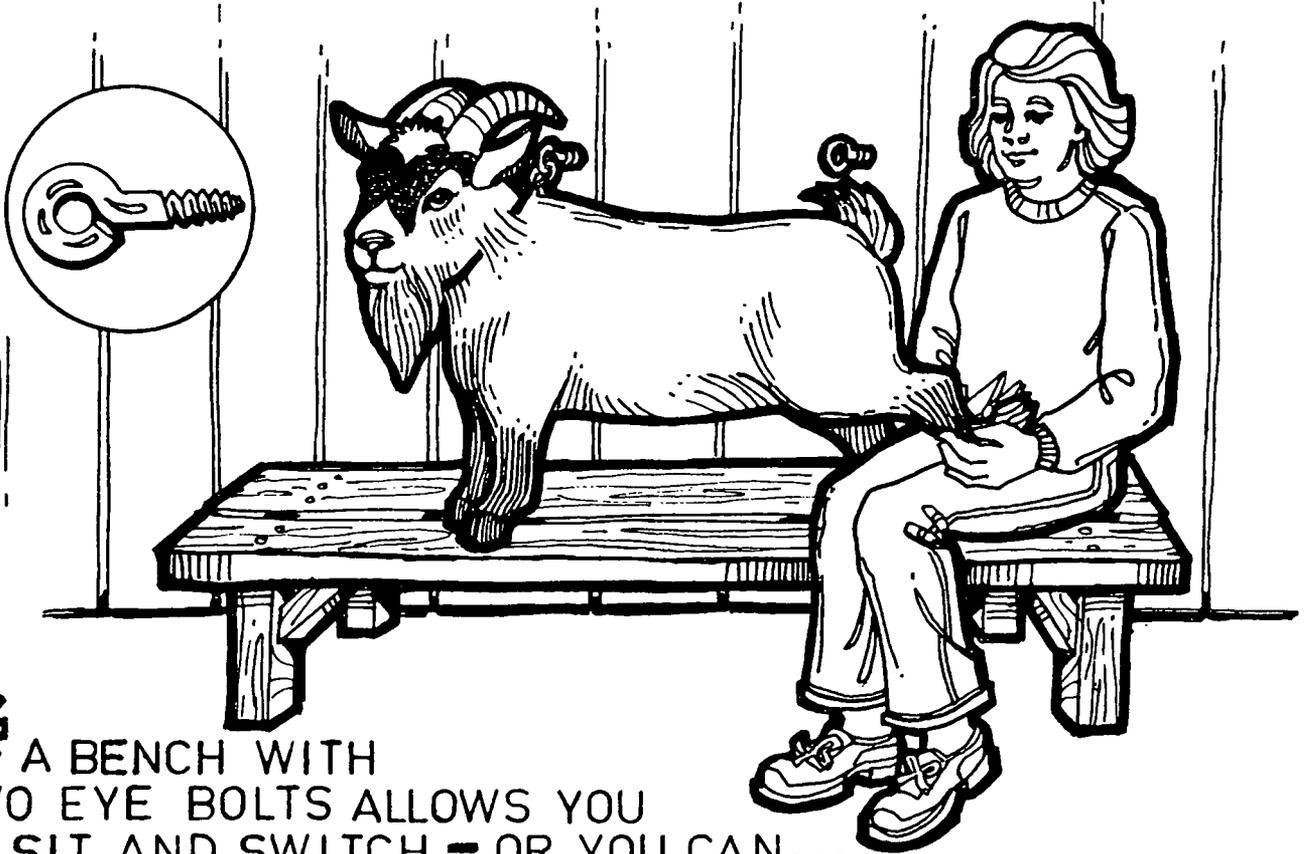
\* if the hoofs are trimmed regularly the job is much easier

\* if the goat bleeds use some iodine and make sure the animal's tetanus booster is up to date



PROPER TRIM

Figure 4.—The basics of hoof trimming (above). On the opposite page, good restraining procedures to use while you're trimming hooves.



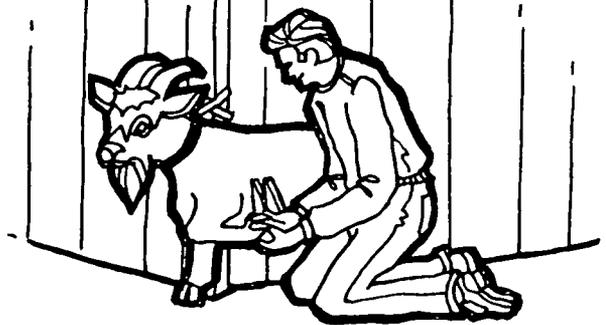
A BENCH WITH  
TWO EYE BOLTS ALLOWS YOU  
TO SIT AND SWITCH - OR YOU CAN...

