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*Please note that views or opinions
expressed by members are not necessarily
the views or opinions of the MDGA
board or program chairs.
Implementing any animal husbandry
advice found in Mini-Goat Notes is done
so at your own risk.*

Miniature Dairy Goat Association Mini-Goat Notes



Letter from the President

Happy New Year!

Do you make resolutions for the new year? I'll admit that I don't make resolutions, goals, or lists when the new year begins. Instead, I aim to do the same thing I do every day: to try to do everything the best I can. The one thing I try to do every day is be encouraging and give support in any way I can to my community. I want to encourage you to send a positive message with a simple thank you or give credit when credit is due. We all face unpredictable challenges, and we can all benefit from a positive encouragement. As we begin a new year, I want to encourage the MDGA community to be the one that spreads the positivity.

Wishing you and your family a happy and prosperous year!!

Thank you for your continued support of **THE** Miniature Dairy Goat Association!

~Dee Daniels~
MDGA-President-2023

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**Tattoo Letter
for 2023
R**

Reminders

Time to renew your MDGA membership!

Membership runs January 1 - December 31 each year. You can renew or become a member online at <https://miniaturedairygoats.net/membership/> or through the mail.

For those participating in milk testing, an MDGA application along with the appropriate fees must be submitted prior to beginning testing. Renewals are due by January 30 of the year you plan to test. New herds can sign up any time of the year.

Remember that scales must be calibrated each year and copies of those certificates sent in to MDGA. More information here <https://miniaturedairygoats.net/milk-testing/>



Milk Program

MDGA is very pleased to bring you an exciting update! Your Milk Committee has been working hard behind the scenes to make the DHIR program the best that it can be as it is growing by leaps and bounds each year. It is encouraging and exciting to see more members utilizing this program as we're breeding DAIRY animals! The committee recognizes the importance in selecting quality foundational animals (standard breeds and Nigerian Dwarfs) that have been proven and tested in milk over several generations and the effect it has in creating our mini breeds.

Moving forward, MDGA is pleased to announce that the inheritance of foundational animal milk stars will now be accepted.

If you bring in a doe and/or buck from the foundational breeds with an unbroken line of stars, their mini progeny will now inherit those stars that these animals bring with them. Current MDGA star and star inheritance rules will apply.

Additionally, this is retroactive; if you would like your stars adjusted, please contact the Milk Committee with the proper paperwork showing the stars of your foundation animals. We hope this encourages our members to seek amazing DAIRY animals in creating our mini breeds as well as encourage more members to start milk testing!

Be sure to check out the MDGA website for the most up-to-date show listings and announcements!

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2022 Milk Stars

The MDGA Milk Committee will be now recognizing NEW star earners in each edition of the MDGA newsletter! To start off 2023, the following are those that have completed their 1-Day or 305 test for the 2022 lactation year to date and have earned their star. As 2022 lactations are completed, we will continue to showcase those earning their star each quarterly newsletter!

Mini Nubians

Suzy Sarna, DVM	Acadia P Sparrow *P
Suzy Sarna, DVM	Naissance MS Moonlit Serenity *P
Annette Derer	Scoop n Poop Farm JJ Adalind Schade *P
Michelle Taub	Whispering Willows Buttercup Blue *P
Beverly Holley	Inavale Athena *P
James & Beverly Holley	Ivyridge Total Eclipse of the Heart *P
Michelle Taub	Cedar Creek Annie Oakley *P
Breanna Gill	Carolina Dreams B Woodsprite *P
Beverly Holley	Cedar Creek SOO Chantily Lace *P
Susan Engwall	Alder Stacey *P
Megan Archer	Sonflower Ranch's Andromeda *P
Megan Archer	Soaring Heart's Keshi Pearl 2*P
Peggy Swager	Faelynn's Gypsy *P
Peggy Swager	Faelynn's Cora *P
Michelle Wittke	Wynott's Ali The Great *P
Michelle Wittke	Rite Choice BB Ms. Maia 2*P
Michelle Wittke	Bifrost Farms Verdandi *P
Sabrina Massie	Ginger Top Farm Blue Fire Enya 2*P
Sabrina Massie	Oak Spring Meadow's Christa 3*P
Sabrina Massie	Oak Spring Meadow's Bambi 2*P
Sabrina Massie	W4's Tia *P
Kathleen Naylor	Cedar Creek Midnight Skye *P
Kathy Hurlburt	Hurlburt Farms MSJ Lady Jane It Is 4*P
Noelle Leithem	Sunshine's Lakota 2*P
Altove Rowley Esch	Soaring Heart's Pursuit of Happyness 2*P
Chris & Megan Archer	SizeMatter's LC Oh Fortuna! *P
Kathy Naylor	Soaring Heart's Sienna Princess *P
Kathleen Naylor	Soaring Heart's Pink Cashmere 3*P
Kathleen Naylor	Soaring Heart's Pretty in Pink 4*P
Beverly Holley	Cedar Creek GLW Hailey 3*P
Beverly Holley	Cedar Creek OB Autumn Blues 2*P
Beverly Holley	Cedar Creek Winstons Storm of Rayne 2*P
James & Beverly Holley	Cedar Creek Little Amie-Jo *P
Beverly Holley	Cedar Creek GLW Heidi Blue 3*P
Beverly Holley	Cedar Creek Cream Brulee' *P
Desiree Payette	Willow Shade's Bubbles *P

