



# 2024 University of Florida Buck Test & Sale

## Welcome

We are very excited to initiate this unique program and to work with producers to quantify the desirable qualities of their bucks. We hope that this program will provide value to your operation. The primary goal of this test is to help identify superior bucks who can perform in the harsh Florida summer climate. This performance test is open to producers nationwide, with requirements specifically outlined in our **rules and eligibility section** of this document – *please read carefully*.

## Overview

Bucks will arrive at the UF Small Ruminant Unit (2108 Shealy Drive) on **Saturday, May 18, 2024**, from **1:30PM til 4PM (EST)**. A 14-day acclimation period will be used to adapt bucks to their new environment and ration, mitigate the effect of shrink on calculated growth performance, and assess incoming parasite load with the goal being to reduce parasite levels. Following the acclimation period, bucks will begin an 84-day gain test. During the test, bucks will be housed on Bahiagrass pastures, and their diet primarily comprised of forage. Supplementation of the 'UF Buck Test' concentrate with a target consumption of 1-2% body weight will be utilized on an as needed basis, as determined by the UF Buck Test Committee. Factors that will influence the decision to feed concentrates include but are not limited to: ADG of test animals, forage quality and annual precipitation. Free-choice mineral supplementation will be available at all times. Data will be collected to determine body weight, body condition score, fecal egg count, and FAMACHA score on 14-day intervals throughout the test. This data will be used as an indicator of the buck's ability to cope with parasites and grow during the hot and humid Florida summer. At the end of the trial, bucks will be ranked based upon their growth performance and resistance to parasites. The top performing bucks will be offered at an online auction (open for 24h) on Friday & Saturday, September 20-21, 2024.

## Program Purpose

1. Standardize the environmental conditions for evaluating post-weaning performance of buck kids as it relates to growth performance and parasite resistance.
2. Provide useful unbiased data for both the consignor and the buyer of performance tested bucks.
3. Provide a source of high quality, performance tested bucks for goat producers.
4. Provide educational opportunities for the improvement of the goat industry.
5. Provide networking opportunities for goat producers.
6. Provide an opportunity for goat producers to showcase their breeding programs.
7. Facilitate the transfer of desirable genetics between breeders.

We encourage you to indicate your intent to consign animals to this program. **Bucks must be pre-registered by May 6, 2024**, to be enrolled in the program. This process will take place via our online registration portal. Please contact Clay Whitehead for enrollment or questions, at (904) 796-0441 or [jacobcwhitehead@ufl.edu](mailto:jacobcwhitehead@ufl.edu).

## Schedule of Events

- May 18, 2024:** Arrival of weaned bucks at UF Small Ruminant Unit (2108 Shealy Dr.). *Check-in will take place from 1:30PM til 4PM EST.* Administration of anthelmintics and vaccination.
- June 3, 2024:** FEC reduction. Bucks with inadequate FEC reduction will be eliminated from the test.
- June 6, 2024:** 84-day gain test begins, vaccination booster, beginning weights and measures collected.
- June 20, 2024:** Interim weights and measures collected
- July 3, 2024:** Interim weights and measured collected
- July 18, 2024:** Interim weights and measured collected; 42-day mid-point test report
- August 1, 2024:** Interim weights and measures collected
- August 15, 2024:** Interim weights and measures collected
- August 29, 2024:** 84-day gain test ends, final weights and measures collected
- September 20-21, 2024:** UF Buck Test Sale (online via Willoughby Livestock Sales)

