

# Goat Information Booklet



Great, you've decided to exhibit a goat at your school's Calf Club. Before approaching a farmer for your kid you may need to check you have a few essential things.

## **Grazing**

Kids need safe, well fenced paddocks with shelter from extreme heat or cold, and clean water in a low trough which your kid can reach easily.

Kids need good quality, fresh, long grass as (when they are very young) they like to nibble at the tips of the grass.

Watch your garden with kids as they will nibble anything!

## **A milk feeder**

Kids – A plastic 1.5 litre lemonade bottle is fine, with a screw on teat which is available at any rural supply store.

## **Time**

Make sure you have time to look after and play with your kid before and after school.

You will need to allow up to 30 minutes morning and afternoon to care for your pet.

This is your responsibility, not Mum and Dad's, so you may need to get up earlier in the morning and allow time in the afternoon. Your kid will be dependent on you for its food and shelter because you will be its foster parent for the next two to three months.

It's a big responsibility but one from which you will enjoy great satisfaction.

### **Where to get your kid**

Your school has a list of local farmers who are prepared to supply animals for Calf Club. You or your parents can contact them and see if they have any available. It is at the farmer's discretion as to how the animal is supplied to you, they may give it to you, sell it, lend it etc. This is for you to negotiate with him directly.

### **Breed**

Make sure that when you pick up your goat you ask the farmer what breed it is, and for what purpose they are grown. The Judge may ask you about this.

### **What to look for**

There is one person to talk to when it comes to selecting your goat – the farmer who bred it. He will select a kid which is healthy, has been fed colostrum in the first 12 hours if possible (this may not be so for an orphan), and is feeding well from a bottle.

Your kid may have a small ear tag because the farmer may want to identify it with its parents.

### **Keep a Dairy**

Remember to record the dates when your goat was born, when it came to you and the milestones which happen during its time with you: when you reduce the number of milk feeds in the day, when you supplement with meal or pellets, when you started to train it etc.

A Calf Club Diary for goat kids will be available from the school.

## **FEEDING YOUR KID**

Most of the kids that become available for Calf Club are orphans. A newly born kid must have colostrum. (When kids are born the first milk the mother produces is called Colostrum; it is full of antibodies which will make your kid healthy and strong).

Usually, the farmer will nurse them through the first few days and then they can be passed over to you. When you first take delivery of

your kid, remember that this is a baby animal which will be feeling lonely and lost without its mother, so make sure you give it lots of attention and love.

You may still need to help it suck from an artificial teat for the first few days.

You will by now have arranged a pen/small paddock where your kid can be kept. For very young kids you may need to provide shelter in the garage or laundry for a while until it's strong enough to be left outside at night time. An old dog kennel makes a great kid house once it is outside in its pen/paddock.

For the first few days as you become friends, it will help to have a small area so wherever you are in the pen you are close to the kid. It can hear your voice and will soon begin to trust you. The best way to become friends is by feeding it.

Right from the start your kid will need feeding at least four times a day. You may need Mum or Dad to help out with this while you are at school.

If you live on a farm you can get cows milk to feed your kid. For many of you, you will need to purchase kid milk formula and mix it with warm water.

It is very important to keep whatever equipment you use to feed your kid completely clean. Kids can get a tummy bug called scours (diarrhoea) from dirty feeding equipment, so clean everything after feeding with hot soapy water and rinse well, so it's ready for the next feed.

Should you need it an anti-scour product is available from your vet.

### **How much to feed**

The farmer will tell you this and you will need to review this as your kid will grow very quickly. As a general rule, after feeding, your kid will look "full", its tummy will be round and the kid will be happy, not calling for milk. To begin with your kid will not drink much at each feed – probably no more than 150ml because its tummy is very small, and you need to be **very careful** not to over-feed it. Get Mum or Dad to check that its slides are flat – not bulging – after its feed.

Replacement milk powders will have mixing instructions at the correct levels so make sure you read them carefully.

Be sure to feed your kid at the same time each day. That way it won't take long for it to know when dinner time is!

### **Special message for Mums and Dads**

The New Zealand Sheep Council has issued a caution about a bloat which can affect kids (and lambs) fed cow's milk or milk replacer - and you may want to consider their advice in the rearing of your child's kid.

[www.ceresfarm.co.nz/sheepcouncil.htm](http://www.ceresfarm.co.nz/sheepcouncil.htm)

Abomasal bloat occurs when bacteria ferments in warm milk in the kid's stomach, causing the stomach to rapidly expand like a balloon causing death. Noticed immediately, this can be 'treated' to save much unhappiness.

The most effective treatment is to puncture the abomasum with a syringe just below the sternum to let the gas out.

If you are concerned about your kid's housing and area, you can obtain from your rural supply store a broad spectrum sterilizing agent.

