

Common Health Challenges in Small Ruminants

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*Hopefully no
one said sheep
are easy...*

*Goats are easy
they said...*

An Accidental Goat Vet

- 2018 University of Florida UF CVM graduate
- Certificate in food animal medicine
- 2019 opened OHLAVS
 - DIY goat vet
 - Peer groups (veterinary specific), text books, podcasts
- 2021 Emergency Leader AASRP
- Today 60% of my practice is small ruminants

“The only way to entirely prevent emergencies is to not own livestock.”



Today's Topics

- Parasites
- Sick bottle baby
- Urinary obstruction
- Attack by dog
- Dysotica/reproduction
- General "ADR"
- VCPR
- Resources



Parasites

- Do not always see diarrhea
- Hair coat quality can turn poor before a pale FAMACHA sometimes
- Parasites kill quickly - Haemonchus female can lay 10,000 eggs per day

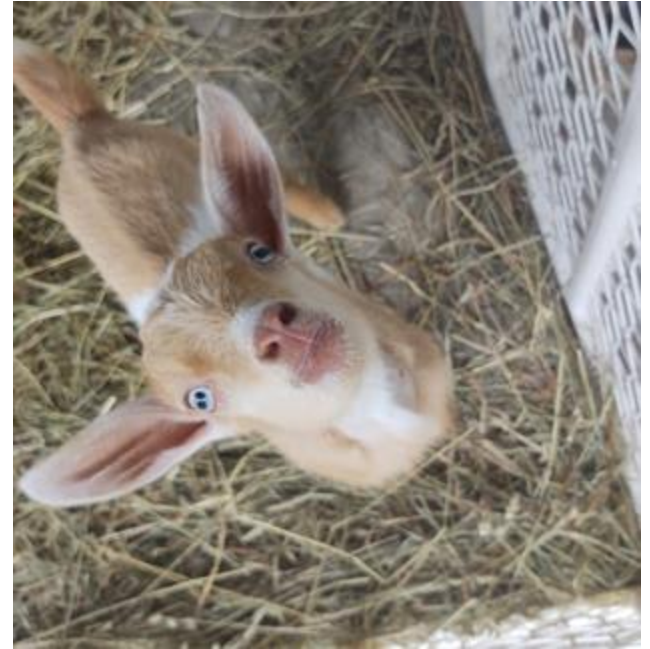
How to prevent ->

- Know your herd, know your parasites
- No two farms get the same deworming protocol
 - History of the farm, owner skill, risk of herd (breeding, CAE/OPP status, etc), stocking density, sand vs grass vs large pasture with mixed forage, willingness to perform fecals
- Postpartum parasite bloom
- Transfer to new home especially with bottle babies
- 20% of the herd sheds 80% of the parasites
- Wormx.info
- FAMACHA Friday



Sick Bottle Baby

- 5 C's - colostrum, calories, consistency, cleanliness & comfort
- Whole milk vs powder
- Do not feed water in a bottle
- Milk does not need to be diluted to wean
- Let them be a goat!
- Clostridium hits hard and fast
- Know history of bottle babies
 - Pulled from doe vs bottle fed
- Always provide fresh clean water
- Some need to be taught to eat hay and grain



Urinary Obstruction

- Castrated males on a high plane of nutrition at higher risk
- Happens in bucks too
- High grain and/or legume hay (peanut, alfalfa*)
- Obesity
- Water or weed component???
- Sometimes very subtle and no obvious straining
- 50:50:50 rule
 - 50% of the time the pizzle amp is successful
 - 50% of the time they are discharged from the hospital
 - 50% of the time they re-block



Attack by Dog

- Nice dogs will bite goats!
- Check integrity of your fences often
- No climb fencing my preference
- Vet intervention often required for appropriate antibiotics, pain medications, flushing
- Polio can easily happen secondary to severe bites



Dystocia/Repro

- Have a kidding box
 - Clean towels, lube, iodine, dog leashes, gloves!
- Watch for 2 kids at once
- Head back is the most difficult
- They can come out with only one leg forward
- Uterine prolapse rare
- Prekidding vaginal prolapse more common
- Pregnancy toxemia prevention
 - Nutrition and BCS evaluation
 - Monitor urine ketones +/- blood test (BHB)



ADR - Ain't doing right

- R/O other common things: parasites, urinary obstruction
 - Often times one of these
- Full physical exam and detailed history especially concerning feed changes
- Bluetongue
- Rumen dysbiosis/acidosis
 - Chicken feed
 - Hay change
 - Grass clippings
- Toxicities
 - Azaleas
 - Unknown



VCPR

- What is it? Well that depends
- Why is it important?
 - What is your plan for emergencies?
 - What is your budget?
 - Decide now before the emotions come in
- What a VCPR means for OHLAVS
 - Telemedicine
 - Another set of eyes on the farm
 - Help setting reminders/keeping up with tasks
 - Herd health plans
 - Access to RX medications



Resources

- Podcasts
 - For the Love of Goats
 - Goat Talk with the Goat Doc
 - Wormx.info has podcast links
- Mentorship within goat community
 - Have caution with advice from strangers on the internet
- <https://www.facebook.com/oakhammockLAVS>
- Raising Goats for Milk and Meat, by Sinn and Rudenberg



Questions

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