## Rules and Eligibility

- **Bucks must be born between December 15, 2023 and March 1, 2024.** We encourage producers to consign bucks born earlier in this period as we expect them to perform better.
- **Bucks must weigh a minimum of 40 pounds at delivery.** Test admittance is at the discretion of the UF Buck Test program coordinators.
- Both registered and commercial bred bucks will be accepted for entry into the test and eligible for sale. For breeds with open herds or appendix registries, breed percentage will be indicated on the buck's pedigree.
- **Bucks must be weaned prior to May 1, 2024. Please have bucks started on consuming grain/forage at least 2 weeks prior to drop-off to minimize stress.**
- Bucks must be pre-registered for the UF Buck Test by May 6, 2024.
- A one-time, non-refundable, consignment fee of \$200.00 must accompany each buck upon arrival on May 18, 2024, to cover the direct costs associated with the UF Buck Test. Please see cost breakdown below.
- Bucks must be vaccinated and boosted against CD&T and pneumonia (*Mannheimia hemolytica* and *Pasteurella multocida*) at least 3 weeks prior to delivery.
- Bucks must have their hooves trimmed within one week of delivery.
- Bucks must have a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection at the time of delivery.
- Bucks must have an official Federal scrapie tag identification at the time of delivery.
- All incoming animals will be evaluated for health-related issues on the truck before they are unloaded at the University of Florida. The University of Florida reserves the right to turn away or disqualify any animal at their discretion.
- Bucks with any of the following will not be allowed in the test: Lameness, pizzle rot, presence of possible contagious diseases (abscesses, swollen lymph nodes, footrot, sore mouth, pink eye, conjunctivitis, boils, ringworm), evidence of inherited undesirable traits

(i.e., entropion or ectropion, overshot or undershot jaws), rectal prolapse, epididymitis, inguinal hernias, abnormal soft or hard testicles, external parasites, evidence of profuse diarrhea.

- It is recommended that consigning producers administer coccidia treatment (Corid® or Albon®) to their consigned bucks at least 3 weeks prior to delivery to eliminate excessive coccidia burden.
- **Producers will be allowed to enroll up to 2 buck kids in the test each year.** Producers are encouraged to only enroll their best animals with the greatest breeding potential.
- The UF Buck Test facility has a capacity of 50 animals. Should more than the maximum capacity be consigned, the UF Buck Test Committee reserves the right to reduce consignments in an equitable manner beginning with the largest consignors. A standby consignor list will also be kept, should an eligible consignor not participate – those next in line will be notified.

#### 2024 UF Buck Test estimated cost per buck

Item	2024 Cost
Feed	\$45.00
Yardage	\$40.00
Veterinary/Medical	\$90.00
Miscellaneous	\$25.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$200.00</b>

#### Testing

**Pre-test Period:** Upon arrival, bucks will be weighed and dewormed with Levamisole (12 mg/kg), Fenbendazole (10 mg/kg), and Cydectin (0.4 mg/kg). Administration of Albon® (sulfadimethoxine) (50 mg/kg) for 5 consecutive days will be given as determined by the UF Buck Test Committee, pending a significant burden of test animals. Each animal will also receive an 8-way Clostridial vaccine, soremouth/orf vaccine and go through a zinc sulfate foot bath solution.

Other data collection upon arrival will include body weight, body condition score and FAMACHA score. Animals will be grouped in their cohort group(s) at the discretion of the UF Buck Test Committee. Animals will be turned out to pasture in their assigned group(s) the same day and offered feed. This will begin the 14-day acclimation period. A fecal egg reduction test will be performed on June 3, 2024. Any buck not showing acceptable reduction in parasite load as determined by the consulting veterinarians (fecal egg count >500 epg) will not be allowed to participate in the test due to parasite resistance to dewormers.

**Test Period:** Body weight, body condition score, FAMACHA score, fecal egg count, and scrotal circumference will be collected on 14-day intervals beginning on June 6, 2024, and ending on August 29, 2024. Scrotal circumference will only be collected at beginning, mid-point, and end. Bucks will be housed on Bahiagrass pastures, and their diet primarily comprised of forage. Supplementation of the 'UF

Buck Test' concentrate with a target consumption of 1-2% body weight will be utilized on an as needed basis, as determined by the UF Buck Test Committee. Factors that will influence the decision to feed concentrates include but are not limited to: ADG of test animals, forage quality and annual precipitation. Free-choice mineral supplementation will be available at all times. Pastures will be rotated every 14 days. Any buck with a fecal egg count above 2,500 epg will indicate a threshold for deworming. The buck will be allowed the opportunity to mount an immune response (14-days). If the buck's FEC is >2,500 epg at a given collection interval and the FEC remains (>2,500 epg) at the following collection interval (14-days later), this will result in deworming of the buck. A FAMACHA score of >4 and BCS <1.5 also indicates deworming will be performed. Disqualification from buck test sale eligibility occurs after one deworming during the test period.