### **Supplements**

Your kid will grow quickly and begin to nibble grass and drink water. At around two weeks old you will want to introduce pellets or meal to its diet to help it grow extra well. Check the meal is suitable for goats. Always keep it fresh and clean and supply a little more than your kid requires each day.

### **Weaning**

Refer to the instructions on the milk formula packet for reduction of feeds. Eventually your four feeds will be reduced to three, two and one a day.

Kids generally remain on once-a-day milk feeds until after Group Day after which they are normally weaned (around 12 weeks of age). At first, your kid will miss its feeds and will call for you, but you can soon make it happy – and forget the feed – if you spend time with it. You need to continue ad lib feeding of meal.

## **LOOKING AFTER YOUR KID**

Keep a constant eye on your kid and if anything changes get your parents to check it out.

Make sure its bedding is always clean. (You may have sawdust or hay on the floor of the pen or house) Take out any soiling regularly so your kid has a clean dry place to rest.

### **Veterinary Care**

#### 1. Inoculations (disease prevention)

Right from the first day you have your kid talk to the farmer about what inoculations it needs to remain healthy. He may provide the inoculations for you.

#### 2. Parasites – Internal & External

Internal parasites are “worms” and your kid may need to be drenched for these.

The farmer will help you with this.

External. Get Mum or Dad to check for lice every now and then.

## **PREPARING YOUR KID FOR CALF CLUB**

### **Fitting a collar**

Collars and leads can be purchased from your local rural supplies store. The collar can stay on the kid. When fitted correctly, you should be able to fit two fingers between any part of the collar and your kid’s skin. It should not pull off if the kid pulls back.

As your kid grows check the collar regularly and loosen it off as you need to.

### **Training**

Always talk to your kid and be their friend so they will respond to you.

If you find this difficult tell them about your day or what you would like to do in the holidays etc. The friendlier they are the better they will perform for you at Calf Club.

### **How often, and how long, to train your kid**

Start with a few minutes training each day and lengthen the time. After each session, praise and pat your kid.

## Leading

When the kid is used to the collar, you can begin to teach it to lead.

Be patient and have fun. You must never use a chain for leading.

Basically, you are going to train your kid to do three things on the lead – to walk forward alongside you, to turn when required and to stop.

If you've been talking to your kid, and it knows your voice, all you have to do to teach it to lead, is to attach a lead to its collar – at least once every day – and walk forward, with the kid on your right, talking to it. Walk a few steps and then stop, give it some milk and make a fuss of it. Your kid soon learns that walking forward, on your right side, means food!

Position when leading.

You want your kid to walk to your right, and for its head/shoulder to be alongside you. Your right hand holds the lead close to the halter/collar (around 15 – 25 cm from the side of their head), with the rest of the lead on your left hand so it's not trailing on the ground.

## Calling

Once your kid knows your voice, ask Mum or Dad to come out with you, before feeding, and hold your kid. Then go down the lawn or paddock, turn and call your kid. It will run to you. Immediately feed it, and make a fuss of it.

The bottle is the biggest help in training your kid at the start but, as calf club approaches, you want to reduce the number of times you reward it with the bottle, instead patting and cuddling it. (The reason you do this is that you are not allowed to show your kid using a bottle).



## Turning

If you have steps described your kid will move happily forward with you.

followed the above, your

Now you have to learn to turn them. Give them a gentle tug and call them when you want to turn.

### **Stopping**

You also need to learn how to stop your kid. This is done by a gentle pull on the lead. Let it know you're going to stop, by giving gentle tugs on the lead, and saying 'stop'.

Remain still for a minute or more then move forward again when you are ready.

### **Varying your leading routine**

Remember to vary the routine when you walk your kid. This way it will be alert to what you want them to do. As they get more used to going for walks with you, vary the route you take by walking passed different" things which might distract them. By the time Calf Club comes along, they will be almost "bomb proof" – used to all sorts of sights and sounds. Be sure to walk your kid in various patterns too – circles, loops, zigzags, jumping up on boxes and walking along beams. Kids love to be on top of things.

Training time should be fun, for you and your pet, so train every day for short spells so neither of you gets bored or tired. Don't forget to hug and praise it when it does well.

### **Leading in preparation for Calf Club**

At Calf Club you will have to lead your kid in a large square, around pegs in the corners and doing a complete circle around one peg.

You also have to stop it and make it stand still for a few seconds.

You may also have the opportunity to do an obstacle course with your kid.

The judge will explain what he expects you to do on the day, but practise these movements daily.

### **Teaching your kid to stay tied up.**

In the early days of tying up, don't walk away from them as they will just try to follow you. Instead spend this time talking to them.

## **GROOMING**

Kids don't require much grooming. Don't brush them at all and pick debris out of their fibre regularly.

### **Washing**

Washing of kids is not allowed.

### **Cleaning**

- Keep the bottom area clean with warm water and a cloth by gently rinsing.
- Gently pick debris out of the fibre when you notice it.
- Warm water and cloth can also be used to clean inside their ears and around their face and hooves if it is needed.