HAVE A FRIEND HELP

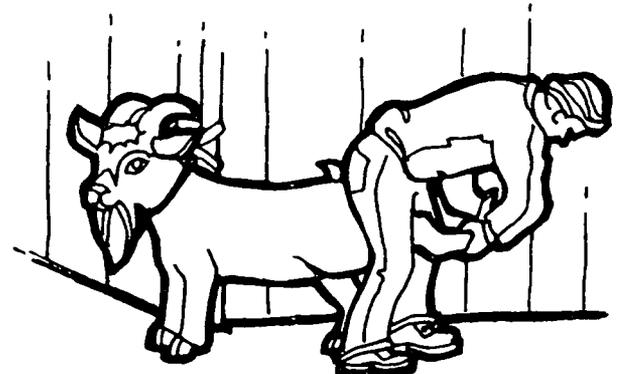
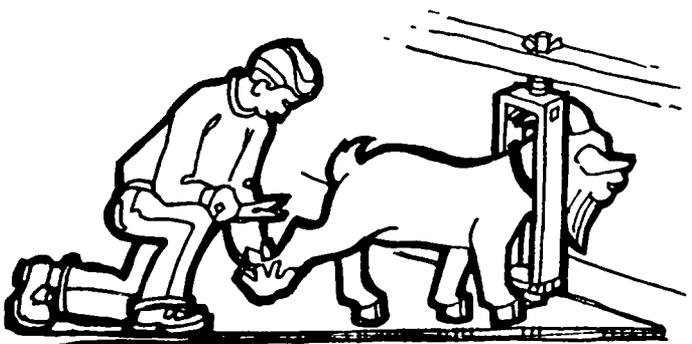
SQUEEZE AGAINST A WALL



USE A MILKING STANCHION



STRADDLE TO DO REAR



## Health management

**P**revention is the single most important issue regarding the health care of your pygmy goat. Be alert to the overall health of your animals. Signs of good health include a glossy hair coat, upright ears, bright eyes, a good appetite, firm droppings—and an active, alert, and attentive disposition. If you see any serious change, give it immediate attention.

It's a good practice to isolate new and returning animals from the rest of the herd for a minimum of 1 week. This will prevent the spread of possible disease. Safety in your pens, barns, and pastures will prevent injuries and a possible call to the veterinarian. Clean up the clutter, trash, broken objects, rotten wood, etc., from the area where your goats live.

Beyond these measures, correct feeding will certainly be the most important step to good goat health. Be sure your animals have:

- an ample supply of good, clean water,
- access to minerals, and
- proper amounts of grain and roughage (as indicated in the section on feeding, page 7).

Be sure to keep good health records on each animal. Include dates, problems, corrective action, and results.

## Internal parasites

The first signs of parasitic infection are general unthriftiness, a rundown condition, and a rough hair coat. Watch for these other signs: loss of weight, poor appetite (or none at all), diarrhea (often present), and the various stages of anemia (paleness of the lips and tongue, mucous membrane around the eye).

Take a sample of droppings from each goat to your veterinarian for examination, to determine the type and degree of infestation. Treat according to your veterinarian's recommendations.

There are several good wormers on the market to control internal parasites—especially worms. Make sure the wormer you use is approved for pygmy goats. A regular, continuing program to prevent internal parasites will pay big dividends.

## Lice

There are two types, those that attach themselves to the skin and suck the blood, and biting lice that live on scales, hair fibers, and skin debris. Lice spend their entire life cycle on the goat.

You can treat affected animals for lice by either spraying or dusting—spraying is more effective (read again the section on grooming, page 13). There is also an injectable product available on prescription from your veterinarian.

## Mange

A minute, spindle-shaped mite is responsible for a disease termed *demodetic mange* in goats. The mites live deep in the skin where they give rise to soft oval blebs, which range from 1/8 inch to 1 inch in diameter.

These are usually smooth-surfaced, but they may rupture. If they do, bacteria can invade the skin, causing a secondary infection that produces small abscesses. Blebs are most commonly found under the legs, but they may occur along the neck, legs, face, or flanks. Serious symptoms are rarely present before 1 year of age.