continued on page 4...

Rosie Shinkle/Rosies Critters	Rosies Critters Carrie *P
Rosie Shinkle/Rosies Critters	Rosies Critters Dolly 2*P
Rose Shinkle	Rosies Critters Clowie *P
Rose Shinkle	Screaming Goat Farm Copper Penny *P
Rosie Shinkle/Rosies Critters	Rosies Critters Fay 2*P
Rosie Shinkle/Rosies Critters	Buffalo Flats Lane *P
Rosie Shinkle/Rosies Critters	Rosies Critters Blaze *P
Kelly Nichols-Pinard	Texas Tykes Sadie *P
Kelly Nichols-Pinard	Rite Choice Wild Fire *P
Kelly Nichols-Pinard	Rite Choice To the Moon and Back 2*P
Kelly Nichols-Pinard	Rite Choice Wild About Ava 2*P
Kelly Nichols-Pinard	Nomad Wild Betty Davis Eyes *P
Brittany Roy	Echo Hill's Saffires & Rubies *P
Joanna Snyder	Magnolia Main Penelope *P
Joanna Snyder	Rising Sun Goats Buttercup *P
Summer Rudolph	Windswept's Basil *P
Summer Rudolph	MilkCreek Ridge Buttercup *P
Summer Rudolph	Windswept's Rosemary *P
Summer Rudolph	Cornerstone Farm Jasmine *P
Wendy Valentine	VMCH Soaring Heart's 1st Lady Hillary 2*P
Wendy Valentine	Soaring Heart's Lavender Blue 3*P
Roxanna Willoughby	Blackberry's Nutmeg 3*P
Roxanna Willoughby	Soaring Heart's Purple PolkaDot PJ 3*P
Elisabeth Montague	Treestar Rambling Rose 3*P
Rosie Shinkle/Rosies Critters	Rosies Critters Peridot 2*P
Rosie Shinkle/Rosies Critters	T Squared Acres Sunshine *P
Rosie Shinkle/Rosies Critters	Rosies Critters Blaze *P
Rosie Shinkle/Rosies Critters	Walk The Walk's Paisley Rain *P
Rose Shinkle	Rosies Critters Sugar *P
Rosie Shinkle/Rosies Critters	Rosies Critters Lola *P
Rose Shinkle	Goat Trails Mystic Topaz 3*P
Rosie Shinkle/Rosies Critters	Rosies Critters Molly 2*P
Kathy Naylor	Goat Trails Apple Of My Eye 3*P
Peggy Swager	Faelynn's Calipsa *P

Mini LaManchas

Natalie Epler	Carpenter Creek PTB Meadow *P
Natalie Epler	Carpenter Creek PTB Magnolia 2*P
Natalie Epler	Carpenter Creek C Luna *P
Natalie Epler	Carpenter Creek GG Camembert *P
Shirley Daniels	Buck Creeks GD Blowing Up My Queue 2*P
Erik P Brown	East Fork X Fraubin *P
Austin Thomas	Thomas Kids AP Theodosius *P
Shirley Daniels	Buck Creeks GP Ima Pop Star *P