### **Brushing**

Do not brush your goat as it will look unnatural. It will pull the fibre out, especially if it is cashmere.

## **ON THE DAY**

Your kid will need to be transported to the Calf Club – this can be on the back of a ute, a trailer behind the car or even a truck.

**Have all the gear** you will need ready to go.

- A bucket with any washing equipment so you can spot clean anything when you get there.
- A cloth.
- A clean collar and lead.
- A water bucket so you can give them a drink at the grounds - remember to take a water container just in case there isn't a tap at the grounds.
- Some meal/pellets and a feeding container, so you can reward them after a good effort.

**Remember that you are on display** as well as your kid, so be sure that you are neat and tidy and enjoying yourself. The Judges will be looking for signs that you are comfortable with, and care for your kid.

### **Leading**

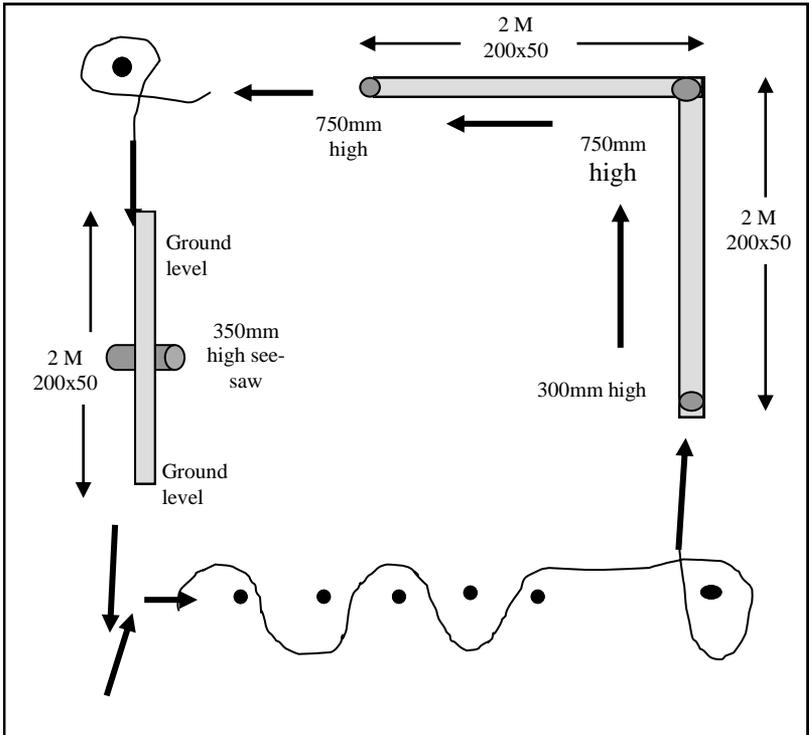
The Judge will be watching your kid to see how obedient it is so you will want your kid leading well and obeying your instructions to turn and stop.

### Call and Follow

The Judge will be looking at how quickly your kid responds to your call, and how easily you can reattach their lead.

### Obstacle course.

The Judge will be looking at how well your kid follows your instructions on the course.



### Rearing

The Judge will be looking to see how well it has been reared (fed, groomed and cared for).

You must present your kid in spotless condition with

- Clean fleece
- Clean feet – remember to wipe any earth away from its hooves.
- Clean under-side and bottom.

- Clean its ears inside and out.
- Clean around its nose and eyes.

Your kid has to be well behaved and stand still to allow the Judge to run his/her hands over its body.

The Judge may ask you some questions about your kid – its name, when it was born, what breed it is, what you have been feeding it, what fibre it is growing and the reason it is farmed.

**You're on your way.** If you've followed all the tips in this resource booklet you and your kid are ready for a wonderful day!  
Good luck!

## AFTER CALF CLUB

The day is over, and you're home with your kid. Remember to take care to put it back in its paddock for a good sleep, and put all your gear away.

Depending on how well your kid did at Calf Club, you might be talking to Mum and Dad about whether it should be entered in Group Day. If it is going to be in more events, you will need to keep feeding it meal and milk twice a day, and continue with its training.

**Aroha Greer, Grand Champ,**



**Group Day 2010**

## FINALLY

It's been a long season but you will have a great friend in your kid at the end of it.

You can be very proud that you took on a big task, and completed it.

You've fed and trained your kid over a long period of time; you've learned a lot about yourself and self-discipline (making yourself go out and feed it when you would rather not), and you've gained a lot of

satisfaction from forming a friendship with an animal which relied on you.

Don't forget to say thanks to Mum & Dad for their support and help, and the farmer who made it possible.

And remember, if the kid goes back to being a member of a mob of goats, it will still remember you. Many farmers can point out the Calf Club kids in their mobs because they are often the quietest and friendliest.

And that's a nice thought, knowing you have trained such an animal.



**Congratulations.**

You've done it.