

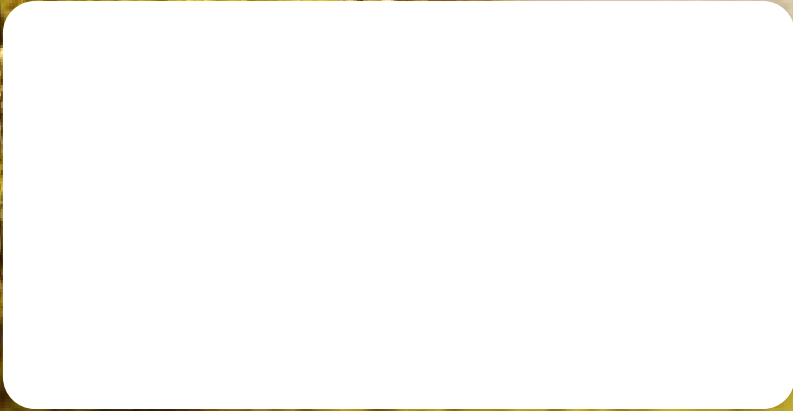
SINCE



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SMALL RUMINANT EDITOR  
May 2021



1929



SINCE

# THREE GOAT MINERAL “MUST-HAVES”

How do you decide what goat mineral to feed? Is it the same mineral you’ve always fed, a mineral your neighbor feeds or are you skipping mineral altogether? Mineral plays a critical role in goat performance, so it’s important to select the right mineral for your herd.

While mineral may be a small portion of a goat diet, it aids in many vital functions and impacts everything from reproduction to feed efficiency and overall herd health. Provide a quality goat mineral that supports performance.

## HERE ARE THREE THINGS TO LOOK FOR IN YOUR GOAT MINERAL SUPPLEMENT:

### 1. PROVIDES CONSISTENT INTAKE

The most important aspect of a mineral is to provide vital nutrients your goats might be lacking. But how can you be sure your goats are getting the intended nutrients if they don’t consistently eat the mineral?

Choosing a palatable mineral assures that your goats are eating and receiving proper amounts of essential minerals like copper and calcium. Also, look for a goat mineral supplement that’s formulated for low intake.

Palatability and low intake might sound like a contradiction, but the idea is for goats to get the nutrition they need while avoiding overconsumption. When goats consume mineral at target intake levels, no minerals get wasted and each goat gets the nutrition it needs.

### 2. SUPPORTS GOAT REPRODUCTION

Many forages lack the essential minerals needed for sound reproductive health. And, if goats don’t receive supplemental nutrition to fill the gap, you may see an impact on reproductive performance.

This could cause your cost per kid to rise steadily, which no producer wants to see.

Goats also have significantly increased energy needs during late gestation. Mineral deficiencies during this time can impact both the doe and the kid. Supplementing with a mineral high in calcium can help prepare goats for increased nutrient and energy needs to support overall health.

Providing a quality goat mineral can help, but so can another key ingredient: fat.

Fat provides energy and helps optimize body condition to support goat reproduction. Consider using high-fat protein supplements in conjunction with your goat mineral.

### 3. FORMULATED FOR YEAR-ROUND FEEDING

Many producers only offer a goat mineral during the fall when forage quality decreases. But your goat may lack minerals throughout the year and you might not know it. Mineral deficiencies are often overlooked because the symptoms can be slow to show or difficult to connect back to a goat nutrition issue.

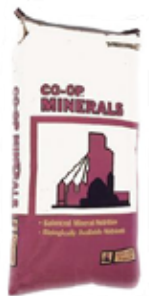
Supplying a mineral when forage quality decreases is common practice, but the best way to support goat reproduction and performance is to provide a mineral year-round. Long-term mineral deficiencies can directly impact your bottom line since your herd won’t perform its best.

Look for a weatherized goat mineral supplement that can stand up to the changing seasons year-round. Minerals formulated with larger particle sizes can help prevent waste due to wind, water or anything else Mother Nature throws at it.

Clay Elliott, Ph.D.  
Companion Animal Nutritionist, Technical Solutions

**Augusta Co-op Solutions**  
**CO-OP, Supreme Goat Mineral,  
Forage Master, 25 lb.**

Free choice mineral for meat goats grazing adequate pasture. Consumption should be between 0.25 and 0.31 ounces per head per day.