Bucks +B

Wendy Valentine	Green Gables GS Golden Sunrise +B
Natalie Epler	Findley Follies Chopin +B
Natalie Epler	Carpenter Creek C Phineas T Barnum +*B

Healthy Minis: Winter Tips

By Kendra Rudd Shatswell

Lice love winter weather. Make sure to thoroughly check your goats for both chewing and sucking lice. Treatment is a topical solution designed for ectoparasites. Permethrins are arguably the most used. Most drugs require two treatments because they aren't effective against nits. One off-label product, Clean-Up II, contains the active ingredient Diflubenzuron, which does kill nits (7). Young kids can also be groomed with a flea or lice comb. Check out the website Goat Biology for great illustrations to help you identify these external pests. <https://www.goatbiology.com/lice.html>

Don't forget water in the winter! According to the Goat Extension website "A 110-pound goat will require 1 to 3 gallons of water per day, depending upon diet, intake, and weather — toward the lower range in winter and the upper range in the hottest days of summer. A lactating goat will require an additional 1 quart of water for every 1 pint of milk produced."

Some studies indicate water can act as a thermal buffer in the rumen-reticulum, affecting digestion because it affects the microbial function (1). Other studies indicate that cold water can lower body temperature - not something you want to do in winter weather (2). Offering warm water can be especially helpful to encourage consumption not only in does, which need to drink copious amounts of water in late gestation and during lactation, but also to wethers and bucks to keep them urinating frequently. Frequent urination, along with a properly balanced diet, can help prevent blockages caused by urinary calculi (3).

Hay = heat! Roughage is fermented as it digests, which generates heat (4). Remember to keep hay safely covered, as hay getting excessively wet decreases both nutrition and palatability and can cause issues with mold and or even listeriosis.

Give that bedding a sniff down at goat level! Ammonia build-up can be especially troublesome in the winter. Too-high levels of ammonia can cause eye, throat, and lung irritation, which also leaves the animals more susceptible to other respiratory issues. There are tools to test the level of ammonia, but the general idea is, if a human can detect the smell, it is at least bordering harmful. (5). In this interesting study, a large barn with 388 goats was divided into tilled and untilled areas. In the tilled side, bedding was aerating instead of only

added to. "The aerated side had a higher temperature at 150mm deep (indicating increased anaerobic activity), was drier and had lower ammonia concentrations than the non-aerated side." (6)

Some additives for bedding to help absorb odors and urine include bedding pellets and barn lime.

Sources

1. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S002203021500291X?fbclid=IwAR1xnjgPMqfqsjOt-vY7jnYzD25WG2mIkXwKo55xSh2QtVlk0pgOJy8CyOo>
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7. <https://www.pbsanimalhealth.com/products/clean-up-ii-pour-on-cattle-horses>



Chewing (left) and sucking lice (right) photo from Montana State University. These are actually cattle lice but the basic body shape is the same with goat lice.

Notes From the Mini-Goat Folks: Goals

What are your farm/herd goals for 2023?

My goals are to finish buck barn and pen, work on second buck barn and pen for jr. bucks and or meat wethers, and get their pasture re-done (fencing is old and needs new posts). Also put a divider fence in doe pen to lock them away from pasture and tin the kid barn. If I can work on my kidding stalls (make them more permanent).

Melissa Swartz

One of our goals is to add 2 Nigerian Dwarf bucks or Mini-LaMancha bucks to our herd to replace our purebred Lamancha bucks.

Dori Lee Oakes

My goals include just really making the farm look as nice as possible including cleaning up wood piles and excess equipment lying around. Another is getting to the next phase in my micro dairy so I can get licensed. These are my main two goals which will be more than enough as both are big undertakings

Jamie L. Butler

Our goal is to get our milk room ready with sink, hot-water, etc. because I was just asked by a grocery store co-op to provide their raw milk! (It's legal here!) I am trying to have all 19 of my does in production by the end of the year. Also, figuring out how to raise kids on bottles since I dam raise! I will also do more milk testing and v-shows. FUN! My 18th year with Mini-Nubians!

Katie Scott

We are moving our herd to a different state in the new year, so my main goal is just getting us all there in one piece! After that I'm looking forward to breeding again (we took this year off to avoid moving pregnant does) and seeing what my new buckling brings to the herd.