**Post-test Period:** Body weight, body condition score, FAMACHA score, fecal egg count, and scrotal circumference will be collected on August 29, 2024, at the end of the gain test. Parameters of parasite resistance and growth performance will be evaluated at this time. Bucks will be ranked based upon their performance during the test, and ratios within the contemporary group(s) will be calculated. Animals will be ranked based upon Fecal Egg Count Ratio and Growth Index. The Growth Index will be calculated by the average of Weight per Day of Age (WDA) and on-test Average Daily Gain (ADG). ***Bucks that achieve an index greater than 90 for both Fecal Egg Count Ratio and Growth Index will be automatically consigned to the sale.*** Any animal who fails to achieve a minimum index of 90 for either trait will not be eligible for sale. Carcass ultrasound and USDA grading data will also be collected at the conclusion of the test period on all enrolled test bucks. All bucks will be inspected at the end of the test period for structural soundness and type by the UF Buck Test Committee. Only those bucks of acceptable type, quality, and soundness will be sold. The decisions of the UF Buck Test Committee shall be final. Producers of bucks that qualify for the sale have the option to withdraw their animals from the sale at the end of the test period and take them home. Owners of animals not qualifying for the sale will be notified as soon as possible at the conclusion of the test period. At this time, we would ask the owners to pick up bucks no later than September 21, 2024, at the conclusion of the Buck Test Sale to prevent any additional charges. Transportation of non-sale eligible bucks to the local sale barn can also be facilitated on an as needed basis – producers must contact the UF Buck Test Committee ahead of time if this option is chosen. Producers are encouraged to keep all qualifying animals in the sale in order to fulfill the mission of this program. All bucks consigned to the sale will undergo a Breeding Soundness Evaluation (BSE) prior to the sale. A 'Satisfactory' classification, according to the guidelines published by the Society for Theriogenology, must be achieved on BSE to participate in the sale.

**Performance measures determined at the end of the test period:**

Average Daily Gain (ADG) = total weight gain on-test / number of days on-test

ADG Ratio = (individual ADG / test group ADG)\*100

Weight Per Day of Age (WDA) = final test period weight / days of age

WDA Ratio = (individual WDA / test group WDA)\*100

Growth Index = ((ADG ratio) + (WDA ratio))/2

Average Fecal Egg Count (FEC) = Average of seven FEC taken on two-week intervals during test period

FEC Ratio = (test group average FEC / individual average FEC)\*100

Overall Index = ((Growth Index) + (FEC Ratio))/2

## **Health Management**

1. The health of all animals will be overseen by the UF College of Veterinary Medicine.
2. Bucks showing significant parasite burden during the test period will not be eligible for the sale. These animals will be identified by the UF College of Veterinary Medicine at the scheduled 14-day health assessments. Parameters for disqualification are fecal egg count (FEC) >2,500 epg at two consecutive health assessments, BCS of <1.5 and FAMACHA score of 4 or 5.
3. Consignors will be notified if an animal becomes ill or dies unexpectedly.
4. Any buck that dies will be necropsied by the UF College of Veterinary Medicine and the consignor will be provided with the necropsy results at no cost.
5. Bucks may be removed from the test by the UF Buck Test Committee in the case of a chronic condition impairing the usefulness of the animal. The consignor will be notified and required to remove the animal within 7 days in such a case. Potential events that may result in animal removal include but are not limited to, chronic lameness, infectious disease, or persistent parasite burden.
6. Additional veterinary healthcare costs due to illness will be the responsibility of the consignor. In cases of illness that require immediate treatment, the treatment will be initiated promptly, and the consignor will be contacted as soon as possible. Additional follow-up treatments will be provided as directed by the veterinarian at the UF College of Veterinary Medicine and an additional cost estimate will be provided to the consigning producer.

