

What you need to know to raise a Market Goat



Market goats are a great livestock project for 4-Hers, it is a very rewarding project but does require a significant amount of work to be successful. This livestock project usually begin in the early Spring, depending on when you get your goats and continue into fair season. Goats do require daily care and attention by the exhibitor, as do all livestock projects. This project usually requires some inside housing facilities to obtain the best of this project. They will grow rapidly and make an excellent 4-H project.

Cost of Showing a Market Goat:

- **Purchase of a Market Goat:**

Show goats can be purchased from multiple places. Online sales are considered to be the most popular, as well as live auctions and private breeders. The cost of purchasing a market goat averages \$100 and up. To have a goat whose age is eligible to show, be sure to purchase one with a birth date between December and May.

Market goats can range from 20-70 pounds, it may be helpful to try to match the goat's size to be proportionate with the child that will be showing it, if your child is smaller in size.

- **Purchasing Feed:**

Goats will need to be fed a 16-18% crude protein ration twice daily. They will need to be fed 2.5-3% of their total body weight. There are self-feeder methods as well as hand feeders depending on your personal preference and what works best for your situation.

Feed can be purchased from local suppliers and can range in type and quality based on your specific needs. Fresh, clean water is a key ingredient to the success and health of your goat project. It will cost approximately \$90 - \$125 per animal, without supplementation to feed your goat project.

- **Local Feed Dealers:**

- Agfinity Feed; Eaton, Greeley, Brighton
- Ault Feed Mill, Ault
- Country Corner Feed & Tack, Greeley
- Murdock's Ranch & Home Supply, Greeley

- Tractor Supply Company, Greeley
- Northern Feed & Bean, Lucerne
- Northern Colorado Feeders Supply, Ft. Collins
- Ranchway Feeds, Ft. Collins
- JAX Ranch & Farm, Ft. Collins

- **Equipment needed:**

Halters (Nylon Rope halter and Show Chain with lead), Feed pans/Water Buckets, Blocking Stand, Water Hose, Fitting/Grooming Supplies.

- **Facilities needed:**

Market goats will need a clean, dry, and safe environment that can be 6x12 or 10x10 under a shelter. It is similar to a dog pen, but a barn is preferable to protect them from predators such as dogs or coyotes. You must have a predator or pet proof environment!

The area should be well drained and adequately ventilated to maximize health of the animal. Shelter is important to keep animals dry and reduce exposure to the elements. Pasture is not necessary to raise market goats, but if you have pasture it does give them good exercise.

Note: Some goats need things to entertain them: things to climb on, play with, etc.

- **Animal Health:**

You will need to work with your local veterinarian to create a good deworming program that addresses specific needs and concerns in your area. The key to a good health program is prevention. By being observant, one can notice illnesses before they become serious. Fortunately, goats tend to be hardy, so an effective health plan can be fairly basic.

All animals should be checked at least daily for signs of illness. Obvious signs include: moving slower than other animals, poor appetite, diarrhea, limping, breathing hard or fast, grunting, grinding teeth, or other unusual behavior. If an individual shows any of these signs, it will need further examination. In order to decide how to treat the animal, it will be necessary to identify the symptoms. To help with a complete examination, use a checklist. Call your local veterinarian at signs of illness.

- **Feeding:**

It is important that goats have clean, fresh water at all times. Goats should be fed a 15-20% Crude Protein feed. Purchase a good quality commercial feed from a reputable show feed company or dealer. Do not feed the cheapest feed you can find, it must be a high-quality show feed that they eat or they will not gain enough weight to make weight at fair.

Hay/Forage is essential for ruminants. Give each goat a hand-full size amount of hay daily. As your goat grows you want to increase its feed to where it is eating 3 - 3.5% of its body weight per day. Of course, you have to look at the body condition of your goat and determine if your goat needs more or less feed to reach its ideal show weight. If you are unsure of this get some help from other goat exhibitors, project leaders or your Extension office.

Important Note: Make certain you have a veterinary-client relationship so that medicated feeds can be used, consult your veterinarian if you are unsure.

- **Daily Care:**

It is important to exercise goats daily, start with short times and increase to build endurance. Exercise will help to build muscle in your goat.