SKU - 96216

# THE WHY AND HOW TO DRY UP A DAIRY GOAT

*Dry off of dairy goats before the next lactation is beneficial for does' health and helps improve goat milk production in future lactations. Start by choosing a dry off date based on your herd goals. Adjust dairy goat feed for 2-3 weeks before dry off and continue milking until your selected date.*

**UNDERSTANDING THE WHY AND HOW TO DRY UP A DAIRY GOAT IS A KEY PART OF MANAGEMENT THAT CAN IMPACT HEALTH AND FUTURE GOAT MILK PRODUCTION. FIND OUT HOW TO PROPERLY DRY OFF YOUR DAIRY GOATS WITH THESE THREE TIPS:**

## 1. WHY SHOULD YOU DRY OFF DAIRY GOATS?

Dairy goat producers dry off does for various reasons. Some considerations include drying off does when they drop below a set level of milk production or allowing drug residues for treatments to be eliminated from the body and not enter consumed milk.

Drying off does allows the udder to rest and prepare for the next lactation. During the dry period, dairy goats can regain weight and body condition lost during lactation and help control udder health.

Additionally, research has shown that a dry off period can help improve future dairy goat milk production. One study, using Murciano-Granadina dairy goats showed does that didn't have a dry period before their next kidding had smaller kids, colostrum with fewer immunoglobulins and lower future milk production than does with a 27- or 56-day dry period. The negative impact of a lack of a dry period on dairy goat milk production was due to impaired cell replacement in the udder during dry off.

## 2. WHEN SHOULD YOU DRY OFF DAIRY GOATS?

In most meat goat operations where the kids remain with the doe, does will continue lactating until weaning. As kids start consuming solid feed and acquiring nutrients elsewhere, nursing slows, leading to milk production naturally decreasing and eventually stopping. However, in dairy goats, the dry off period is more deliberate and should be managed to minimize stress on the animal.

Most dairy goat producers have a planned length of lactation (the standard is 305 days). Timing for dry off is based on goat milk production goals and breeding practices. The dry off process should start 2-3 weeks before the planned dry off time with milk secretion stopping three days after the last milking.

One common dry off practice that's not ideal is reducing the frequency of milking from twice a day to once a day and then to every other day. A gradual reduction in milking continues to stimulate the udder to make milk and keeps it open to bacterial infection.

## 3. WHAT CHANGES TO GOAT FEED SHOULD BE MADE?

Starting 2-3 weeks before the dry off day, slowly reduce the amount of energy in the diet by removing grain-based goat feed and alfalfa and switch to grass hay or other high-fiber goat feeds. Don't restrict the amount of feed offered to allow does to feel full while reducing the overall energy and nutrient content.

Continue milking does during this period and offer free-choice, readily available water. Also consider speaking with your herd veterinarian during this time about a recommended dry period mastitis treatment.


After two weeks of reduced dietary energy, assess each goat's udder to see how much milk is being produced, and to evaluate udder health. Abruptly dry off if milk production is minimal and the udder is healthy. Abrupt dry off means does are milked one final time and then not again until the next lactation.

*Michael Schlegel, Ph.D., PAS, Dipl. ACAS-Nutrition  
Sr. Nutritionist, Wildlife & Small Ruminant Technical Solutions*

**Augusta Co-op Solutions**

**Augusta, 16% Goat  
Grower/Developer Pellet, Med.  
50 LB Bag**

A general-purpose pelleted feed for growing kids, nannies, and bucks. Also contains Rumensin for the prevention of coccidiosis.



**SKU - GOATGROW**

# BETTER BREEDING SEASON STARTS WITH SHEEP BODY CONDITION SCORE

*It's easy to overlook sheep body condition score (BCS) during the summer months. Your ewes have what they need to be self-sufficient until it's time to turn the bucks out again: fresh air, plenty of pasture, water and likely access to a free-choice sheep mineral supplement.*

But sheep breeding season arrives sooner than you think. Make sure to give ewes more than a passing glance during the summer months to make sure they are in good condition for successful pregnancies.

## EVALUATE SHEEP BODY CONDITION SCORES

Use a BCS chart to assess your flock's condition. Depending on flock size, it may not be practical to check the condition of all ewes. In that case, score approximately 10-20% of ewes to get an estimate of the flock's condition.

