

and cottonseed meal. Commonly used energy ingredients are corn, hominy, oats, barley, wheat, wheat midds, soybean hulls, citrus pulp, rice bran and molasses. The amount of concentrate to include in the ration depends on level of milk production. A dry doe requires very little concentrate if adequate amounts of pasture or good quality hay is available. Goat producers mixing their own rations will need to take care in balancing the minerals, especially calcium, phosphorus and salt.

Commercial feeds are used by most producers and contain a variety of ingredients as well as minerals and vitamins. The preferred mixture has good texture and in some cases is pelleted to prevent separation. Ingredients such as cracked corn, oats, barley, wheat midds, soybean hulls, corn gluten feed and citrus pulp add good texture to the feed. Special ingredients such as molasses may be added at the rate of 5 to 10% to reduce dustiness and cottonseed hulls from 5 to 15% to improve texture. Greater amounts of cottonseed hulls may be used if needed as the major source of roughage.

### Summary

Dairy goats like a good textured and chewy feed that provides adequate amounts of the needed nutrients. Ingredients that are usually very palatable and are commonly used include cracked

corn, rolled oats, corn gluten feed, cottonseed meal, and limited amounts of wheat midds, soybean hulls, citrus pulp and molasses. Also, soybean and peanut meal are quite palatable protein sources. Cottonseed hulls are very useful in providing extra texture and roughage to the ration.

An acceptable and recommended practice is to dry-off lactating dairy goats about 8 to 9 weeks prior to kidding. This provides a rest for the doe and enables her to meet the needs of a rapidly growing fetus. The fetus gains about 70% of its birth weight during the last two months of the gestation period.

Dry does do not need a lot of feed during the dry period. Some long hay and pasture may be adequate during the early dry period. About 3 to 4 weeks prior to kidding, add some grain supplement. The amount needed will vary with the condition of the doe. Provide a good source of minerals and vitamins.

Long hay should be available to does before and after kidding. Grass hay is recommended over legume hay since legumes are high in calcium and may cause a mineral imbalance unless special attention is given to the source of minerals. Feed legume hay to high-producing does when available.

Lactating does should be fed according to their ability to produce milk. A doe producing 10 lbs of milk would need 3 to 4 lbs of hay and 6 to 8 lbs of grain per day. Does will usually consume about one-half pound of grain per pound of milk produced.



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