Allison Kelley

At Waldi Lane Farm, the initial goal for this year was getting all the does bred. As of last night, I am 6/7 of the way there. I still have one stubborn doe living with the bucks. With the exception of 2, I will be kidding out all of my does in February to get an early start on milk testing. I am still wrangling whether to just do one day tests this year or try OS40 again. My husband and I are planning a 10 day trip to Wisconsin this summer

and 10 days is a long time to leave to my kids, in-laws, or the farm sitter. Also, I am thinking about bottle raising. Most of all, I am hoping for doelings from my grade does and a really nice buckling from Coco.

Diane Walser

We brought in some new Nubians unexpectedly from a dear friend that had life happen. They are fantastic animals that I have adored for years and lines that I was working toward establishing, slowly but surely. We are content with what we have here and will be focusing on working within the herd as we have a good group to really work with. I have some linebreeding plans I want to work on. Used our young buckling on most everyone and will be working to prove him out the next couple of years. Taking it easy for a bit and looking forward to seeing the fruit of some specific breedings.

We need to work on getting their new shelter set up now that I figured out how I want it (just have temp pens up for winter/kidding) and get all our pens and feeding systems finished and in order. We'll probably be holding some wethers back this year to process as well since we are moving our sheep on for a bit.

Kessel Run Dairy Goats

Here at Green Gables MiniNubians, my goal is to evaluate the udders on our many first & 2nd fresheners and bring the number of milkers from 23 down to 15-17. To continue milk testing (would love to make top ten again!), continue with the goal of low maintenance goats by selecting for parasite resistance and strong hooves that need trimming only a few times a year. And to help many new breeders with quality animals to begin their herds and the support they need to succeed.

Eliya Elmquist

I'm excited for my first year breeding registered minis. We're hoping to expand the herd by retaining some doelings. We're also looking forward to expanding fences and restoring pasture. I'm working this winter on getting my milk room set up and the girls' barn sectioned so everyone has their place.

Anna M. Walker Howells

Feeders, fencing, and starting seeds on time.

Christine Rogers

Notes From the Mini-Goat Folks: Goals

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Our goal is to breed top-quality goats, milk testing, performance, and shows. Bentz Family Farmstead along with Leisure Family Farm - we hope to get the dairy goats more popular in our county for 4H youth. In our county meat is very popular. We want to show everyone the importance of the dairy breed.

Shawna Bentz

My goal is to milk test for the first time, and be successful. I want to expand our reach on our farm business FB page. I want to improve my minerals area. I want to add a dry pen in front of the barn for rainy days. And show several of my goats.

Alyssa Downs

This will be my third year, and I'm not planning to breed my four girls until September 2023. Everyone needs to either grow or take a break! During that time, I will figure out what additional facilities I need to go from milking one or two to (hopefully) milking four.

Kate Walker

My goal for 2023 is to simply just enjoy what we have and appreciate where we have been. After so many years of pushing hard, we need a year to just sit back and enjoy what all we have done and what all we have achieved.

Samantha Barton

At Gill Farms Dairy Goats, my goal is to bring in more standard Nubian genetics. So we will have a lot more F1 kids this year. Our plan is build up the breed and our line from these kids. I want to see more level rumps in the mini Nubians. I also have a goal of building our milking parlor.

Breanna Gill

Birch Hill MiniNubians is excited about our 2023 kids. We're a new program and slowly building and developing. We'd love to build a milking room as well as a growout pen so we can separate does in milk from weanlings and yearlings! Fingers crossed for a keeper buckling too!

Ashley M. Holloway

Well, at The Mosaic Menagerie we took a year off of milk test and most of showing in 2022 due to family needs/commitments. For 2023, we have switched back

to Langston for DHIA testing, are planning to make it to at LEAST 2 live shows (and both V-Shows next year). Big plan for next year is to finally get the back acreage fenced so that the girls can wander through the woods on regular basis without me! We brought in quite a few new ones this year to help strive toward our breeding goals. I have a few others picked out to come either in 2023 or 2024 for line breeding on a couple of dams that I just love their udders - if I could have a whole herd of udders that look like those I would be quite happy. But that's a long term goal and not specific for next year.

Courtney DuCharme

As a brand new mini-Nubian owner I'm hoping to learn more about the right qualities to look for in goats and how to find them as we expand our herd.

