

NZAGA Newsletter

NZ Arapawa Goat Association - February 2017, Issue 9



From the Editor

Hi all. Welcome to 2017 and yet another very full newsletter. So much to tell you regarding the Arapawa goats. The first story in this newsletter is a report on the day the BBC filmed Arapawa goats running feral on the island. Amazing that four men will travel across the world to observe and film the Arapawa goats, while a NZ government department (DOC) hunts them down as vermin. Such bias and short-sightedness. You will see from the 'No Ordinary Goat' book update that publicity for the goats is spreading around NZ. This has led to an increase in the demand for the Arapawa goats which far exceeds the supply. Further on in the newsletter is an invitation for breeders to register if they wish to be contacted by potential owners.

Thank you to all those people who have sent in their stories, photos and questions about the Arapawa goats, and those who have given permission for me to share their correspondence. Your contribution ensures that this newsletter is interesting, informative, and 'Arapawa goat' centred.

Having been offered a stand at Masterton's A&P show on 18th February to showcase NZ's Arapawa goats, this is an exciting opportunity to share their story with interested bystanders. While I have a banner, posters, the books and the stories, (I am not taking any goats with me on this occasion), any suggestions to enhance the stand would be welcome (as would another volunteer to join me). Fingers crossed for fine weather and big crowds.

Warm cheers,

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The UK's BBC show, Countryfile, film goats on Arapawa Island

(Note: this article has also been printed in the NZ Rare Breed Society's NewZ)

In March 2016 I received an email from a man by the name of Matt Smith; 'when would be a suitable day and time for him to ring and talk about the Arapawa goats?' Matt is a researcher working on a British rural affairs and farming TV show called Countryfile. It's the UK's most watched factual programme with weekly audience figures exceeding 7 million viewers. Their presenter, Adam Henson, is an expert on British rare breeds and they were interested in finding out more about the New Zealand rare breeds and how they're connected to the UK. "We were looking at Arapawa Goats for example which are a British native, a rare breed in the UK now but common in Arapawa after Cook introduced them." Months later, in October I received a call from a Matt Stewart, one of the directors and cameraman for Countryfile; they were coming to New Zealand in November and wanted to arrange interviews with people who knew the history of Arapawa Island's wildlife. Based on their criteria, it was very clear that Michael Willis of Christchurch's Willowbank Wildlife Park was the best person to talk about the Arapawa goats, sheep, pigs and the history around the goat musters. Unbeknownst to me, they had already spoken with Michael Willis and formed the same opinion. I also confirmed Peter and Takutai Beech of the 'Myths & Legends Eco-tours' would be perfect with their knowledge of the Sounds and friendship with Betty Rowe. An interview with members of Betty's family would be the icing on the cake.

The 7.8 Kaikoura earthquake struck in the early hours of Monday, 14th November. The BBC crew were already in the North Island and had two vehicles booked for Saturday, 19th November on the interislander ferry. It is fair to say they were a little nervous about heading south into an



earthquake zone. Early on Monday morning we met at the wharf in Waikawa Bay, Picton. Peter and Takutai Beech were busy preparing their launch 'Tutanekai', Michael Willis had brought two Arapawa goats with him: a buck and a doe, along with their cages, etc. Betty's granddaughter 'Shannon' would be sailing with us, and the BBC crew arrived just in time to help Michael and Pete load the goats on board.

Then we were off. But wait. The BBC people wanted a shot of the 'Tut' leaving the wharf. Back we went, off again. Oops, a rusty old barge was in the background. Back again. This set the tone for the day. A fleeting scene on the TV may require many 'takes' to get it perfect. Fortunately, the weather was perfect and the Sound beautiful, one could be excused for thinking Betty was watching over us. As we sailed towards Arapawa Island, Michael Willis sat at the front of the boat being interviewed by Countryfile presenter, Adam Henson. The interview was interrupted by the sighting of Hector dolphins, then it was back to finish Michael's interview and hear Peter's stories of Queen Charlotte Sound. Hours passed as we sailed into inlets and bays searching for wildlife. Rare seabirds were sighted, followed by shoals of fish and more dolphins, but not one sighting of a goat on the shores of Arapawa Island. Not even at the sanctuary. As we quietly sailed parallel to the beach in front of Betty's cottage, reluctantly we agreed it was time to go. Peter piloted the 'Tut' towards Te Aroha Bay where Betty's son Mitch, and his wife Debbie were expecting us for lunch.



