

MILKING

(Field Exercise)

The purpose of this field exercise is to learn and experience the proper way to set up, and perform milking responsibilities in a way that is beneficial and efficient for the producer, as well as comfortable and healthful for the herd.

Milking Parlor

- A proper milk parlor should contain milk stands with feeders, a reserve of mixed grain for feeding, stainless tables for milk equipment, stools at an ergonomically proper height for milking, goat sanitizing supplies, running water for hand washing, a complete line of milking equipment, and a lidded trash can for waste disposal.
- The milk parlor should have a sloped concrete drain floor, washable walls, screen doors, and good ventilation.
- The milk parlor should be far enough away and enclosed from goat housing to insure against dirt or fecal cross contamination.

Pre-Milking Procedures

- Goat(s) are brought into milking parlor and immediately climb onto milk stand.
- Goats are fed in grain dishes attached to milk stand.
- If long hair is present on goat's belly or inside of upper legs, goat should be thoroughly shaved.
- Goat's belly and udders are then rubbed down with warm water. This accomplishes two simultaneous goals: First being removal of dirt, loose hairs, and any other fine particulate that could potentially fall into milk pail during milking. The second function is that warm water stimulates milk movement to the bottom of the udder and makes milking the goat thoroughly much easier.
- The goat is quickly dried using one paper towel.
- Goat belly and udders are then sprayed down with diluted iodine solution; teats are washed and dried first, followed by remainder of udder, then the rest of belly. *(It is during this stage of cleaning the udders that a thorough inspection of the entire udder and teats takes place. Any abnormality should be noted and dealt with promptly. Possible abnormalities could be bumps or other external anomalies on the udder and teats.)*

Milking Properly

- The first stream of milk from each teat is deposited in strip cup. Strip cup is simple aluminum receptacle with a fine screen designed to trap any fluid abnormalities in milk. These abnormalities could be lumps or stringiness in milk, which would indicate possible early detection of mastitis.
- Milking begins at this point. The milker should hold the teats in the space between thumb and pointer finger.
- Proper milking should involve the filling of teats followed by "inching" or squeezing the top of the teat so upon use of finger rolling, milk does not flow upward back into the udder.
- Milk should be "rolled" out of the teat, alternating both hands to find a rhythm that is comfortable for both milker and goat.
- It's very important that the farmer doing the milking does not grab above the point where the teat meets the udder. This is due to the fact that the cells inside the teat are able to handle intense pressure without the worry of cellular rupture, and cells at the base of the udder are more susceptible to rupture leading to infection or possible mastitis.
- As the milk flow decreases, the milker should simulate the feeding behavior of kids to help urge any remaining milk in the udder to drop down lower where it would be accessible to milk out completely. This is done by using an upward-facing open palm and firmly "popping" or "massaging" the entire udder in an upward movement. This knocks any remaining milk in the upper portion of the udder down closer to the teat where it can be easily milked out. Immediately following the coaxing of remaining milk, continue milking for a short time, then repeat coaxing and milking several times.
- Finish milking goat by "stripping" out teat. This is done by gathering and expelling last little milk from udder and teat by narrowing your grasp where the udder meets the teat and GENTLY apply a squeezing motion down the teat.
- Immediately following milking, each teat should be dipped in a teat dip cup filled with a post milking product designed to seal off milk canals that have been opened during milking. This product is also an anti-bacterial. This application prevents any possible bacteria from traveling up the open milk canal.

Post Milking Milk Handling

- Milk should immediately be poured from pail to lidded stainless storage tote.
- All milk collected should be transported to available facility for cooling. Milk should not be left for more than forty-five minutes in tote. The faster the milk is brought down to an appropriate temperature (low forties) the better quality milk.
- All stainless milk receiving equipment should be immediately washed with lukewarm water and anti-bacterial soap.
- All equipment should then be rack dried thoroughly.
- All milk should be cooled in heat exchanger or ice water bath immediately after being received at the creamery or kitchen.