

## ADGA NATIONAL SHOW COMMITTEE

Dear First Time Exhibitors,

We want your first National Show experience to be a rewarding and fun experience. It's such a great opportunity to see beautiful animals and meet their owners. You'll find pens filled with animals from those herds you've seen advertised online and in print, but you will also encounter novice exhibitors like yourself just excited to attend this premier livestock event for the dairy goat industry.

Enclosed with this letter is a helpful checklist. The list includes tasks to complete before traveling to the show, and items you'll want to bring (both goat-related and people-related) that are either required (registration papers and health papers for your herd, for example) or will make life more comfortable and convenient as you ready yourself, your goats, and/or family to spend a week in a barn far from home. You will also find an essay written by Lauren Acton, DVM, longtime breeder/owner of the nationally competitive Tempo herd of Alpines, LaManchas, and Saanens. Dr. Acton is a seasoned and well-traveled national show exhibitor, and the advice contained in her article is very valuable, especially when it comes to long-haul trips with livestock.

Although the week can be hectic and stressful, remember to take time to just wander around, visit folks, and sit back and watch the show. Before attending, spend a little time talking with a friend who has attended the National Show, and you're sure to glean some good pieces of information to help ease your trip and make your experiences pleasant. Enjoy the show! The whole National Show Committee is here to help you, so don't hesitate to ask.

Warm Regards,

Helen Snyder  
ADGA National Show Chair

## **THINGS TO DO**

- FIND A RELIABLE, DEPENDABLE GOAT CARETAKER FOR 7-10 DAYS
- INFORM YOUR VET YOU WILL BE AWAY
- LEAVE YOUR CONTACT NUMBER

## **GOAT THINGS TO BRING WITH YOU**

- REGISTRATION PAPERS, HEALTH PAPERS, MILK RECORDS
- NATIONAL SHOW PACKET WITH RULES
- COPY OF YOUR SHOW ENTRY FORM
- HAY RACK/FEEDERS
- GRAIN FEEDERS
- WATER BUCKETS (ENOUGH FOR ALL PENS)
- STRAW
- FEED, HAY & GRAIN (YOU CAN ALSO BUY HAY, STRAW & FEED ON SITE)
- TACK BOX (FILLED WITH ALL YOUR CLIPPERS, EXTRA BLADES, HOOF TRIMMERS, SHAMPOOS, SPRAYS, COLLARS)
- VET PACK (BE READY FOR SCOURS, BLOAT, SORES, STRAINS, RUNNY NOSES)
- HERD DISPLAY/HERD LISTS
- EXTENSION CORDS -CHECK RULES FOR CORRECT SIZES (KEEP OUT OF REACH OF GOATS!)
- FAN
- SMALL WATER BOTTLE FOR MISTING ANIMALS
- SHORT HOSE & SPRAY NOZZLE FOR BATHING

## **PEOPLE THINGS TO REMEMBER TO BRING WITH YOU**

- SUFFICIENT CLOTHES - EXTRA SETS OF SHOW WHITES
- READING MATERIALS
- FOLDING CHAIRS
- COOLER (BAGS OF ICE WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT THE SHOW)
- ACTIVITY THINGS (GAMES, MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, ETC.)
- FOOD (STOCK UP ON PREPACKAGED AND EASY TO PREPARE FOOD)
- PERSONAL ITEMS INCLUDING MEDICATIONS AND FIRST AID SUPPLIES
- EXTRA MONEY TO STOCK UP ON SUPPLIES AND GIFTS FROM THE MANY VENDORS AT THE SHOW

*Plan some time to visit local sites. More information will be included in your CONFIRMATION PACKET shipped after your entries are accepted at the ADGA office and a WELCOME PACKET, which you will receive at check-in.*

*See You at the Show!*

# Going the Extra Mile Pays Off with Traveling Animals

by Lauren Acton, DVM

## *“GOING THE EXTRA MILE”*

is a phrase that our goats know well. Yet there is a major difference between hauling 4 to 8 hours to a show, and hauling 48 to 84 hours to Nationals or a Convention. Simply “getting there” is not enough; remember that on arrival the goats will be on public display and expected to be in show condition. Our 1994 Spotlight Sale kid had been hauled well over 7000 miles to various shows by the time she arrived in Madison, Wisconsin. Her dam, Winner, has been showing in Washington, Oregon, Wyoming, Texas, Nebraska and Canada, and still maintains over 3000 lbs. of milk per lactation.

