

# 'No Kidding' — Teacher Raises Boer Goats

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**TYRONE (Blair Co.)** — Teaching elementary school and raising goats might not be the ideal combination, but for Cathy Hoover of Tyrone, it works.

Cathy says she can't remember a time when she didn't like goats. "My husband and I would be driving around and I would see a goat and say, "Oh Roger, let's get some goats."

"We always had sheep," says the dark haired, smiling, Warriors Mark teacher, "but we didn't have goats."

Then, one summer while visiting the state of Texas with their three children, Cathy and Roger discovered the Boer goat.

"The comparison between a Boer goat and a dairy goat is about the same as comparing a Hereford to a dairy cow," Cathy explains.

"The energy of a dairy goat goes into milk production, but the energy of a Boer goes into meat."

Roger Hoover's profession is training bird dogs. While in Texas, the family found a very reasonably priced 160-acre farm, perfect for training dogs.

"And, for raising goats," chimes in Cathy.

"I took a sabbatical and we moved the whole family to Texas for a year," she recalls. "It was a wonderful year. The school was small and the children learned a lot."

Doing some serious goat studying, Cathy and Roger learned that artificial insemination had not had enough time for good experience among Boer goats.

"When we moved back to Pennsylvania, I began looking for a Boer buck of my own," Cathy remembers. "We found one for \$8,000 and that was a bargain. He paid for himself in a year."

We brought our first doe home from a goat seminar in the back of our Suburban station wagon."

Roger and Cathy raise primarily breeding stock. "There isn't much of a market for goat meat in rural Blair County," says Cathy. "However, it is popular in New York City and Washington D.C. where we have a large ethnic population, which includes eating goat meat in their religious observances."

Like lamb, the meat must be obtained while the animal is still young. The carcass should not

weight more than 94.5 pounds on the hook with the ideal slaughtering weight being between 45 and 90. Meat prices run upwards of \$1 per pound.

A dressing percentage according to age may serve as a guide: 8 to 10 months, 49%; two tooth 50%; four tooth 52%; six tooth 54%; full mouth 56-60% or more.

Carcasses with good conformation, covered with a thin layer of fat quality for the higher grades. Goats with too much or too little fat and weak conformation are graded lower.

Another market for the Boer goat is the leather. Quality is determined by the hair on the skin. The shorter the hair, the better the quality of the skin. Boer skins can be used for leather uppers for shoes, gloves, and book covers.

Lower in cholesterol than venison, goat meat can be served in a variety of ways. Cathy and Roger make soups, stews, and cook steaks on the grill.

Located in a picturesque wooded setting, the Hoovers own 60 acres of land and 40 goats with a few additional on the Texas acreage. Pens are dry and provide warmth



Cathy Hoover holds a newborn baby goat. She said, "My dream is to retire and just raise goats."



On a cold wintry day, Cathy feeds Boer goats, a hefty meat breed, which she first heard about in Texas and now raises in Blair County.

for those goats which give birth during the winter months. "By next year this time, we hope to have at least 150," Cathy adds. "You can raise seven to eight Boers per acre."

"It doesn't take a lot of land or good land to raise goats," she continues. "Boers can graze on almost anything and are great on nonproductive land. They love blackberries and we have a lot of them on this ridge."

Quite healthy, the Boers are considered low maintenance with vaccination costs being lower than sheep. "Treatment against internal parasites is an important expenditure," Cathy said.

Boer goats have very short hair and, therefore, do not get entangled in thorns and shrubs and rarely need protection against rain or cold.

"They birth much easier than sheep," Cathy explains. "But, they do demand attention during birthing season."

Cathy's dream is to retire and devote all of her time to the goats. "I want to get into organic farming, soap making and various other forms of getting back to nature," she adds.

Anyone wanting more information on the Boer goats can get in touch with the Hoovers at RD 3, Box 462B, Tyrone, Pennsylvania.



## OMESTEAD NEWS



### Ten Ways To Raise A Monster

**HONESDALE (Wayne Co.)** — You probably have seen those self tests where you find out if you're good at something or not. Here is an easy parent quiz to help you figure out if you might be raising a little monster. Write down how many times you say "yes" to these 10 questions:

1. Do you often call your child "clumsy," "slow," or other names?
2. Do you growl at your child and have a nasty tone to your voice?
3. Do you talk badly about your child in front of the neighbors or your child's friends?

4. Do you criticize what your child does when you feel it isn't very good?
5. Do you keep busy doing other things when your child wants to tell you something?
6. Do you jump in and do everything for your child because you can do it better or faster?
7. Do you make fun of or call your child names when there is an accident?
8. Do you talk "rough," "mean," or rudely to your child?
9. Do you yell or scream when your child doesn't act as quickly as you think?
10. Do you jump in with a

punishment or yell "shut-up" when your child tries to explain something?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may be on your way to raising a little monster. Now don't get me wrong, everyone is guilty of doing any of these things at one time or another. Parents need to realize that doing these types of things, name calling, yelling, blaming, an ignoring, can hurt a child's feelings. A child's self-esteem is slowly taken away if constantly ridiculed, shamed, and made to feel worthless. The child will start acting out in bad ways only to make matters

worse. Remember, children are great copy cats. They learn how to act from watching others, especially you. How do you keep your child from becoming a little monster? Try to set a good example by shar-

ing your time, showing interest and listening to even little problems that might be going on. Give your child your love no matter what. You can work on the misbehaviors and love your child at the same time.

