



National Agricultural Research Institute

MANAGEMENT OF BREEDING DOES

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MANAGEMENT OF BREEDING DOES

Mother goats in agricultural terms are called *breeding does*. Breeding does play an important role in the herd of a goat farm. They produce the young ones (kids) which can be raised for meat, cash income and sustainability of the herd.

Young mother goats (Doe)



Father goats (Buck)



Basic Information

Age at First Kidding	12-15 months or more
Kidding Interval	7-8 months
Interval between Birth and next Pregnancy	2-3 months

Goat herd



Lactation Period

The lactation period is the length of time between kidding and weaning or the separation of the kid from its mother. This is the time during which the kid is feeding on its mother's milk. Weaning can be 3-4 months after kidding. Lactating does need more and better feed than pregnant does and better quality of pasture or browse plants is essential. Feeding during the lactation period will have a great influence on the milk yield available to the kid and enable the doe to successfully complete the next pregnancy period.

Kid feeding on its mother's milk



Knowing the best ways to look after breeding does is very important to avoid high mortality of does and kids before, during and after giving birth (kidding).

A good herd should have one breeding buck (father goat) for every 15 to 20 breeding does.

Pregnancy Period

The pregnancy period is the length of time between successful mating and kidding, which takes approximately five (5) months.

Pregnant doe



✍ Higher levels of good feeding must be provided during the last two months of the pregnancy to provide the following advantages:

- Greater development of udder tissue, which ensures high milk.

- Low kids and doe mortalities.

- The milk flow in the doe is increased following kidding causing a great live weight gain in the kid.

- Towards the end of pregnancy, does must be confined to the pens where the kids will be born. Water and minerals (salt-block) should be provided at all times.

Kidding

The following signs of birth can be seen physically in the pregnant does close to kidding time:

✍ Uneasiness (restlessness, sitting down and getting up, smelling the ground or floor). When this happens, kidding can be expected to occur within 1-2 hours.

- Appearance of the water bag.

- Onset of contractions of the muscles of the reproductive organs.

- Start of appearance of the kid.

- ✍ Assistance should be provided if the presentation or appearance shows an abnormal birth position such as:

- One leg held back.

- Two legs held back.

- Kid upside down.

- Back- to- front presentation.

However, a doe should be given time to help herself first before provision of assistance. It is very important to ensure all kids are removed from the womb of the doe.