As soon as you note these blebs, cut them carefully in cross pattern with a sharp knife, squeeze out the contents, and paint the cavity with Formalin or iodine.

Such treatment doesn't guarantee a cure. However, it prevents an increase in the size of the incised blebs, and it may cut down the number of mites that transfer to other animals. Fortunately, demodetic mange poses no special economic threat.

## Mastitis

This inflammation of the udder is caused by various types of bacteria. Contributing factors include failure to keep bedding clean, bruises from nursing kids, cuts or scratches on the udder or teats, or infectious discharges from the uterus that may run down over the bag.

The first symptoms you notice might be a doe's straddling walk and failure of the kid to nurse. The udder is usually hard, hot, and swollen, and you may see flecks or clots in the milk.

Isolate the animal from the herd and apply hot packs. Use towels soaked in epsom salts, as hot as your hand can stand. Repeat this four to five times a day. After soaking, carefully dry the udder and then milk it out. Next, gently massage the udder with camphorated oil. Call your veterinarian. He or she may also suggest infusing the udder with antibiotics.

## Foot rot

This is infrequent in goats. But it may occur in animals that spend much of their time in wet, unsanitary yards or barns—or that stand in wet bedding constantly. The first symptoms you'll note will be lameness, then a swelling of the foot, which becomes hot to the touch.

In treating, pare away all dead tissue with a knife and soak the foot in an appropriate disinfectant. Bacteria are usually involved, and your veterinarian may recommend the use of one of the broad-spectrum antibiotics as a supplementary treatment.

## Brucellosis

This infection in goats is caused by the germ, *Brucella melitensis*. The symptoms are abortion, lameness, inflammation of the udder, and reduced milk flow. Test all your goats for this infection—it can cause a serious disease in humans called undulant fever.

A human can contract the disease not only from the unpasteurized milk, but also from assisting at kidding time if the disease is present. The organism can gain entrance through a break in the skin.

Follow state and local regulations about pasteurizing milk. There have been very few cases of this disease in recent years in goats in the United States, but it's wise to blood-test your goats, anyway.

## Bloat

Bloating is an accumulation of excessive amounts of gas in the rumen. This may result from overeating tender, young, high-moisture-content legume pasture or eating lush, green forage that is still wet with dew. Occasionally bloating may follow the choking caused by eating apples, corncobs, or the like.

Bloat causes a swelling in the triangle formed by the left hip bone, the end of the rib cage, and the top of the loin. The animal will show distress, lying down and rising, kicking at the abdomen, slobbering, and grunting.

You can prevent bloat by making sure that your animals have a good feed of dry hay before you turn them out on a moist, young pasture. Use a grass-legume pasture rather than straight legumes.

You need your veterinarian for this treatment, which introduces anti-ferments through a stomach tube or drench. Animals die very suddenly with bloat—don't wait before you call for assistance!

## Diarrhea

In kids, bacterial scours occur usually during the first few days of life. It may result from chilling, an unsanitary environment, or faulty feeding practices. The signs include liquid feces, weakness, and depression. Unless such kids are treated, death may occur within 24 hours.

The newborn kid should always receive colostrum milk for the first 2 or 3 days. If hand feeding follows, strict cleanliness of equipment is necessary—even sterilizing feeding containers whenever a problem exists.

At least three feedings a day are recommended, with either milk or a milk replacer. A milk replacer low in lactose and containing antibiotics may help prevent the occurrence of dietary scours.

If such scouring begins, skip a feeding and dilute the milk replacer for the next few feedings. Then, if the diarrhea persists, consult your veterinarian about using a suitable medication.

In older animals, diarrhea may be caused by intestinal parasites, coccidiosis, Johne's disease, or other factors—such as a sudden shift from dry feed to lush green pasture. Gradual changes in the feeding program are always recommended. Scouring may appear in grazing animals after the first heavy frost, but it usually fades away in a short time.

## Ketosis

This metabolic disease occurs just before kidding, or 2 to 4 weeks afterward. The first symptoms are twitching of the ears, muscular spasms, and loss of appetite. As it continues, coma develops—with rapid, labored breathing, frequent urinating, and finally death.

The causes seem to include an unbalanced diet, sudden changes in the diet, or underfeeding during advanced pregnancy. Treatment with intravenous glucose and intestinal stimulants is of some use, but prevention is the real answer.

You should give your does a diet containing good green alfalfa or legume hay and at least a half pound of grain containing corn (see the section on feeding, page 7).