Vanessa Willis

My goal is to get all the darn pictures taken for way-overdue registrations

Melissa Dawn Hughes

We just moved so we're building a new barn with a milking room. My main goal is to get that finished and operational by spring when my does are due to kid. I also plan to get licensed to sell raw milk for pet consumption and make goat milk soaps and cheeses.

Lealoni R. Yildirim

This is just the start for my farm. I just became a member. Now to register my little girl. If I am lucky she will be bred August 2023. I have started teaching myself to make cheese with cow milk for now.

Cassie Mays

Our goal in the farm is to have the barn done before kidding season and to start milk testing.

Ambery Runyon

Recipe: Italian Ricotta Cookies

Shared and Adapted By: Crystal Eustler

Prep Time: 10 minutes | Cook Time: 10 minutes | Servings: Yield: about 60 cookies

Ingredients:

For the cookies: 2 stick (1/2 pound) butter, softened
1 3/4 cup granulated sugar
2 eggs
15 Oz goat milk ricotta cheese
2 tbsp. vanilla extract
4 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. baking soda

For the glaze: 4-5 tbsp. milk

1 1/2 cups powdered sugar
1 tsp. almond extract

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In a medium bowl, cream the butter and sugar. Add the eggs, ricotta cheese, and vanilla extract; mix until well combined. In a separate medium bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, and baking soda. Add the flour mixture to the ricotta mixture; mix well. Roll or scoop the dough into teaspoon-sized balls. Place on an ungreased cookie sheet about 2-inches apart.
3. Bake 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Allow cookies to cool on the baking sheet for 3 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk the milk, powdered sugar, and almond extract until smooth. Dip the tops of the cookies into the glaze and set upright back on the wire rack. Immediately top with sprinkles. Repeat for remaining cookies.

Mini Goat Classifieds

Members, shows, and clubs - you can advertise your farm, organization, or event to other MDGA members! Fill out the online form at <https://miniaturedairygoats.net/mini-goat-notes-directory-submission/>

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Purebred Nigerian Dwarf and Mini Nubians

Shadowbrook Acres Essay Contest

Essay contest for youth! Win a mini LaMancha doe or doeling! Entries due by January 31, 2023. Please check the post at Shadowbrook Acres Facebook page for more info and complete contest rules.

Letter to the Editor: The Morning Milking

By: Vickie Nieman

I stroll out of the house with some rags in one hand and a milk bucket in the other. The sun is just breaking over the east horizon. There is a thin layer of ice on the grass and it crunches under my mucking boots as I advance toward the barn. I push open the Dutch-style doors. First, the upper door, which I never latch. It fits snugly enough in the frame that even the wind can rarely open it and, as it is, I have to put my weight into it to get it to open. The lower door is latched with a simple piece of metal nailed to the door through which a stick that looks as if it had been chopped from a broom handle slides into a notch in the door's frame. Each door opens with a sturdy grind. The conglomerate smells of pine shavings, alfalfa, goat manure, dust and who knows what else wafts a greeting from the old barn. I grab the grain feeder from its place on the milking stand and fill it -one pound alfalfa pellets, one pound dairy rations, and a handful of sunflower seeds. I return the feeder to its designated spot on the stand then grant entrance to Dulce de Leche who is waiting impatiently outside the door that leads to the goat pen. There is no need to open the upper door. She habitually slips in through the lower one and mounts the stand. Until yesterday, Dulce was the only goat in milk.

I wash, sanitize, and dry her teats and udder as she contentedly chomps on her feed. I settle in on the five-gallon bucket that doubles as a milking stool and proceed to milk. Initially, the streams of milk make a tinny sound as they hit the inside of the metal bucket, but soon the sound becomes more muted as the bucket fills. Entranced by the rhythmic cadence, my mind is carried back to yesterday.

Yesterday Symphony gave birth - a buckling and a doeling. Sadly, we lost the little girl. Her brother was delivered flawlessly, and the little girl followed shortly thereafter. The newborn doeling was delivered with the bag still completely intact. Since I tend to let the kidding

process go as naturally as possible, I didn't want to be too hasty in assisting this kidlet from the bag. That was my mistake! By the time I had intervened, she was struggling for her life. I suctioned her airway, vigorously rubbed her down, and flushed her spine. Nothing worked. In spite of doing everything I knew how, she died in my arms. As my husband later said, with a choke in his voice, "I've buried many animals, but it doesn't get any easier." But it comes with the territory. If we gave it up to avoid the sadness and heartache, we would also be surrendering the joy and the jubilation.



