

ETHICS

by Judy Langley

Sometime ago I read an article about successful farming. The article related that farming was rarely a solitary enterprise. My take on successful farming includes working with family, friends, agricultural associations and other producers with like values and endeavors.

Personally, I like to be associated with four or five friends/producers that have almost the same management style and the same values and ethics. I say "almost same" management style because it really doesn't matter if you run different styles; it doesn't really matter if you have the same type livestock or not, but you better be on the same page as far as ethics are concerned. Management styles can vary according to the terrain or forages available on the property and as far as animals are concerned, they can differ because if the producer is a good husbandryman (I saw that term used in a Goat Rancher article recently - and liked it), that is what it is all about. If you practice common sense diagnoses is-

sues and use practical medical advice, well then, that alone keeps health matters from being an issue between you.

But, if the friends, producers, or even associations that help and rely on each other do not have strong ethics, well, one or two will become disenchanted and will be sorry for the connection with that relationship and it will probably turn you off from working with anyone else again. "Once bitten, twice shy" ... It will more than likely tend to push you into the "loner" category, but my advice is not let a bad relationship turn you off to having associations with others. Learn to assess relationships by paying attention to your first instincts and look for good ethics and values in your relations. No matter, what you decide, successful farming includes a lot of hard work, close relationships of whatever kind you need and the gift or knack of conservation or recycling.

The Southern Goat Producers Association has discussed planning an ethics class. It sounds strange to say that because one would think ethics would come naturally. Well,

they do somewhat, but farming creates a whole new set of ethics. Often producers know what they should do in a particular situation, but fail to recognize all the details that might come with animal ownership and sales.

Ethics and the importance of, having ethics, begins by one living with the virtuous ideals and by not changing your ideals to fit a particular situation. If "it" is not honorable on Monday, well then, it will not be honorable on Friday just because it fits your 'whim' on a particular day.

