

# Getting Started in Sheep and Goats

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# What you should know about sheep and goats:

- They like to be together
- They are ruminants and eat forages
- They are prey animals
- They can be fiber or meat animals or both



# Things to think about:

- Good Fences/Predator Protection
- Winter
  - Water?
  - Feed Storage?
  - Housing?

# Things to think about:

- Ram + Ewes = Lambs 5 months later
  - Buck + Does = Kids 5 months later
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- No matter what the weather
  - When do you want to lamb/kid?
  - Plan ahead
  - Plan ahead
  - Plan ahead

# Things to think about:

- Buy sheep/goats from someone who takes care of their animals the way you plan to take care of yours.

# Things to think about:

- How are you going to market your lambs/kids?
  - Traditional markets?
  - Direct to consumer?
  - With other producers?
  - NOT "where do I get rid of these lambs/kids?"
  - You cannot keep them all 😊

# Things to think about:

- What breed should you raise?
  - Depends on your reasons for sheep and goat farming
  - To shear or not to shear?
  - How much milk do you really want?



# Breed?? continued

- Will you market with others?
  - Don't want to stand out in the crowd
- How hard will it be to find a ram or buck?

# Health things to remember:

- Parasites – Take the class!
- Predators – dogs, llamas, donkeys, rifle, traps

# Health things to remember:

- Nutrition – get I right and other things will fall into place
  - Body condition
  - Minerals (loose)
- Fresh Air
  - Lack of it = respiratory problems

# Sources of info:

- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Other Producers – with caution
- Books
  - Ron Parker's Sheep Book
  - Bill Kruesi – Sheep Raiser's Manual
  - Mary Smith's Book on goat health
  - Info Vet Small Ruminant Notebook

# More Sources of info:

- Magazines
  - Shepherd
  - Sheep!
  - Graze
- Listservs
  - Srmarketing-l
  - Livestock processing
  - Production Dorset, etc

# More sources of info:

- [www.sheep.cornell.edu](http://www.sheep.cornell.edu)
- [www.sheepandgoat.com](http://www.sheepandgoat.com)
- <https://sheepgoatmarketing.info>
- <https://attra.ncat.org>
- [www.nnyagdev.org](http://www.nnyagdev.org)

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