

Dairy Goat Handbook

Grooming

Tattooing and Dehorning - This should be done when the kids are three days to one week old, If an adult has horns, it would be advisable to have a veterinarian dehorn her.

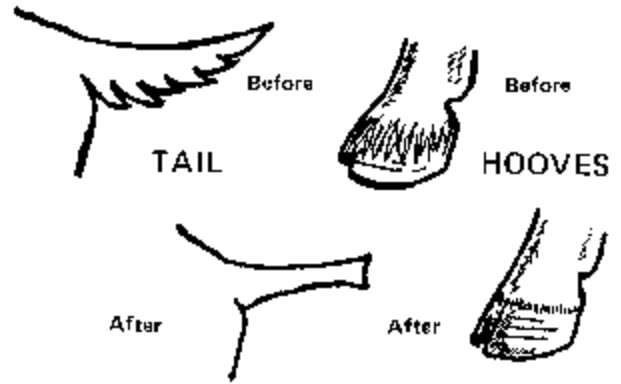
Washing - Bathing goats with a mild shampoo before clipping them helps keep clipper blades sharp. Goats should be rebathed and rinsed well after clipping to remove loose hair and dandruff. Newly clipped goats, especially those with light skin, are apt to sunburn and should be provided with shade or a lightweight coat until the hair grows out a little and the skin becomes less sensitive. Newly clipped goats are also sensitive to draft and chills and need to be covered. Either the day before, or the morning of the show, wash the entire body of the dairy goat, if the weather is warm enough. (If not, clean soiled areas with a damp rag or sponge and thoroughly brush the coat.) Use lukewarm water and very mild soap; rinse thoroughly with lukewarm water to avoid chilling, and either towel dry, use a hair dryer, or place the animal in the sun until dry. Be sure to clean the nose, ears, knees, and under the tail. If the hooves are dirty, scrape and wash them.

Clipping - This is done to give your dairy goat a sharp, attractive appearance. There are two methods of clipping your animal, depending on the season of the year. The summer or complete clip can be done two ways:

1) Clip with a fine blade over the entire body two or three weeks before the show and reclip the head, tail, belly, lower legs and udder just before the show.

2) Use two different blades just before the show. The "plucking" blade is used on the large body area and a fine blade is used on the head, tail, belly, lower legs and udder. Care must be taken to blend the two areas where they meet, so that it looks natural. The winter clip is done by clipping the head, tail, belly, lower legs and udder. The rest of the coat is left unclipped to protect the animal from cold, damp weather. Blending of the clipped and uncapped areas is necessary to give a smooth appearance.

Use a standard Sunbeam clipping blade to remove all the hair from the body, clipping evenly against the hair. Then, with a fine blade (Oyster #10 or the like), clip all the hair on the head, ears, tail, forelegs below the knees and rear legs below the hocks. Finally, use an extra fine blade (Oyster #30 or equivalent) to clip the udder. It is easier to clip the udder when it has about 12 hours of milk in it, but be careful not to nick the tender skin.



Hoof Trimming - Assuming that the hooves have been kept in reasonably good shape throughout the year, trimming should be left until a week or two before the show. They should be evenly trimmed and shaped, using care to accentuate a deep heel with the toes pared down quite closely, but not closely enough to cause sore feet and lameness. If necessary, the dewclaws should be trimmed to look neat. Do not trim the hooves less than three days before the show to allow for healing if they are trimmed too short. Pruning shears, pocket knives or files can be used for trimming. The hooves should be trimmed parallel to the "growth rings," so that the hooves are level and square. This will help the dairy goat to walk straightly and correctly. Cleaning and scrubbing the hooves before trimming will soften them and allow you to see the growth rings more clearly. The following steps are suggested:

- Step 1. Cut off the overgrown hoof wall level to the sole.
- Step 2. Pare off the sole until a slight pink ness can be seen keeping the sole parallel to the growth rings.
- Step 3. If the heel has grown larger on the inside causing the toes to separate, carefully trim this out. Sometimes the dewclaws also need a little trimming.
- Step 4. Use a file to smooth down the sole. Continually check to see that it is level from both the front and the side.

