

A healthy rumen produces B vitamins. A sick goat's rumen stops B vitamin production. It is always good to give a sick goat supplemental B vitamins, especially B-1 (Thiamine), hence the importance of giving them to the goat each day until it is well.

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WETHERING YOUR GOATS

by Suzanne Gasparatto www.tennesseeemeatgoats.com

MANY goat producers routinely wether (castrate) their buck kids with little thought as to why they do this extra work. A common belief amongst breeders is that this procedure is a necessary step in raising goats.

Producers who raise goats to sell for show purposes often wether their buck kids . . . usually within a few weeks after being born. If wethering is a show requirement, the producer whose market is selling to show participants must perform this task.

Breeders with limited amounts of pens or pasturage may find it neces-

sary to wether in order to allow the male kids to continue to run with females but not be able to breed them.

Producers who think that wethering is essential in marketing slaughter goats should check with their buyers to determine if this really is necessary. Some ethnic groups require intact males when they buy goats for consumption. Wethering male kids will cut a producer out of this very significant marketplace.

Wethering in order to insure a 'non-bucky' and/or 'tender' taste to the meat is not a valid conclusion on the producer's part. How the buck is

killed, bled out, and cooked has everything to do with how the meat tastes. Intact males, if properly processed and the meat is cooked by someone knowledgeable in how to prepare goat meat, present no taste or odor issues.

Most commercial auctions do not distinguish between intact or wethered males in terms of what they will accept to sell or how much money the goats bring at point of sale.

Research your market before wethering. You may be stressing your buck kids and doing work unnecessarily yourself.

Suzanne Gasparatto is an excellent source for goat issues and has written a wealth of information about goats. Check out her website: www.tennesseeemeatgoats.com. By studying her articles, you will be better able to diagnose problems and illnesses.