At 45 to 60 days before the beginning of the sheep breeding season, ewe BCS should be 2.5 to 3.0 for optimal breeding and conception results. Maintaining body condition scores, or improving those for thin ewes, during the first 90 days of pregnancy helps promote embryo survival.

Too-thin ewes (1.5 BCS or below) may not only be weaker and more susceptible to disease, but they also typically take longer to conceive during breeding season. That's because under-conditioned ewes may skip heat cycles until they get back to ideal weight.

Over-conditioned ewes (4.5 BCS or above) are also not reproductively or financially efficient. These females tend to take longer to breed, leading to delayed lambing and reduced lamb gain.

## HIT THE BODY CONDITION SCORE TARGET

To hit a target BCS of 2.5 to 3.0, consider adding a supplemental fat and protein source. Supplemental fat can help maintain condition and is especially important if ewes trend toward the thin side. Fat has 2.5 times more energy than a carbohydrate like corn, making it the most efficient way to add energy into a diet.

Ideally, supplements should be offered year-round to maintain BCS through every season. It's especially important to provide supplemental fat when forage nutrient values are declining through late summer, fall and winter.

## LAMBS WIN TOO

Supplementation is critical as ewes enter the third trimester, when 75% of fetal growth occurs. If the ewe can't get enough energy into her system during this timeframe, she can lose condition since the fetus is taking many of the nutrients.

As an ewe gets later into gestation, her rumen competes for space with the growing lambs. An energy-dense supplement provides the nutrition the ewe needs in a smaller package, allowing her plenty of space for both the rumen and lambs.

Once lambs are born, maternal nutrition remains important. A higher level of dietary fat can influence milk fat content. In turn, higher milk fat helps lambs get a better start with extra energy for rapid and efficient lamb growth.

Start today by zeroing in on ewe BCS to ensure your flock is ready for the breeding season.

*Clay Elliott, Ph.D.  
Companion Animal Nutritionist, Technical Solutions*

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## WEANING LAMBS: ONE STEP AT A TIME

*While there may not be a ceremony with caps and gowns, weaning lambs is essentially a graduation. Lambs are growing up and transitioning to the next stage of their lives. This may be an exciting time, but it can also be stressful for both you and your lambs. It's essential to have a weaning plan in place to make the transition as smooth as possible and avoid putting additional stress on your lambs.*

## HERE ARE SIX STEPS FOR A LOW-STRESS WEANING TRANSITION

### 1. MAKE SURE LAMBS ARE READY

The biggest indicator that lambs are ready for weaning is dry feed consumption. At weaning, lambs should consume at least 0.75 pounds of starter per day and have consumed a total of at least 25 pounds of lamb milk replacer powder or milk from the ewe. Lambs typically reach this benchmark around 35 pounds of body weight.

When lambs are ready for weaning, you should be too. Make sure to have a weaning plan in place 2-3 weeks before starting the weaning process. Know when and how the weaning process will take place and prepare for any challenges that may arise during the transition period.

*continued on page 4*



## 2. OFFER CREEP FEEDS FOR LAMBS

To prepare for weaning lambs, offer free-choice creep feed (starter grain) starting at one week of age and plenty of fresh, clean, free-choice water. A high-quality lamb starter grain of at least 18% protein is ideal for rumen development. Start by feeding small amounts at a time to keep lamb starter fresh and to reduce waste. As lambs begin eating starter feed, provide more at each feeding.

At the start of weaning, lambs should consume at least 2% of their body weight daily in high-quality creep feed. Lambs should also have access to free-choice, clean, room temperature water to help them become accustomed to drinking water and prevent dehydration during weaning. Providing a multi-species electrolyte can also help support lambs during times of stress and support proper hydration.

## 3. DECREASE AMOUNT OF LAMB MILK REPLACER OR MILK OFFERED

Abrupt removal of milk replacer for lambs or access to milk from the ewe can be stressful on lambs and can cause digestive issues. For a smooth weaning transition, gradually reduce the amount of milk replacer or milk fed over 4-7 days. Step down the total volume of milk replacer for lambs offered by reducing the number of feedings or dilute milk replacer with additional water to lower the level of milk solids.

If you are weaning lambs off the ewe, it can be challenging to limit the amount of milk consumed. Reduce access to the ewe and ensure lambs are consuming the proper amount of starter and water before completing the weaning process.

