



2024 MEAT GOAT TESTING PROGRAM

(nominations accepted between February 15 and March 15, 2024)

PENNSYLVANIA'S LIVESTOCK EVALUATION CENTER

1494 W. Pine Grove Road, PA Furnace, PA 16865

Greg Hubbard, Station Manager Email: ghubbard@pa.gov

TELEPHONE: 814-238-2527 FAX: 814-238-1785

PURPOSE :

1. Provide a sound testing program that allows a variety of goat producers to participate.
2. Promote the value of performance testing of meat goats in Pennsylvania.
3. Provide a common test for evaluating rate of gain, structural soundness, and estimated carcass merit.
4. To identify bucks which excel in growth and meat production characteristics.

SPONSOR :

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with Penn State's Department of Animal Sciences.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE :

Representation on this committee will include Penn State animal science faculty members involved in small ruminant teaching, research, and/or extension, the attending veterinarian (**Rep. - Centre Herd Health.**), a representative of The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, the station manager of the Livestock Evaluation Center (Mr. Greg Hubbard), and three goat producers selected for three-year terms:

Members of the Technical Advisory Committee will be participants of the previous year's testing program

SALE COMMITTEE :

The combined Species and Technical Committees will make up the basic Sale Committee. A smaller group consisting of two or three individuals from the technical committee and five or six test participants appointed by the co-chairmen of the Executive Committee will be responsible for making and carrying out the final decisions on all sale details.

APPROXIMATE TESTING TIMETABLE

<i>Nomination Period</i>	<i>February 15 – March 15, 2024</i>
Delivery dates.....	April 8,9
Official start.....	April 16
14-day weighing	April 30
28-day weighing	May 14
42-day weighing	May 28
56-day weighing.....	June 11
70-day weighing.....	June 25
77-day weighing.....	July 2
Tentative sale date.....	August 15
Pre-Test Technical Comm. Mtg.....	To be scheduled
Post-Test Technical Comm. Mtg.....	To be scheduled

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRY :

1. The test is open to purebred and papered percentage bucks born between September 1, 2023 and February 28, 2024. (Sep.1 – Dec 31. born bucks = Senior bucks. Jan and Feb born bucks, = junior bucks.)
Animals must be identified to meet Current Federal Scrapie Regulations.
2. Bucks must be weaned at least two (2) weeks prior to entry date and weigh at least 30 pounds upon delivery.
3. Bucks must have a recorded birth date and their sire must be known and documented.
4. Bucks must be free of obvious structural or reproductive abnormalities. This is a combination of structural correctness, mouth, frame type, natural muscling, and breed type.
5. Bucks must arrive at the Center with feet recently trimmed, with no evidence of any foot disease.

- All bucks must be accompanied by a veterinarian's statement that required vaccinations, at least one vaccination of CDT (C. perfringens with Tetanus) and/or tests have been done within the designated time, that the buck is in good health and apparently free of infectious and contagious diseases and that it originates from a herd from which no infectious and/or contagious diseases including scrapie, OPP and John's have been diagnosed within the past 12 months.

DELIVERY GUIDELINES:
 BUCKS MUST WEIGH AT LEAST 30 POUNDS UPON DELIVERY OR
 HAVE A MINIMUM WT/DAY OF AGE **.35 LBS./DAY GAIN**
 UPON DELIVERY, WHICHEVER IS GREATER

N O M I N A T I O N P R O C E D U R E :

- Nomination forms must be received at the LEC according to the timetable. A minimum of 25 bucks must be nominated to conduct the test.**
- Anyone whose bucks are accepted for test agrees to abide by all rules, regulations, terms and conditions of the entire program now in existence, or any that might be adopted by the LEC Executive Committee for that particular test. Not doing so will jeopardize eligibility for future tests.

N O M I N A T I O N A C C E P T A N C E P R O C E D U R E :

- Nominations will be accepted from February 15 through March 15, 2024. Postmarks will determine eligibility.
- First choice will be given to Pennsylvania breeders.
- In the event all pen space is not utilized by Pennsylvania breeders, out-of-state nominations will be accepted.
- After nominations are accepted, there will be no further differentiation between Pennsylvania breeders and out-of-state breeders.
- Preference will be given to those who have participated in previous performance tests.

D A T A C O L L E C T I O N :

Bucks will be weighed every 14 days and a progress report will be sent to the owner and other interested persons at least every other period. Other factors evaluated will include scrotal circumference, estimated loin eye area, daily gain, etc.

