



Goat Fact Sheet

We are committed to finding safe, loving homes for our rescued animals and want to make sure that you are making an informed decision when choosing to adopt. Please read this Fact Sheet carefully before filling out the application, as well as do your own research.

Characteristics:

- Goats can live 12-14 years and have been known to live far longer.
- Goats are social animals who need the company of at least one other goat, but also get along with cows, sheep, horses, or donkeys. They also get along with cats and most dogs. Be mindful that an occasional hunting dog may see goats as prey.
- No goat should ever live or be housed alone!
- Goats love to climb and should be provided with a hilly area or boulders.
- They are very curious and investigate everything with their mouths. Be mindful of what they might access, including your fingers!
- Unusual, painful, or unpleasant experiences cause goats stress. Do not move suddenly or make unexpected motions. **Like all animals, goats respond best to a gentle approach!**
- Repeat their names and talk to them while feeding and grooming, and they will become your affectionate and playful companions.
- Before adopting Goats:
 - Check your local zoning regulations to make sure that you can have them.
 - Make sure that you have the time to care for them and that you have responsible caretakers to cover for you in the event of illness or when on vacation.
 - Ensure that your vet practice includes goats and makes farm calls. If it does not, find one that does prior to adopting goats.

Feeding:

- Clean, fresh water must always be available to your goats. Use heavy containers to avoid spilling.
- Minerals, either loose or as mineral blocks, are one of the most important factors in providing proper nutrition for your goat.
- Feed - Goats are ruminants (multi-stomached animals) and rely mainly on hay or pasture for their dietary needs. They require at least 8 hours of grazing time per day. Grain is very high in fat and **should not** be used on a regular basis.
- Pasture – The best goat pastures include clovers and mixed grasses, in addition to plenty of twigs, saplings, brush, and trees. To supplement their pasture they particularly relish fruit tree prunings, wild grape vines, and, believe it or not, dead leaves. Be sure to remove all plants that are poisonous to your goats (**your County Agriculture Extension can provide a complete listing of poisonous plants in your area**).
- Adult goats need two to four pounds of hay per day. Timothy hay is best. Alfalfa hay is very high-protein and should only be used for sick and debilitated animals.

Health Care

- Every five to six weeks, goats should get a routine, individual health check and have basic procedures done. These include: hoof trimming; ear cleaning; feeling the body for lumps and bumps; checking udders on females for heat, hardness, swelling, or discharge; checking eyes for injury, ulcers or discharge; brushing; checking horn growth for any areas of horn touching the skin; and checking teeth, especially on older goats.
- Symptoms indicating illness include loss of appetite, limping, listlessness, labored breathing, diarrhea, discharge from eye or nose, or abnormal body temperature.
- Vaccines - make sure you vaccinate your goats for Rabies, Tetanus, and Clostridium (CTD).
- Goats are relatively easy to take care of, and sanitary housing, good quality pasture, nutritious food, and plenty of sunshine will help reduce health problems.

Shelter & Fencing:

- Building - A large barn or shed makes a fine shelter for goats. Allow at least 25-square-feet per goat, and be sure the shelter has good ventilation and no direct drafts. Always provide plenty of clean, dry straw for bedding and remove damp and soiled straw daily.
- In addition to adequate shelter, you will need a fenced-in area. This is particularly important in areas where there are wandering dogs, as a dog can kill a goat in a matter of minutes. The stress of being chased by a dog can be fatal to a goat. Goats are notorious for escaping, so a five-foot high, tightly woven fence is best. Do not use cattle fencing with larger square openings, since goats tend to stick their heads through them and can easily become stuck. Barbed wire or electric fencing should never be used, as goats become easily entangled in it and it is not sufficient for keeping predators out.
- Tethering your goats (putting them on a long leash) is not recommended, as it can be stressful and goats can hang themselves on a tether.
- Pasture- We recommend 1/2 acre of land for every two goats. For warm weather, the fenced area must have plenty of shade. Be sure to fence in any shady trees you want to keep, as goats are great landscapers and the trees will not last unless they are protected!