

Monday August 25 2008

Hi everyone Marshall Ball here reporting for the sheep showers. We had our meeting August 6th 7:00 at Laura Dorrell's home. Since it was finally a nice night we were able to sit outside by a campfire which was nice.

Laura talked to us about feeding our lambs Colostrum. That is the first milk from the ewe, it is thick and yellow in colour. If you are bottle feeding then frozen Colostrum can be used, milk from the ewe or cows milk. For the first month a new born lamb can only digest milk. Then you will see the lamb nibbling on hay or grass. Some lambs can be weaned at 3-6 weeks of age, but most are weaned at 7-9 weeks. When creep feeding our lambs we should make sure that the lambs are able to eat the feed and the adult sheep can not. The adults like the creep feed but do not need it, the young lambs need the protein more.

Advantages of early weaning are: lambs are ready for market sooner.

Ewe's can be rebred.

If you have orphan lambs it is easier to care for them.

Disadvantages: Are that lambs weaned earlier may not eat enough solid food and will grow poorly.

You need to put more feed into your lamb so it can be more costly.

We then looked at a chart that showed what to look for in our lambs to tell what shape they are in....

A Skinny lamb is when you can feel a sharp spine, they have shallow back muscles and there is no fat.

A Lean lamb is when you feel a sharp spine they have full back muscles and no fat.

A lamb in Good Condition is when you can feel the spine they have a full back muscle and they have some fat cover.

A lamb that is Over Conditioned is when the spine is barely fat they have very full muscles and they have a thick fat cover.

A lamb that is just Fat is when you can not feel the spine they have very thick fat cover and they have fat deposits over the tail and rump.

These are some of the things the judge is looking for when we are showing our lambs. They don't just judge the appearance of our sheep, they look at how we handle the lambs and how we look when showing.

We talked about the different markets for selling our lambs.

The holidays and Ethnic markets.. There is the Western or Roman Easter

Eastern or Greek Orthodox Easter.....Passover.....Christmas....

Id al Adha.....Qurbani.....Ramadan....Id al Fitr.

All the different markets want the same weights 65-79 pounds.

Lambs ready for market should look clean and healthy, be up to a good weight some may have to be castrated but some markets {The buyers} prefer the lambs to be intact with no brusing.

We also talked about lamb meat, that it is very good tasting you can cook your meat many different ways and there are different spices that go good with lamb. Meat from older sheep is called mutten, it is stronger tasting but good.

We are all learning that there is lots to know about raising sheep, and we have a good leader in Laura Dorrell helping us to learn.

Our next meeting is August 20th at Charlton Fair grounds, Where we will be having a special guest Mr. Vern Burnett. He will be showing us how to properly block and trim our lambs. So we were told to wash our lambs and be ready for a hands on meeting where we handle our lambs. We will be trimming and brushing them. This should be lots of fun.

And on August 27th we will be going to Belle Valle Wools.

Then August 30th is the Charlton fair when we will be showing our sheep. So if you can come on out

and join us at the fair and watch the sheep show and everything else. It will be lots of fun like it was last year.

Hi everyone Marshall Ball here reporting on our 4-H club news.

We had our meeting July 20th ,6:00 at Charlton Fair grounds.Mr Vern Burnett was our special guess. 5 of us brought our sheep to the meeting so Vern could show us how to trim our sheep ready for the sheep shows.

Vern has judged sheep and he knows what he likes to look for when judging. He told us he will tell us what he likes but not all judges look at the same things has he does, it will depend on the judge. Vern picked out one lamb to work on, he said you first look at the hoofs and trim them if needed. Then he likes to trim the wool off their bellie, it cleans them up and then we do not need to worry about washing under their bellies and in my opinion it is hard to trim our lambs under their bellies with the hand clippers, it is a lot easier the way Vern did it.

After you trim the hoofs and the bellie then we would wash our lambs. After the wool is dry then you card the lamb. A card is a wooden tool that has small wire things sticking out on it something like a hair brush. We do not brush our lambs we touch our lambs pushing in the wire tips not hard then pull back. We keep doing this untill the lamb is completely carded.

Then we start at the rump going toward the neck using our hand clippers and start trimming taking just small amount of wool off. We trim our lambs all over when we are done then we use a wooden paddle something like a ping pong paddle, and we pat down the wool then we can card and trim again untill we like the look of our lamb.

Vern the ask all of us to walk our lambs around the ring just like we would at fair time. He told us that eye contact is very important and that we should always be on the side of our lambs facing the judge, the judge wants to see your lamb not our bodies. We just do not stand holding our lambs we have to move around our lambs in what ever direction the judge walks around.

We thanked Vern for all his help.

Our next meeting is August 27th at Belle Vallee Wools.

And do not forget everyone the Charlton Fall Fair August 30th and 31st, come on out and enjoy a great time.

Our Goat club {Just kidding around} We had our meeting August 21st at Kim Overholts home. We had an afternoon meeting from 2:30 untill 4:30.

We talked about how to keep our goats healthy. They need clean water,good feed,to have their stalls cleaned out, good dry bedding and for them to have needles to help prevent them from getting diseases. There are 3 kinds of diseases Infectious...Nutritional {Metabolic} and Parasitic.

Infectious:: is usually contagious.....caused by bacteria,virus or fungus.....examples ringworm and pinkeye

Nutritional....not contagious....caused by either too much or too little of a netrient in goats' diets....examples...Ketosis,milk fever, white muscle disease.

Parasitic....somewhat contagious....caused by small species of animals {parasite} that live on or in other organisms...example: coccidiosis.

To help prevent some of these diseases you have to keep your goats barn clean, make sure they have good ventilation,you can use a barn spray,or fly trapps to get rid of the flies. make sure they do not eat moldy hay or grain.

You just have to keep an eye on your goats and if they get any kind of disease then treat it right away so

it does not spread thought the flock, and to prevent that you should keep the ill goat away from the rest till it is better.

Kim told us that we would talk about housing when we have a farm tour then we can see housing , stall sizes, and how many goats you can have in a stall.

My sister and I will be going to Kims Tuesday August 26th to pick out our goats and to handle them. Then we will be handling our goats this Saturday August 30th at the Charlton Fall Fair. Thankyou for reading my 4-H news