H E A L T H A N D V E T E R I N A R Y C A R E :

- Health of the bucks will be under the supervision of the attending veterinarian.
- Appropriate metaphylaxis may be administered for pulmonary disease if deemed necessary in the judgment of the attending veterinarian.
- During the adjustment period, all bucks will be treated for the control of internal and external parasites and vaccinated for enterotoxemia, sore mouth, and tetanus as needed.
- All bucks will have their feet trimmed at the end of the test. Additional foot trimming on individual bucks will be performed as necessary.**
- Any buck deemed clinically unsound during the test will be removed from the test at the owner's expense. This decision will be made by the LEC Station Manager and the attending Veterinarian.
- All bucks will receive a physical examination for breeding soundness, at the end of the test.
- Bucks will be monitored routinely for internal parasites using fecal egg counts.

C A R E A N D M A N A G E M E N T :

- Bucks will be penned in weight groups as uniformly as possible.
- Feed, water and condition of all animals will be checked at least twice daily.
- Bucks will have free-choice access to a commercial concentrate diet of at least 16% protein. A coccidiostat is given through the feed at recommended levels. Ammonium chloride (1%) is added as a preventive against urinary calculi formation.
- A grass-alfalfa mixed hay will be fed free choice.
- Also, the Technical Committee and the veterinarian may, from time-to-time, make other adjustments to the ration which they feel is in the best interest of the test.
- Ration analysis will be done as changes occur in the ration. Feed batches will be balanced to ensure that the feed contains less than 35ppm of copper for safe feeding of goats.**

R E T U R N O F B U C K :

Bucks may be returned at any time to the owner, at the owner's expense, for any reason deemed necessary by the technical or species committee. However, no buck will be removed from test and/or LEC without first having approval from the LEC Station Manager and attending Veterinarian. Some reasons for return might be:

- Health (including chronic bloaters)
- Disposition
- Lack of valid identification
- Buck classified as potential non-breeder
- No Sale
- Any reason deemed necessary by the LEC Station Manager and/or the attending Veterinarian.

L I A B I L I T Y :

The breeder retains ownership of his buck(s) while on test at the LEC. However, the breeder waives any right to press claims of any type against LEC supervisors and employees, and will sign a testing agreement that he assumes full responsibility. The cost of insurance is included in the testing charges to be paid by the owner. Owners who lose bucks during the testing period will be paid an amount equal to the market value of a medium buck as quoted at New Holland the week the loss occurred, minus testing costs incurred to that date.

PERFORMANCE TEST SALE :

1. Sale date is August 15, 2024, and will include an Invitational Doe Sale.
2. An index ratio will be used to rank the bucks at the conclusion of the test to determine the sale order for the bucks within their respective breed groups: Senior fullbloods, Junior fullbloods, Senior purebred, Junior purebred, Senior percentage, and Junior percentage. All bucks eligible for sale must be offered for sale.
3. **A copy of registration papers must be provided to the LEC station manager no later than July 1, 2024, in order to be eligible to sell. Transfers of animals will be the responsibility of the buyer.**
4. The number of bucks offered for sale by an individual consignor may be limited by the sale Committee.
5. **All Bucks and Does offered for sale will be assessed a Sales Commission based upon the actual sales production costs and calculated by the final sale price. An additional 1% Commission will be added on to the total sales percentage, to be paid directly to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Bucks and Does offered for Sale which do not receive a bid will be assessed a Commission on the Minimum Bid Price. Bucks and Does offered for sale which do not receive a bid will remain the possession of the breeder.**

RATING BUCKS FOR SALE :

1. All bucks will be inspected by the LEC Station Manager, attending Veterinarian, and Sale Committee for breed character and type, soundness of mouth, breeding soundness, structural correctness, etc. Depending on the severity of the fault, a buck may be eliminated from the sale regardless of performance. The Sale Committee's decision on all sale details will be final, including which bucks sell, minimum sale price, minimum index, etc.
2. ALL BUCKS MUST BE SOUND OF MOUTH [within 3 mm (approx. 0.10") over or under] IN ORDER TO SELL.
3. ALL BUCKS MUST BE SOUND OF SCROTUM [scrotal cleft of less than or equal to 5.0 cm (approx. 2.0")] IN ORDER TO SELL.
4. Buck teat structure will be listed in the catalog for buyer review. Examples include: Fish teats and multiple fused teats.
5. An index score will be calculated for each individual based upon:
 - 30% on average daily gain
 - 30% on lifetime weight-per-day-of-age
 - 20% on area of longissimus muscle (loin) at the first lumbar site as measured by real time ultrasound adjusted by the goat's metabolic weight
$$\frac{\text{Area of longissimus muscle (loin)}}{BW^{0.75}}$$
 - 20% circumference around the widest part of hind left leg as measured with a tailor's tape adjusted by the goat's metabolic weight
$$\frac{\text{Circumference of hind left leg}}{BW^{0.75}}$$

The adjustment to metabolic body weight will give lighter goats a fair comparison of muscling to heavier goats.