My mind returns to my duties just as I empty out the few final squirts. The warm milk steams in the cold morning air. I inhale that steam deeply; it permeates my soul. I can't help but think of old fashioned hot chocolate made with rich cocoa powder, vanilla, maple syrup, and fresh raw goat's milk. Maybe I'll make some for breakfast this morning. On a warm morning I would prefer eggnog. I have to agree with Mr. Wilder¹ when he said that a person "would do more work in twelve hours, if he had a rest and all the egg-nog he could drink, morning and afternoon." Nothing invigorates the body like some fresh

eggnog. I wonder how eggnog became associated with the winter holidays? It really is much more satisfying in the heat of summer.

I release Dulce from her restraint and she dodges past Deli, the alpha goat of the herd, who is just outside the door panhandling for some grain or other treats.

Before returning to the house, I toss hay to the buck and a couple flakes of it into the doe's feeder. A quick glance at the automatic watering system confirms it is doing its job. I then notice that the minerals and kelp have been depleted, so I replenish them. I also check on the new mama and baby before grabbing the milk and the used rags and returning to the house.

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Letter to the Editor: The Morning Milking

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In the house, a half-gallon mason jar awaits my arrival, perched on a kitchen scale, straddled by a milk strainer. The milk flows easily, with foam accumulating both in the jar and in the strainer -three pounds, twelve and a half ounces; only a few ounces shy of a half gallon. Not too shabby for a mini-mixed-breed-mutt of a goat, especially considering that it's been fourteen months since she freshened. I cap the mason jar, inscribe the date on it, deposit it into the refrigerator, and continue on with my morning chores.

Defi the panhandler



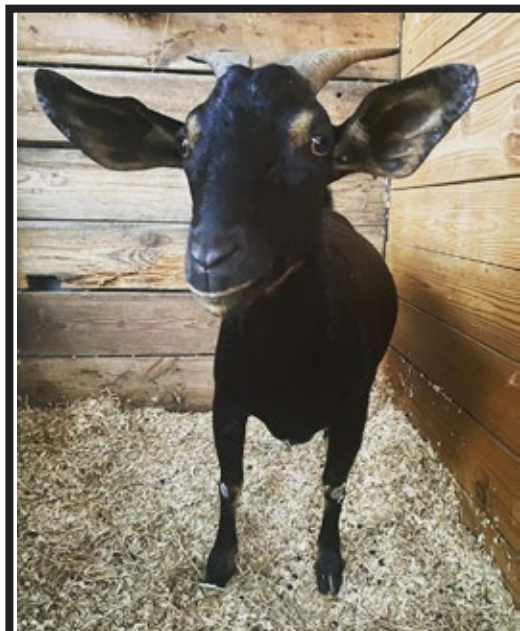
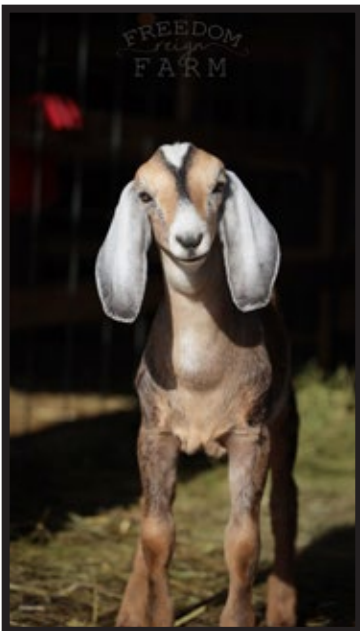
Photos from the Mini Goat Folks

Photo (below) by Elizabeth Gibson



Photo (above) by Lucy All

Photo (below) by Cati Holker



*Photo
(right) by
Christine
Cotton*



*Photo
(left) by
Crystal
Spurgeon*

Milk Program: What is a 305 Milk Test?

By: Crystal Eutsler - former MDGA Milk Test Committee

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You may have been toying with the idea of putting your herd on milk test. When doing some reading, you found a lot of terms you did not know. It may have scared you to think you couldn't do a milk test. For instance, you may have read the term 305 Day Test.