How do we do it? Is there a secret to successful hauling? What special feed, injections, etc. do we give? The answer is basically none. The secret to successful hauling lies mainly in common sense, healthy goats and lots of preparation.

The most important aspect of hauling goats is to start with healthy animals. We try to avoid hauling unweaned kids; the major exception here are dam-raised kids which are hauled with their dams. Otherwise, “bottle-babies” tend to have more digestive upsets than older kids. I’m sure much of this is due to erratic schedules, inconsistent milk temperatures, and the inability to adequately clean and disinfect milking and feeding equipment. Also, the change from maternal antibodies to the kid’s own immune system occurs between 8-12 weeks of age.

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This is one of the most susceptible ages for viral and bacterial diseases. As a result, we usually select our “show string” kids based on which dams we are hauling, or pick older kids.

We also avoid hauling does over 8 years old, or any animal that doesn’t appear to be in good condition at the start of the trip. Even a potential National Champion win doesn’t justify the stress on these older does.

We don’t vaccinate with anything special, or give prophylactic antibiot-

ics. I just follow a standard program of CDT and BoSe injections. I do make sure that the goats are current on their de-worming, and that the kids have been recently treated for coccidiosis.

The milkers that haul the best are does with the most persistent lactations. It seems that goats which will milk an even, steady amount tend to rebound from the trip sooner and are metabolically more stable than those that have extremely high production for shorter periods of time.

## *Trailer ideas*

Over the years we have added, changed and fiddled with our trailer innumerable times as new ideas are tried. It helps immensely to have a patient mechanical engineer who specializes in design for a husband. We started with an old 16’ stock trailer—the kind that you’re not afraid to weld onto or drill holes into as ideas are tried out. Our sole aim is to provide as healthy of an environment as possible, in as many weather conditions as necessary.

The trailer is painted white inside and out. While this coordinates nicely with Saanens, our main goal was to decrease temperature by reflecting the sun, and to provide a light, clean interior.

Ventilation is of utmost importance. Our trailer has solid walls up to about 3 feet, then open, slatted sides for another three feet. We have plywood panels that can be adjusted to cover ½, ¾ or all of the open area, or they can be removed entirely. It seems that most hauls are invariably in extremely hot weather. We usually drive with the panels about ½ way up, then remove them immediately when we stop. An alternative is to remove one side, and raise the other to provide shade in incessant sun.

The floor of the trailer is made of 2x6’s with drainage spaces between the boards. We cover this with rubber mats to decrease vibrations, I prefer shavings instead of straw for bedding since they are easier to walk in.

We have installed special mangers along the sides. They are raised so they don’t decrease floor space. They are narrow, just the width of one flake of hay. Not only does this decrease the

space taken up by the mangers, but it also helps to prevent the goats from actually sticking their heads into the manger and becoming stuck should the trailer veer or stop suddenly. The mangers are removable and become pen mangers while at the show.

We use removable 2x4’s to create a rack for bales of hay about the goats. Our trailer has a shelf above the tack compartment. Using these two areas, plus strapping a few small bales on the outside allows us to carry a ½ ton of hay if necessary. Putting hay over the goats does decrease airspace, but it provides insulation from the sun or cold when coupled with adequate airflow ventilation. We do leave areas open at the front and rear of the trailer so people can stand upright while watering and feeding. Our milk stand fits nicely on one side, and a large tack compartment in front completes the goat part of the trailer.

We leave water buckets in the trailer while driving. These are huge one ft. ties to help prevent spillage. While only a few goats actually drink while

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moving, the buckets are available as soon as we stop. We also carry extra containers of water, as water can be hard to find at some rest stops.

Important items that shouldn’t be overlooked include a spare tire, a functioning hydraulic jack (capable of lifting the loaded trailer to change a tire), well maintained trailer brakes and wiring and safety “break away” brakes. We added a sway bar in 1994 and it has been well worth the cost, especially in windy South Dakota. I hope to add a 20-gallon water reservoir with a spigot.

While at the shows, we turn our “goat” trailer into a “people” trailer. The mangers are removed and put into goat pens. The hay comes down and the 2x4’s slide back to form a 2 ft. wide shelf at the rear of the trailer. An awning made of an 8x12 tarp and wooden

poles is unrolled and attached to the side. The bedding is cleaned out and AstroTurf is put down both inside the trailer and under the awning. An inflatable mattress fits nicely in the rear of the trailer, a propane stove goes on the shelf in front, and fold up chairs and table provide seating and eating area.

Our 1968 Ford finally developed a critical heart condition after our last long haul, and will (hopefully) be retired. A "trusty rusty," it was also specially fitted after years of hauling goats.