The deviation from the average of the parameters measured, from the goats in the performance test will be used in the index calculation. Thus, the average index score for bucks on test will be 100. Bucks that are above average will have indices above 100 and those below average will have index scores below 100.

FECAL EGG COUNT TESTING FOR PARASITE RESISTANCE :

Parasitic worms are a significant problem to the small ruminant industry. Certain genetics have higher resistance to parasitic infection. To test this resistance, small ruminants can be infected with a specific parasite (*Haemonchus contortus*- bred specifically for trial research with susceptibility to multiple class of anthelmintics). Following infection, test animals will be monitored through FAMANCHA scoring and fecal egg count (FEC) samples collected to develop a comparable number to assess susceptibility to parasitic infection.

1. Parasite resistance testing information will be not used in criteria for final index or sale
2. Bucks will be acclimated to the ration, dewormed prior to parasite infection and reviewed for health
3. Bucks will be infected with a set amount of *Haemonchus contortus* at the beginning of the trial and fecal egg counts and FAMANCHA scoring will be done throughout the test to obtain data to calculate resistance. Bucks will only be infected one time during this test.
4. Bucks will be dewormed and reevaluated following the trial. **Parasite infections carry higher risk to animal health. Specific health protocol will be followed to reduce any negative impacts of parasite infections.**
5. Information from FEC data will be compiled and available for review.

TESTING COSTS :

1. A \$60 fee per buck is due at time of delivery.
2. If a buck dies or must be removed from test, the owner will pay all expenses incurred to that time.
3. Grain costs for each buck will be calculated by multiplying the average pen feed conversion times the actual gain (in pounds) of each buck in the pen times actual grain costs.
4. Other testing costs (hay, straw, veterinary products and services, scanning, parasite testing, etc.) will be divided on a per buck basis.
5. A facility usage charge, prorated for all species on test, will be assessed for all animals completing test.
6. A yardage fee of \$.08/day/buck will be charged to help offset miscellaneous testing costs such as postage, telephone and office supplies.
7. Estimated costs for parasite testing will be available to consignors at delivery (costs will vary annually)

8. Out-of-state participants will also be charged a fee for labor and facilities which will be (approximately \$15.00/buck). Total testing costs commensurate will be determined by the LEC Station Manager.
9. Sales expenses will be determined as a percentage of the sale gross and this will be deducted from the sale receipts. **An additional 1% Commission will be added on to the total sales percentage, to be paid directly to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. All Consignments offered for sale will be assessed a Sales Commission on the final sale price. Consignments offered for Sale which do not receive a bid will be assessed a Sales Commission based on the Minimum Bid Price. Consignments offered for sale which do not receive a bid will remain the possession of the breeder.**
10. No buck may be removed from the LEC until all incurred expenses are paid unless approved by the LEC Station Manager. Anyone not paying expenses will jeopardize the opportunity for future testing until all accounts are paid.
11. Final test payment or billing will be made to all test participants within 30 days of the sale providing all testing bills have been paid.

MEAT BUCK TEST NOMINATION FORM
PENNSYLVANIA LIVESTOCK EVALUATION CENTER

PLEASE PRINT

Owner's name _____ Telephone _____

Farm Name _____ E-Mail _____

Address _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

County _____ Breed _____

Number of bucks you want to test _____

TESTING AGREEMENT

Upon acceptance of any of my animals for testing at the Pennsylvania Livestock Evaluation Center, I, the owner, do hereby accept full and complete responsibility and liability for my animals during all phases of the program, including pretest, official test, post-test, and sale. I have read and agree to abide by the rules, regulations, terms, and conditions of the program, both now in existence or hereafter adopted by the LEC Executive Committee for this test.

I further authorize employees of The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, The Pennsylvania State University, and any other person or organization connected with the management of the program to act as my agent in connection with the program, including any sale of the animals—provided, however, that the above-mentioned employees or organizations shall not be liable for any loss, claims, or suit by me arising out of participation in the program, including, but not limited to, the sale of the animals.

(owner's signature) (date)

Nomination Date: February 15 through March 15, 2024

Send nomination form to: PA Department of Agriculture
Livestock Evaluation Center
1494 W. Pine Grove Road
PA Furnace, PA 16865