## **Administration and Management**

The UF Buck Test program coordinators will be solely responsible for consignment, record keeping, correspondence, and general oversight related to the program. All daily management of the bucks will be conducted by the UF Department of Animal Sciences staff. Faculty from the UF College of Veterinary Medicine will serve as consulting veterinarians for the program. The program coordinators will share the test data for all bucks enrolled in the test on the UF Buck Test webpage at midpoint and final data collection. The program coordinators will provide consigning producers with data points at each 14-day collection, beginning at the second test data collection interval. All consignors agree to this data release when consigning bucks to the test.

## **Liability**

University of Florida personnel will make every reasonable effort to safeguard the health of the animals and to obtain professional veterinary services when necessary but will not be responsible for the loss by fire, theft, injury, sickness, death or in any other way.

## UF Buck Test Sale

- The 2024 UF Buck Test Sale will be held online via Willoughby Livestock Sales. The sale will be open for 24 hours, beginning at 11AM EST on September 20, 2024, and closing 11AM EST on September 21, 2024.
- Bucks enrolled in the UF Buck Test Sale will be available for in-person viewing on Friday evening, September 20, 2024 (6pm EST) and Saturday morning, September 21, 2024 (8am EST) during the UF Small Ruminant Short Course at the UF/IFAS Horse Teaching Unit, 1934 SW 63rd Ave., Gainesville, FL 32608.
- A maximum number of 20 of the highest performing bucks will sell.
- To qualify for the sale, bucks must achieve an index greater than 90 for both Fecal Egg Count Ratio and Growth Index.
- Any buck that has a fecal egg count >2,500 epg at two consecutive health assessments, BCS <1.5 and FAMACHA score > 4 during the test, will not be eligible for sale.
- Both registered and commercial bucks are eligible for sale. Sale order will be determined by test performance with those bucks who performed the best, highest FEC Ratio and Growth Index, will sell first.
- Sale order will be determined in descending order beginning with the highest ratioing animal for the combined traits of Fecal Egg Count Ratio and Growth Index. In the event of a tie, the tie will be broken by the Fecal Egg Count Ratio.
- All bucks will sell with a 'Satisfactory' Breeding Soundness Evaluation (BSE) performed within 30-days of sale by a licensed UFCVM veterinarian.
- UFCVM veterinarians will be on-site to provide an official Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) for interstate or intrastate travel to the purchaser's facility after the sale.
- A sale commission of 10% will be deducted from the sale price of each sale animal to recover sale costs and additional feed/yardage costs from the end of the performance test.

## Buck Test Sale Format

The 2024 Buck Test Sale will be conducted online through Willoughby Livestock Sales. It will be open for 24 hours, beginning September 20, 2024, at 11AM EST and closing September 21, 2024, at 11AM EST.

Sale bucks will be eligible for viewing on Friday, September 20, 2024 (6PM EST) and Saturday, September 21, 2024 (8AM EST), at the UF/IFAS Horse Teaching Unit, 1934 SW 63rd Ave. Gainesville, FL 32608.

**Please note:** Attending the Small Ruminant Short Course (SRSC) is not required to come view sale animals.

## **UF Buck Test Program Coordinators**

Clay Whitehead  
Sheep Unit Manager  
UF Animal Sciences Department  
(904) 796-0441  
[jacobcwhitehead@ufl.edu](mailto:jacobcwhitehead@ufl.edu)

Brittany Diehl, DVM, MS  
Clinical Assistant Professor & Small Ruminant Extension Specialist  
UF College of Veterinary Medicine  
(352) 294-4387  
[bn.diehl@ufl.edu](mailto:bn.diehl@ufl.edu)

## **Online Platforms to Follow/Reference**

UF Buck Test website link: <https://animal.ifas.ufl.edu/smallruminant/buck-test>

UF Small Ruminant Short Course website link: <https://animal.ifas.ufl.edu/smallruminant/small-ruminant-short-course/>

Social Media – Facebook: UF Small Ruminant Extension

Social Media – Instagram: @UF\_SMALLRUMINANTEXTENSION