

## **Meat Goats Rearing**

Meat goat farming in Kenya is becoming popular day by day. This is because goats are hardy and can be kept even in dry areas. Most farmers venture into meat goat rearing as a source of income from the sale of extra kids and culled adults. This is because goats are prolific compared to cows. They have a short gestation period, high chances of twinning and requires less space and feed less than cows. They are also much easier to invest in considering the initial capital investment and time you need to attend to them. They are generally browsers, if you plant more of fodder trees you are good to go.

## **Breeds**

There following are the common breeds suited for commercial and profitable goat farming in Kenya:

- Small East African Goat
- Galla Goat
- Anglo-Nubians
- German Alpine
- Boer
- Toggenburg
- Saanen

NB: Have a good Meat Goat breeding plan for a vigorous growing flock and to avoid inbreeding

## **Housing**

Construct a suitable house for your goats. The house should:

- Have adequate space for accommodate each goat. Generally, an adult goat requires a an average space of 0.5 - 0.75 square meter
- Be damp proof and th roof not leaking
- Free from sharp objects, pests and wild animals
- Has a proper ventilation
- Be in a calm, quiet and noise free land on your farm. Goats love solitude places.

You can divide the house into two parts:

Resting or sleeping area - Make the sleeping area comfortable enough for the goats with sufficient facilities of well ventilation, soft bedding, must have to have wall with door, well roofed and well ventilation system

Feeding area - The feeding area should have water trough, feed trough, slatted floor, feed racks and a rain proof mineral block pack area. Ensure sufficient flow of fresh air and light in the sleeping and feeding places of goats

Since goats are browsers and not grazers, a house 1.5 feet raised off the ground would look much more appealing to them. This also helps to reduce waste of feed. Put a board under the rack to catch fallen feed.

A house of 1.8 meter \*1.8 meter\* 2.5 meter (5.5 ft \* 5.5 ft \* 8.5 ft) is suitable enough for housing 10 small goats



### **Feeding**

Feed Meat goats complementary on fast growing and fast weight gaining food. These include:

**Fodder** : napier grass, green leaves. The fodder should be chopped into small pieces of size 3 cm. Include energy supplements, molasses, milling by-products like pollard or bran, cereals etc

**Protein supplements** : These include Calliandra leaves, cotton seed cake, Leucaena leaves, desmodium, fish-meal, dairy meal, sweet potato vines etc.

**Salt** : Hang nutritious salt lick like MACLIK MINERAL BRICK constantly in their cages to lick. This will avoid cases of hard to urinate and a little bloody urine.

**Water**: Ensure goats gets sufficient supply of clean and fresh water. An adult goat should take 2 litres of water per day

You can also castrate them for fast weight gain.

Since feed costs account for up to 70 per cent of the total cost in a meat goat enterprise you can reduce costs through adequate year round browsing and/or grazing with only mineral supplementation is the most economical way. These include hay, crop by-products such as maize stalks, forages from leucaena, calliandra, gliricidia, clitoria and centrosema, harvested cassava leaves left under the sun for 1 day to reduce poisoning, pruned mango tree branches, cowpeas, local bran from pound maize and other grains as energy supplement.

## **Vaccination**

Do timely vaccination of your meat goats for a healthy flock.

This helps to keep your goats free from highly contagious diseases like PPR, goat pneumonia, tetanus etc.

Vaccinate meat goats for PPR at 2 weeks and Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia (CCPP) at 1 month. CCPP is also a very dangerous disease which can kill the entire flock in a short time

Give sheep & goat pox and tetanus anytime after 1 month of age.

For preventing scabby mouth disease, vaccinate the goats at their two months of age.

**Deworming:** We deworm our goats after every two to three months. Use dewormers like NILVERM from Cooper K-brands.

**Ticks control:** To control ticks, wash your goats every two weeks with water containing acaricide using a piece of cloth or a hand sprayer. Wear hand gloves for protection against the acaricide. Use at least 1.5 litres of the mixed acaricide for each adult goat

Walk the goats through a foot bat of 5% COPPER SULPHATE regularly. This will help stop foot rot and foot abscess. Trim injured or overgrown hooves