Feed your does at regular hours and don't make sudden changes in their diet. A moderate amount of exercise will tend to keep their bodies toned up and your animals from going off feed.

## Abscess

This is a common problem in goats in many areas of the country. Abscesses are caused by the bacteria *Corynebacterium pseudotuberculosis* (cor-ine-bac-ter-e-um, su-doe-tu-ber-cu-losis). They appear around the head and on the neck most commonly.

The disease is spread from infected animals and from the environment through small punctures in the skin caused by sharp (even pinpoint) objects and vegetation. Take special care to avoid infected animals at fairs, to protect your goat.

If abscesses do occur on your goat, consult your veterinarian for recommended treatment. If the abscess should break open, clean thoroughly with iodine, flush daily, and keep the infected goat away from others. Keep flies away from the abscess site with a good fly-repellent spray.

## White muscle disease

Young goats are subject to this disease, caused by a selenium deficiency in the diet. The level of selenium will vary from area to area in pastures and feed. Ask your veterinarian or Extension agent if there's a need to add selenium supplements to rations in *your* area.

A single shot of selenium/vitamin E solution is generally required by newborn kids. If your area is severely deficient, all your animals will need selenium treatment year-round, in their feed or by injection.

White muscle disease can be confirmed only by examination after death. However, you can uncover a deficiency that may *lead* to the disease by testing a blood sample from your goat. The sample is tested for selenium deficiency. Treatment may begin as soon as results are confirmed.

# Training and showing your goat

## Training

**W**ork with your pygmy goat until it's gentle and will lead or stand as you want it to.

A few minutes a day for several weeks is better than several hours a day just before the show. Teach your animal to lead easily and to walk with its head up. Teach it to stop, to stand quietly, and to take a few steps backward when you push back on the collar and on its shoulder with your hand.

Don't make sudden moves, jerk, or abuse your goat. Hold it so that it can't get away. Teach your goat to stand quietly when someone handles it.

## Fitting for show

Wash your animal, paying close attention to under the tail, hooves, and in the ears.

Pygmy goats are not clipped for show. They're judged on the length of their hair and the condition of the hair. You'll only need to clip inside the ears with a close blade.

Trim the feet so the animal stands straight on its legs. Trim as often as necessary, usually once every 6 weeks and several days before the show.

**Final preparations.** Before taking your goat into the show ring, brush it down carefully. Remove all straw. Clean the ears, nostrils, and feet with a cloth. Be ready when your class is called.

## Showing

Pygmy goats in 4-H are shown with a leather collar or neck chain. Bucks are not shown in 4-H. Lead your goat slowly, holding the collar with your right hand, and walk forward. If the judge is on the outside of the circle, lead with your left hand. Always lead from the side of your goat that is away from the judge.

Lead in a clockwise direction or follow the judge's directions. Don't crowd the goat ahead of you. Don't move so slowly that the other exhibitors crowd up behind you.

Keep your eye on the judge so that you can stop, pose your goat, or move as he or she directs. When you stop, take the collar in your left hand. You can pose the goat with your right hand. When your goat is properly posed with feet set squarely, head up and alert, let it stand naturally. Don't fuss with it more than you need to.

As the judge walks around to the left of your goat, step a little to the front so that he or she can get a good side view. Then, as the judge walks on around in front of your goat, step back quietly to the left side so that she or he can get a good front view.

If your animal stands well, let it stand in that position. Show your animal to its best advantage.

Always pay attention to your goat and to the position of the judge. Continue showing all the time that you are in the ring.

Wherever your goat may place, be courteous and pleasant. Pay careful attention to the reasons the judge gives.

Wait until your name is called or the class is dismissed before leaving the show ring.

## Your own grooming

Be sure your hands, face, fingernails, clothes, and shoes are clean.

Have your clothes pressed, shirt tail in, shoes tied, and your hair combed.

Check to see if white clothes are required.

In 4-H, we always do our best. We learn from experiences so we can "Make the Best Better."



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**The Oregon State University Extension Service** provides education and information based on timely research to help Oregonians solve problems and develop skills related to youth, family, community, farm, forest, energy, and marine resources.

**Extension's 4-H/Youth program** assists young people, their families, and adult volunteers to become productive and self-directing by developing their practical skills and knowledge. Professionals and volunteers together provide educational projects and activities in animal science, plant science, home economics, engineering, natural resources, and expressive arts.

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