

# Dairy goat fanciers hold field day

Sally Bair  
Feature Writer

Interest in raising the dairy goat must be on the increase if the size of the crowd at the annual goat Field Day is any indication.

Nearly fifty goat enthusiasts gathered Saturday at the Jacob H. Fisher, Jr.'s Windy Hill Farm, Manheim R1 for an afternoon of learning and sharing experiences with other goat owners.

The Fishers, who milk 35 goats, had organized the day for maximum learning, and there were both demonstrations and an educational exhibit filled with goat literature. Producing quality goat milk was the primary focal point.

N. Alan Bair, county agricultural agent, discussed the causes of mastitis in the dairy goat and the treatment for the condition. He recommended the use of the California Mastitis Kit to determine if mastitis is present. Bair said, "The oldest and probably the best method of treating mastitis is to milk out the udder completely every hour or two for twenty-four hours." He also said that commercial remedies especially prepared to combat mastitis may be used. The causes can be diverse, but mastitis results from some sort of stress upon the animal.

Fisher emphasized the importance of cleanliness throughout the milking procedure for obtaining high quality goat milk. Milking can be done by hand or with specially designed milking machines, or cow milkers which have been adapted for use.

Bair noted that an important part of quality milk is cooling the milk quickly. He said, "The modern refrigerator is not designed for cooling: it is only made to keep things cool. It will not cool milk quickly enough to maintain its quality." Bair suggested alternative methods of cooling the milk, including immersing its container in ice water in the refrigerator.

In response to a question, Bair said it is recommended that dairy goats be tested for both tuberculosis and brucellosis if the milk is to be used for human consumption.

Demonstrations provided a great deal of information for the goat owners, especially those who are just beginning in the business. First Fisher showed the proper method for dehorning a kid. He used an electric dehorner, and suggested that the job should be done in the first 2-3 weeks of life. Dehorning is recommended for goats for safety reasons and for ease of handling.



Jacob Fisher, Jr., Manheim, demonstrates the skill of clipping goats at the recently held dairy goat field day.

Hoof trimming is another important aspect in the care of dairy goats. Fisher demonstrated the trimming of both the hooves and the

dew claws. Keeping the feet sound is a vital part of the

overall management program, and the frequency of trimming will depend upon the type of housing.

A clipping demonstration was also given. Clipping is especially important for sanitary reasons. The udder of a milking goat should be clipped, as well as the flank, especially in the winter. A long-haired goat may also be clipped to help keep it cool and to help in the control of

parasites - but it should not be shorn.

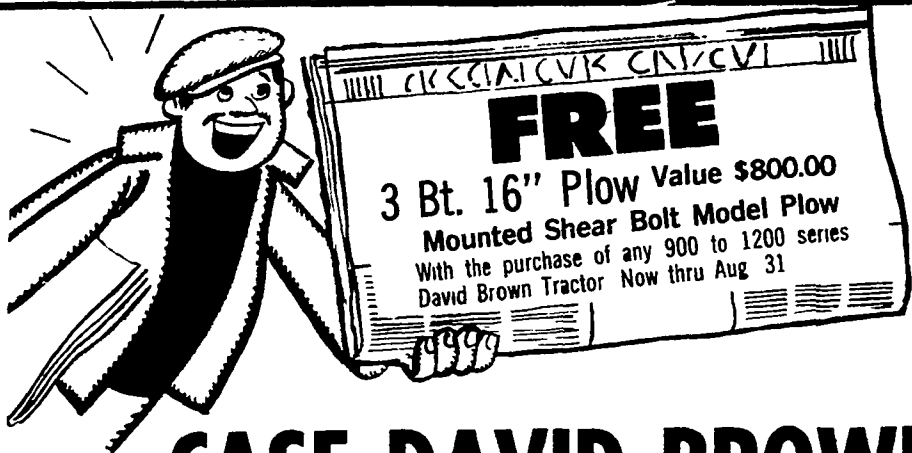
There was a demonstration of tattooing for identification.

Following the formal program, there was much socializing and exchanging ideas and information among the goat breeders. Breeders attended from neighboring counties and states.

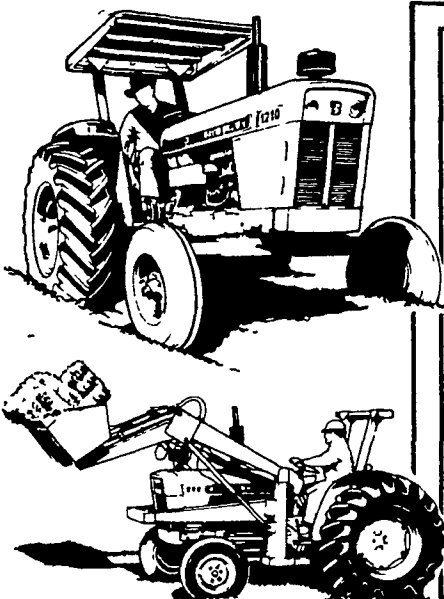
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