Let's talk about the 305 Day Test, and see if we can take out the mystery. For starters, why is the test called 305 Day? 305 stands for the number of days a doe may be milked and those pounds of milk be calculated for her lactation. So that means that, from the day a doe freshens to 305 days, all the milk that is collected during test days will go toward the official number of pounds collected. You may

be thinking, "I have to write down the pounds of milk my doe milks EVERY day for 305 days, NO WAY!" Well, you can relax. That is not the way it's one. You will test at least every 30 - 45 days during that 305 days for at least 5 tests. You will choose a day each month and you or your tester will weigh the milk collected from each goat.

Before you can test, you will need to do a couple of things. These things may seem over whelming but they really aren't. The first thing you will need to do, is find a lab. The lab is responsible to test your milk for its components. The components in milk are fat, protein, and other lesser, or inert, parts. Once you find a lab, you will know what they require to become a certified tester. A tester can be yourself, a friend, neighbor or local goat owner, that would agree to test for you. They cannot be a family member or someone who has a direct financial interest in your herd, as defined by your lab. The lab can assist you in finding a scale to weigh your milk, and certify your scale. To certify a scale means that the lab will use measured weights to test your scale. They will make sure your scale is measuring each weight

correctly, if it is not they will make adjustments to correct it (calibration). They will put a sticker on the scale with an expiration date (one year from the test date) and possibly a certificate telling the date, method and accuracy of your scale. Each year you will need to re-certify your scale. Most labs require testers re-certify each year, though each lab has different requirements, you will want to check with your lab. If you have

trouble finding a lab, MDGA can offer you a list of labs our other members use. Once you have a lab, and a tester(s), you are well on your way to being set up for 305 Milk Test.

Next you will need to apply with MDGA for 305 Day testing. When you are filling out the application,

you will want to have the registrations of all does you plan to test on hand, as there will be a lot of information required that you will find on the registration.

Lastly, you will submit your application fee to MDGA. Once your application, proof of certifications, and payment have been received, you will receive a "Welcome to MDGA - DHI" email from the milk testing committee.

Our most common used testing plan is the "Owner" test plan. On this test plan, the owner is the certified tester who weighs and samples milk on each testing day, except for the required Verification Test, which will be performed by another certified tester. Now you may ask "what happens at a Verification Test?"

You will gather your supplies: normal milking supplies (milk pail, wipes, disinfectant, etc.), a scale, a dipper, registrations certificates, official height measuring stick, milk vials, lab sheet, and a sharpie marker. A typical testing period starts in the evening. Your tester



Samples ready to be shipped.

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will come that evening and check the tattoos of all your does; the tattoos must be visible and match the registration certificate of each of your does. Your tester will also measure each doe and record their height on the MDGA verification test form. Then each doe will be milked and the milk weight will be recorded on the 1st milking space. The tester will check to see that each doe is completely milked out. No milk is collected in the vials at this milking. Approximately 12 hours later you will milk each doe, the tester will weigh it and record the weight on the VT form in the 2nd milking space, and the tester will collect enough milk to fill half of the milk test vial and mark the does ID on it. You will do that with each doe. Approximately 12 hours later you will milk each doe, the tester will weigh it and record the weight on the VT form in the 3rd milking space. Your tester will complete the form for the lab, box all the vials and seal the box closed. The box should be shipped as soon as possible to the lab. The lab will send the results to you and to MDGA. You will send a photo copy of the verification test form to MDGA within 48 hours via email.

If you quit milking before your doe reaches 305 day in her lactation the last day you milk your doe for the year will be the date you enter on your paperwork, with the “dry code”. After it’s processed the lab will send you a dry doe page. The dry doe page will have all the end of the year totals, and say the doe is “Turned Dry” or it will have information in the section, “305 Day Lactation”, meaning the doe is still in milk but has completed 305 days of milking.

If 305 Day Milk Testing is something you might be interested in, feel free to contact the MDGA Milk Test Committee with any questions you might have. There is a lot of value in this test. You can prove your doe’s milking ability, prove a herd sire, watch for herd improvements, and so much more. We hope this article answers some questions and takes the fear out of the MDGA 305 Milk Test.

****Note:** All 305 Day Milk test plans can be found on the website under: Programs – Milk Testing – 305 Milk Test Packet/Rules

