Sheep and Goat Handling Ideas
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Livestock Handling Basics

• The best way to handle livestock is to work in harmony with their natural behavior.

• Livestock have excellent peripheral (wide angle) vision.

• They have excellent distant vision, though they may have difficulty judging distances.
Livestock Handling Basics – Cont.

- There is recent evidence to suggest that livestock do perceive colors.
- Livestock prefer to move towards lights and do not like to enter dark buildings.
- Livestock have a keen sense of hearing.
Livestock Handling Basics – Cont.

• Ruminants have a natural herding instinct. They become distressed and agitated if they are separated from the rest of the herd.

• They like to follow the leader. They move in a circle around the pen or handler.

• They are easily distracted by noises or sudden movements.
Livestock Handling Basics - Cont

• Shadows will cause livestock to balk.

• They are creatures of habit and will remember bad experiences for up to a year.
What about Goats!

• How do goats differ from other livestock?

• Goats are more difficult to handle than cattle or sheep when using handling equipment. They do not flow through the system as easily and stress more easily.

• When they are frightened, they may lie down and sulk and pack in a corner, risking injury to other goats.
Goats Continued…

• They can become aggressive towards each other.

• They move in family groups, with the older females moving first.

• They may need higher gates than sheep and will find the escape spots in the handling system, if they exist.
Keep it simple

• Crowd into the corner with panels
• Panels can be fancy or not
  – Tie top and bottom
  – Keep the sheep close together
  – Mark those done with chalk or paint or crayon
Keep it simple – cont.

– A few well placed staples in the wall will go a long way to keeping things stable

– Avoid water tank or other things they can step in.

– Avoid nails or other things sticking out

– Good lighting helps
Commercial Chute
Things to look for

- Fold down sides
- Back-up gates
- Ways to hook together
- Sort gate
- Adjustable width?
- Good Paint
Parts

• Tub
• Swing gate
• Guillotine gates
• Sort gate
• Tilt table
• Scale
• Footbath
Make your own chute

• Raised or floor level?

• How wide?

• How high?

• How long?
Make your own chute – cont.

• Where to put it
  – Make it in sections so you can move it
  – It takes up space
  – Good lighting
  – Room to sort at the end
Make your own – cont.

• Collection area and feeder funnel or tub

• Light is important!!
  – For you to see what you are doing
  – For sheep/goats to go towards
  – Solid versus slats

• Remember you might not want all the sheep at once
We totaled up all of our expenses and categorized them.

Built the handling facility! Three sections and ramps at both.

First version was 17" at the bottom. Put planks in to narrow
made the other two sections 19". Sections 8 ft. long, ramps 6'.

1x12
1x12
14"
15"
Built the handling facility!
First version over 17" of the
made the other two sections

1x12
\
15"
Some other Simple Ideas

Out in the pasture....
  Metal posts and hog panels

Curved hog panel to funnel them in

Using existing alley ways in old barns