## 4. PROVIDE CONSISTENT LAMB GROUPS

Lambs group-housed during the pre-weaning phase form hierarchies and close bonds. It's important to keep consistency in lamb groups during weaning by avoiding transitioning lambs to larger groups. Introducing new animals into the group dynamic can put added stress on young lambs. Avoid any major group changes two weeks before and two weeks following weaning.

When grouping lambs, consider smaller groups with lambs of similar size and age. The more consistent the animals are within a group, the better. Larger, dominant animals can limit lamb feed and water access to other lambs when competing for bunk space. If there are dominant lambs in several of your groups, consider placing them together.

Lamb group size can also play a role in reducing disease challenges. Small group sizes with adequate space of 15-20 square feet per lamb may help reduce respiratory problems in young lambs.

## 5. KEEP ENVIRONMENTS CLEAN

Providing a clean and sanitary environment is important during any stage of lamb development and is especially critical during weaning. A clean, dry environment with good ventilation and drainage can help reduce the potential for disease challenges during the weaning process. This can not only help keep animals dry but can also help save on bedding costs.

Pay close attention to areas surrounding waterers and feed bunks. Proper drainage in these spaces is essential as they are high traffic areas. It's also important to keep these areas as clean as possible to minimize the possibility of disease transfer from animals eating and drinking from the same feeders.

## 6. PERFORM PRE-WEANING PROCEDURES

Change can be stressful for young lambs. For that reason, work to make one change at a time. Health practices, like deworming, castration, vaccination and tagging, should occur pre-weaning when young lambs are consuming more nutrients from milk replacer or milk from the ewe.

For each of these practices, it's important to steer clear of other stressors occurring at the same time. Avoid moving pens, altering lamb feed, performing multiple procedures simultaneously, and any other major changes during weaning.

Help lambs graduate from milk replacer and transition to the next stage of life with these six steps. Preparation and a low-stress weaning plan can help lambs seamlessly transition through weaning and become successful members of the flock.

### Augusta Co-op Solutions Royal, Wood Shavings, Compressed Bale, Black Bale

For bedding stalls and other areas where livestock may be housed. Helps to absorb the wastes that animals excrete and reduce odor. Makes cleanup of stall messes easier. Also provides a fluffy surface for more comfort. These soft wood shavings are low in fine fibers and dust.



SKU - 20350

# DOES YOUR RAM FERTILITY ADD UP?

## KEEP YOUR RAMS IN SHAPE TO BREED

Reproduction is a 1 + 1 equation, and, in sheep breeding, results often equal two or more lambs. In most cases, the attention focuses on the ewe side of the equation. Ewes do all of the work following insemination to maintain the pregnancy and ensure multiple lambs are born.

However, you can't ignore the other side of the equation – the ram. Proper ram management and nutrition before and during the breeding season will guarantee rams are ready to perform.

Here are some tips to ensure ram fertility adds up to a successful breeding season:

## NUTRITION'S ROLE IN RAM FERTILITY

Rams must be in good body condition before breeding season turnout. Breeding is an intensive task with rams covering anywhere from 25 to 100 ewes, depending on the situation. A body condition score of 2.5 to 3 on a scale of 5 points ensures rams have enough condition to maintain energy levels during the breeding season.

If a ram is too thin at the start of the breeding season, he will wear down, become weak and breed fewer ewes. The same goes for obese rams that tend to have reduced libido and won't follow ewes for breeding.

Keeping rams in proper body condition starts at least four months before the breeding season. Maintain rams' nutrition during this period using a balanced supplement. Augusta Co-op's Textured Sheep & Lamb Feed is a good option since it provides rams additional energy to add condition while being highly palatable to optimize feed intake.

Also, it is important to feed rams supplements low in protein because it reduces pizzle rot. When rams ingest protein in excess of 16%, it causes a build-up of urea that leads to an infection in the sheath, known as pizzle rot, that can damage the penis.

## TESTING RAM FERTILITY

An important first step to guarantee your rams will get ewes bred is to have a veterinarian perform a breeding soundness exam on each ram.

