

# AN EXAMPLE MANAGEMENT CALENDAR – very general

## Prior to breeding

- Quarantine new bucks at least 30 days.
- Conduct breeding soundness exams on all bucks paying special attention to reproductive organs.
- Trim bucks' hooves, make sure they have plenty of opportunity to exercise, and increase their plane of nutrition unless they are obese.
- Keep bucks away from does (no sight, smell or sound) for at least 3 weeks prior to the start of breeding season to increase the "buck effect" and concentrate the number of does kidding in a short interval
- Conduct a health and soundness exam of all does and cull if necessary.
- Trim hooves on does. Monitor eye membranes or fecal samples and worm if necessary (you'll want to avoid worming in early pregnancy as sometimes abortions can result).
- Give selenium injections to does and bucks if your area is selenium deficient.
- Vaccinate unvaccinated does for *campylobacteriosis* (vibrio) or *chlamydia* if significant numbers of abortions have occurred before and these diseases have been diagnosed by a lab.
- Flush does with very high quality pasture and/or ½ to 1 lb of concentrate per head daily starting 2 weeks prior to breeding and for at least 3 weeks into the breeding season if you desire to increase litter size.
- Make sure your fences are in good shape if you plan on having separate breeding groups.

## Breeding

- Turn bucks in with does at a ratio of about one yearling buck to 15 does or one mature buck to 30 does.
- Supplement buck with extra feed especially if he is with a large number of does.
- Observe and record breeding activity and check for recycling does.
- If using a marking harness or brisket paint, change colors every 18 to 21 days.
- Use a replacement or clean-up buck after 30 to 42 days if you note several repeat breeding.

## Early Pregnancy (first 3 ½ months of gestation)

- Monitor health and condition of does and minimize stress to herd.
- Note any bloody tails (possible abortion) or does back in heat and rebred or cull.
- Feed a maintenance ration and free choice minerals/salt. Pasture or hay usually adequate without grain supplementation. Avoid letting does get obese. Separate thin does from main herd and feed them extra.
- Keep doelings separate and feed them for pregnancy as well as for growth.
- Administer second vaccine for abortion diseases if necessary following label instructions.
- Trim hooves that get too long before does are too heavily pregnant and awkward.

## Late Pregnancy (last six weeks prior to kidding)

- Increase plane of nutrition for does by gradually increasing concentrate intake as the fetuses are now growing rapidly and does also need to build up their body reserves for nursing. Generally, ½ to 2 lbs depending on forage quality, doe condition, and probable number of fetuses.
- Increase protein intake, especially the last 2 weeks before kidding, to discourage the sharp increase in worm egg laying commonly observed as does go into labor and to insure good colostrum production.
- Monitor eye membranes or fecal samples and deworm the herd or individual animals if necessary. Avoid the de-wormers Valbazen (Albendazole) or Tramisol (Levamisole) during pregnancy. Consider feeding a coccidiostat.
- Put clean bedding in barn, set up jugs if you use them, and organize kidding supplies and equipment.
- Vaccinate does for enterotoxemia (*Clostridium perfringens* C&D) and tetanus about 2 to 4 weeks prior to kidding. Does that have not been vaccinated previously should receive a first dose about 8 to 6 weeks before kidding followed by a second dose with the rest of the herd.
- Encourage does to walk a lot. You can place feeders and waterers apart from each other.
- Observe does frequently. Does that are sluggish or hang back at feeding may have pregnancy toxemia (ketosis) and require early treatment.

## **Kidding**

- Play it safe! Have everything ready for kidding at least 140 days after the buck was first put in with does.
- Check does at least four times daily for signs of kidding. More times may be necessary in extremely cold weather.
- At birth, dip navels in 7% iodine, give kids subcutaneous BoSe injections (1 cc/kid) if in Se deficient areas.
- Observe doe and kids frequently and treat for problems if necessary. Record any problems that should lead to future culling.
- Record weight of kids and litter size within 24 hrs of birth. Identify kids with eartags or “collar tapes”.
- If herd was not treated for internal parasites prior to kidding, remember that the estrogen released at kidding stimulates worms to lay more eggs, and deworm if necessary.
- Trim does’ hooves as necessary.

## **After Kidding**

- Gradually increase plane of nutrition until it is adequate to support does in peak lactation, rarely more than 2 to 3 lbs of concentrate per day depending on quality of forage fed, doe condition, and litter size.
- If space permits, separate mature does with  $\geq$  triplets and yearling does with  $\geq$  twins from the rest of the herd to feed them more nutrition than the rest of the herd. Also, smaller groups better, less competition.
- Consider providing a creep feeder. It is important that creep fed kids be protected against enterotoxemia. Use an enterotoxemia antitoxin on the kids if does were not vaccinated before kidding. Decide whether to include a coccidiostat in the creep feed – often a good idea for all but organic farms.
- Disbud and tattoo kids (if desired) at about 3 days to 2 weeks of age. Castration can also be done at this time. Make sure kids protected against tetanus, use antitoxin if does were not vaccinated prior to kidding.
- Vaccinate kids subQ for enterotoxemia and tetanus at 6 weeks of age followed by a second booster 3 to 4 weeks later. Don’t vaccinate kids to be sold for slaughter as sucklings (meat withdrawal is 21 days).
- Gradually introduce herd to pasture and train kids to electric fences or netting if used.
- Monitor does’ body condition, eye membrane color and fecal samples throughout lactation and adjust diet and management accordingly and/or treat for internal parasites as necessary.

## **Weaning**

- Generally occurs between 10 wks and 4 months of age.
- Separate does from kids, preferably out of sight and sound.
- A few days prior to weaning decrease any grain in the does’ diet and feed a lower quality pasture or hay to reduce milk flow and chance of mastitis. For 7 to 14 days after weaning, feed does no grain and low/average quality forage to encourage them to dry up. Do not remove water and minerals.
- Avoid milking out does if possible but observe closely for signs of mastitis (swollen, hot or very cold udder)
- Prior to or during weaning, consider treating kids with a coccidiostat. Deworm kids at weaning unless fecal samples indicate no need. Discuss with vet what drugs and methods to use for internal parasite control.
- Observe kids closely for poor appetite and/or scours. Avoid increasing concentrate rapidly.

## **Weaning to Breeding (growth period for kids)**

- Cull poor producing does or does with unsoundness or health problems.
- Select doe kids to keep based on their dam’s production records, and their own growth records (after accounting for litter size and dam’s age) and their soundness/health exams.
- Put does on good quality pasture or hay to recover the weight loss from nursing. Monitor body condition and consider providing extra nutrition to lean does.
- Continue feeding kids good quality hay, browse, or pasture. If grazing, try to keep kids on “clean” pastures ahead of does. Consider vaccinating kids again for enterotoxemia. Provide concentrate as needed to meet targeted weight gains. Slaughter males at desired market weight.
- Keep track of hoof length and trim as necessary.
- Monitor worm loads. Adjust management accordingly. Keep drug withholding intervals in mind when deworming or medicating animals.