We began with a "camper special" so the suspension was able to handle weight. A "trailer special" transmission was added to more easily pull the heavily loaded trailer up mountain passes. We put in a heavy duty radia-

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tor, as well as a separate transmission cooler. Our 390 engine pulled the trailer over the Continental Divide several times without failing.

We divided the back into  $\frac{2}{3}$  goat area and  $\frac{1}{3}$  tack area, using a removable manger as a divider. As in the trailer, we put rubber mats on the floor of the goat area. A wooden shelf across the tack area provides an enclosed lower area and raised platform. Since the lower area is hard to get into during the trip, we use it to store the clothes, tack, milking machine, etc. that are only used at the show. A pass-thru window makes the top of the shelf easily accessible from the cab.

A CB radio is invaluable when traveling in a caravan. Don't underestimate the value of personal comfort in the cab. While the USA may be the most wonderful country on earth, parts of it are long, hot and boring during long distance trips. Carry lots of extra oil, transmission and brake fluid, a spare tire, a manual for the truck and miscellaneous tools. Even new trucks break down, and being stuck in 100' weather with a trailer full of overheating

goats is no fun experience. Even if you can't use the tools, there may be someone around who can.

### ***Trip begins***

There is and always has been controversy over whether driving straight through is preferable to overnight stops. One important thing to remember is it will take about the same amount of time between when you leave home and when the goats look normal again. Thus, if you haul direct for 36 hours, it will take another 36-60 hours for the goats to recover (usually the younger does bounce back more quickly). If you split that into three 12 hour shifts with overnight stops, the goats will recover in a much shorter time on arrival. Personally, having hauled both ways, I much prefer stopping for trips over 18 hours. Try to make the last day be the shortest, or add an optional overnight stay. This is when you are the most exhausted both physically and mentally. Remember that unloading and setting up is a lot of hard work and is usually tough to accomplish at 2 a.m. after you've been driving for three days.

Plan your trip and overnight stops before you leave. We usually stay at fairgrounds. Most require you to clean the pens before you leave. Very few have bedding available. We carry extra straw and cleaning equipment. An alternative is to stay at a horse boarding stable. These are usually more expensive and may be difficult to find, especially at night in unfamiliar areas.

While it is important for the goats to rest, remember that it is equally important for the drivers to relax. Usually there is no one else at the fairground. Since most fairgrounds have electricity, we carry a coffee maker and/or hot pot (also good for soups, heating milk, etc.) and last year found a small microwave to be very handy. We don't like to leave goats unattended, so we carry food that we can prepare. Since we usually travel in caravans, this is the time to sit back and relax with friends. We try to appoint someone as "cook". They fed the humans while we feed the goats.

At night I usually put the does in the pens and allow them to relax and eat hay before I milk them. I feed grain at night—up to 1½ lbs. each (normal ration). In the morning I'll feed only a

small amount of grain while milking and put hay and water in the trailer.

We find that the goats usually choose grass hay during the first day, then begin eating alfalfa again as they become accustomed to the trip.

As a veterinarian, I carry a well-stocked first aid kit. While most of this is to treat metabolic upsets, shipping fever and injuries, I also carry analgesic and anti-inflammatory medications for sore backs and legs. I am a firm believer in properly applied leg wraps. Wet wrap or Ace bandages applied directly to a leg can cause injuries. I use a "polo" wrap or equivalent made of polar fleece. A soft, bulky bandage that applies even pressure and support over the entire lower leg is the goal of a leg wrap.

We always clip before hauling and carry a spray bottle of dilute liniment (Bigeoil or Absorbine). This helps to cool the does as well as provide muscle relief.

### ***When you arrive***

The key here is to remember that the goats are just as tired, dirty and sticky as you are. We unload as soon as possible, into pens with lots of water and both grass and alfalfa hay. The does need something firm to stand on, so we use a minimum of bedding, or at least bed one area of the pen more lightly than the other. Other than a quick bath (which seems to refresh them as much as a shower does for us), we mostly let them sleep for the first 24 hours. Grain is reintroduced at the second milking. I haven't needed electrolytes very often, but occasionally will put some in an extra bucket of water. Always have plain water available.

Hauling goats cross-country can be a fun and rewarding trip, or it can be a nightmare. The key elements for the goats seem to be air, water and light. Remember to prepare your vehicle for unexpected stops and don't depend on moving vehicles to keep the goats cool. Above all else, use common sense. Then put your worries aside and have a safe trip. ■

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