The following tests will be performed during a breeding soundness exam:

- **Physical exam:** Evaluate the ram's structure, such as body condition score, hooves, legs, teeth and eyes.
- **Scrotal measurement:** A scrotal circumference is taken with a measuring tape. At a year-old, rams should have a minimum measurement of 28 cm.
- **Semen morphology:** An evaluation looking at whether the sperm cells are normal or abnormal. A passing exam requires a minimum of 70% normal sperm. If white blood cells are present in the semen sample, it's a sign of infection and may require the ram to be treated and held from breeding.
- **Semen motility:** A test analyzing how well the semen moves. Ideally, a ram should score 70% or better for motility, with a minimum score of 30% for a ram to pass.

Conduct a breeding soundness exam every breeding season between two weeks to one month before turning rams out on ewes. The test lets you know where your rams are at reproductively. If a ram doesn't pass the breeding soundness exam, you can make arrangements to purchase another ram or adjust breeding plans. Consult your veterinarian when it's time to schedule a breeding soundness exam and make it part of your routine management.

## FIVE MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Maximizing ram fertility takes thoughtful management, considering the needs of both rams and ewes. Follow these five guidelines to improve the breeding performance of your flock:

1. **Turnout age:** Most rams reach puberty by seven months old and are ready to breed.
2. **Retirement age:** Generally, after six years old, a ram will begin to see limited performance. Body structure, arthritis and hoof health are common ailments in mature rams. Consider culling older rams from the flock to maintain fertility.
3. **Number of ewes:** A young ram less than a year-old can cover 25 ewes in a pasture and 50 ewes in a pen. Mature rams can cover 50 ewes on pasture and up to 100 ewes in a pen.
4. **Commingling rams:** In large pastures or range situations, running multiple rams is necessary for proper coverage. For pen breeding, one ram per pen of ewes is the best option to limit fighting and potential injuries. When rams aren't with ewes for breeding, consider penning or pasturing them together so they can establish a pecking order before the breeding season.
5. **Length of breeding season:** Each breeding cycle lasts approximately 21 days. Leaving rams out for a minimum of 63 days allows them to cover ewes for at least three breeding cycles.

Ram fertility is just as important as ewe fertility when it comes to breeding season. Make sure both sides of the equation add up to more lambs on the ground by focusing on ram nutrition and management.



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Augusta Show Feeds have a strong tradition of building champions. From market steers and barrows, to goats and lambs, our award winning formulations add just the right amount of bloom and finish to your show animal.

Augusta Show Feed is produced from only the highest quality ingredients. Additionally, quality control remains at the forefront of our manufacturing excellence. Bringing together science and proven success is the foundation of our show feeds.

## RESULTS

Science is everything. Our team of experienced nutritionists and industry experts closely evaluate each formulation providing you with nutritional perfection in each bag of Augusta Show Feed. Our brand delivers consistent, superior performance that will lead you directly into the winner's circle.

|                   | PROTEIN % | FAT % | FIBER % |
|-------------------|-----------|-------|---------|
| <b>BEEF FEED</b>  |           |       |         |
| SHOWPRO           | 13.0      | 4.5   | 9.0     |
| SHOWPROH          | 14.0      | 3.5   | 14.0    |
| <b>SHEEP FEED</b> |           |       |         |
| SHOWLAMB          | 18.0      | 3.5   | 12.0    |
| SHOWLAMBPLUS      | 16.0      | 2.5   | 12.0    |
| <b>GOAT FEED</b>  |           |       |         |
| SHOWGOAT          | 16.5      | 4.0   | 10.0    |
| SHOWGOATPLAIN     | 16.5      | 4.0   | 10.0    |
| <b>HOG FEED</b>   |           |       |         |
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# AUGUSTA CO-OP SPRAYING SERVICES

*Focusing on small agricultural pasture applications.*

At Augusta Cooperative Farm Bureau, Inc., we know the importance that spraying services can play in maintaining the health and beauty of your property; and because of that, we offer our clients a full range of options in spraying applications.

Many property owners are unaware of just how critical it is to properly protect their pastures and property from weeds until it's too late; but by being proactive with treatments applied on a regular schedule, those hazards can often be prevented and eliminated. With our team's knowledge and specialized equipment, Augusta Co-op will achieve optimal results.



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Applications to remove all vegetation.

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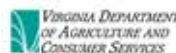
Test and monitor pH levels, soil moisture and soil quality.

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Spraying services is based on climate & environmental conditions.

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