More interviews, this time with Mitch and Debbie. A weka family came in and out of the shot, totally unimpressed by the importance of the occasion, helping themselves to some titbits and getting in the way, much to the amazement and amusement of the visiting Brits. But it soon became apparent Adam was on a mission. He hadn't flown half way around the world to leave without filming Arapawa goats. It was decided they would film Michael's goats on the beach. But being the BBC it had to be authentic; they would have to acknowledge they hadn't sighted any

feral goats. “What I really want” says Adam, “is a feral doe with some kids”. We all laughed and returned to the ‘Tut’ to continue what we feared would be a futile search. Around the first bend we went and there on the beach meandered a young buck. “Goat!” I yelled (probably my only contribution to the trip). Cameras clicked but there was only time for one quick photo and he was gone. Never-the-less, we were all elated. They had their shot of a feral Arapawa goat. We continued on, scanning the bushy banks and the shoreline. Then, up on a cliff-face was a beautiful white doe with black facial and shoulder markings. Pete put the brakes on (do launches have brakes?). Frantically the crew grabbed their cameras and started filming. The doe just stood and watched us as we filmed her. There was movement in the bush and a light coloured kid aged about 3 months appeared. A few seconds later another kid showed itself; this one was light brown with the dark brown dorsal stripe. We then realised the doe had triplets; the third kid was smaller and darker than the others. A delighted Adam had been granted his wish; a doe with kids.



But there was more to come. Having filmed some feral goats, we were all relaxed. Until someone screamed “Pig!” “Slow down!” we all yelled at Pete. “Quick, back up”. And there was the most enormous pig crashing its way through the scrub. My first thought was, thank goodness we hadn’t met it on the track. As the crew filmed the Arapawa pig, Michael shared their history with Adam.

We continued hugging the shoreline of Arapawa Island when more feral goats were spotted. A group of about six light coloured Arapawa goats were browsing on the bracken of a fire break. Pete slowed ‘Tut’ then put her in reverse as the crew captured the scene on film. But we were too close to the shore; we could almost reach into the clear water and touch the rocks below. Bleats were heard in the bush then more goats appeared, including some kids. There was a whole herd, maybe 20 in total. “This is so worth the trip” said Adam. “Marvellous! Absolutely wonderful.” But

the adventure was not over. As we headed back towards Te Aroha Bay, there grazing in front of a vacant holiday home was a flock of Arapawa sheep. We quietly watched the sheep for a few minutes as the cameraman did his job. I don't know about the others, but I imagined I could feel Betty's presence. Arapawa goats, a pig and now sheep calmly feeding as we filmed and all on the same day. Such a rare occurrence.

The sun was starting to lose its warmth as we tied 'Tut' up once again at Te Aroha Bay. Michael and Adam brought Willowbank's two goats along the jetty and secured them to rocks on the beachfront. I was now exhausted, but Michael, Adam, the Director and the two cameramen were like ever-ready batteries – full of energy, they just kept on going. Back and forth along the jetty marched Michael and Adam as the sun went down and the cameras rolled.



After nearly twelve hours of filming, the director determined they had sufficient footage to put together a reasonable documentary on the feral animals of Arapawa Island. It was time to say our farewells to the Rowe family. Loading Michael's goats back onto 'Tut', we literally sailed into the sunset. Pete dropped the BBC crew off at the Te Awaiti jetty where they would be staying the night. They had scheduled the next day for filming the old whaling station. In the dark, a very tired Michael, Peter, Takutai, me, and two Arapawa goats headed back to Waikawa Bay. In quiet reflection we shared our satisfaction with the day's events. For me, the greatest satisfaction was the knowledge that the existence of our beautiful Arapawa goats is being broadcast around the world.



Adam Henson with Arapawa buck. Photo by Matt Smith, BBC

The documentary was first broadcast by Countryfile in the UK on 15th January 2017 at 6.30 pm. It runs for about 10 minutes towards the end of the episode titled 'Carmarthenshire'.

For those who can access BBC channels (I think you need the BBC iPlayer), the link is:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b08bc1n2/countryfile-carmarthenshire>

There are other ways to see recent episodes via social media for those who have the know-how. It is certainly worth watching and the scenery is stunning. For those of you who can access Dropbox, the link is:

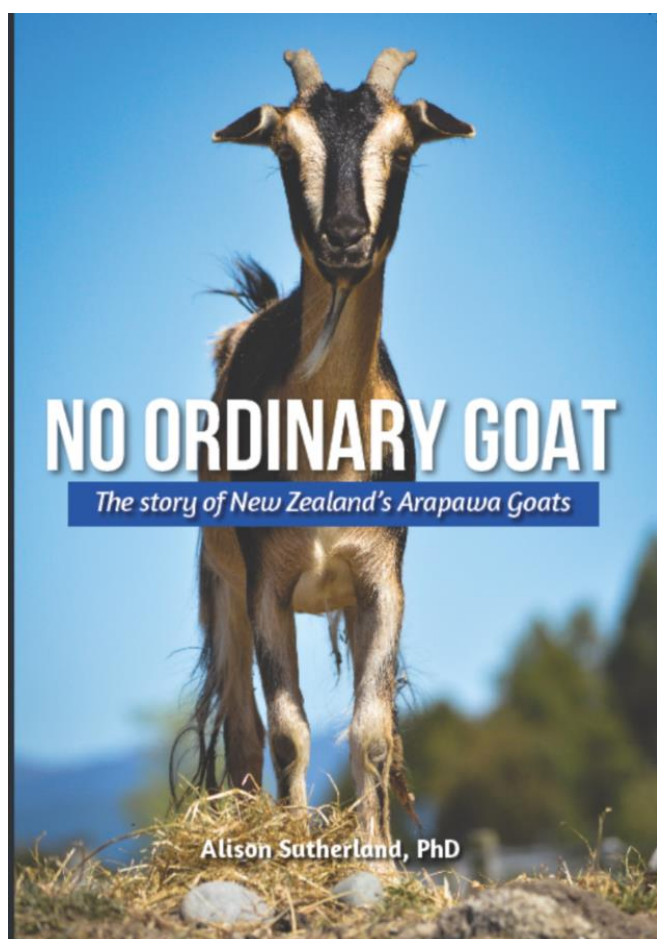
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/2umilqew7wvjrh/Countryfile%20Arapawa%20New%20Zealand.mov?dl=0>

Alison Sutherland

'No Ordinary Goat' Update

THE STORY OF NZ'S ARAPAWA GOATS

To my surprise and delight, the book has been quite a success, not only in sales, but also in the interest it appears to be generating in the Arapawa goats. It has received some wonderful reviews with a common thread that the book is enjoyable to read (one reviewer stated she was "spellbound", another wrote "I am totally delighted with it and can't put it down!" – praise indeed!). With orders from the USA and the UK, the story of New Zealand's Arapawa goats is spreading around the world.



Another highlight has been orders from New Zealand booksellers whose specialty markets are NZ libraries, schools and tertiary institutions. Accessible and on the shelves of public organisations, DOC won't be able to so easily sweep the existence of NZ's Arapawa goats under the proverbial government carpet. Down to the last few books of the first edition, I have ordered a reprint of 'No Ordinary Goat' where most, if not all, the errors have been amended (I can't believe I missed some of those mistakes).

Articles about 'Protecting a Rare Breed' have appeared in several farming magazines, including the Canterbury Farming, Wairarapa Farming and Northland Farming editions. Farmlands have also published an article in their magazine that went out to all their members around NZ at the end of January. The NZ Rare Breeds Conservation Society are highlighting the book in their NewZ (quarterly newsletter) which is due to go out at the same time as this newsletter.

Wildlife photographer

If you are looking for someone to capture quality images of your goats and/or other animals and you are in the lower North Island, I highly recommend Sarah Page of Sarah Page Photography. Sarah has just left school and is looking for opportunities to develop her photographic skills. It is Sarah's photograph of Island Girl of Arapawa Island that is on the cover of the book. Sarah can be located through her Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/S.A.Luke.Photography/>.

Cuddle Time

By Sharon Taylor & Glenn O'Keeffe - Littlebrooke Arapawas

We have always been big on interacting with our animals to enrich their lives. We think a cuddle is as good for our animals as it is for us, and we try to handle them on a daily basis. When we bring a new animal into the family we are very conscious of the issues around integration, and we think that if we are seen actively engaging with our current animals it helps win trust with the newcomer. Interacting with the newcomer also in turn helps our existing animals accept them.

We have learnt that building trust is not an overnight thing and like most things needs to be worked on. You need time, patience and a sense of humour, as well as eyes in the back of your head, and an acceptance that you are going to get bruised and pooped on from time to time.

Because goats are very inquisitive we have found if we sit quietly in their paddock and ignore them they will come to us, and if we don't move they will stay close. It is not long before they are nuzzling us and chewing our hair, then climbing on our back if we are sat down. We have found the magic time is when they lay down next to us to let us stroke them and give them a good scratch behind the horns.

The payoff is that we can enter enclosures relatively safely, as they are not stressed by our presence, and we can catch them if they go walkabout in our neighbour's paddock without too much swearing (why is the grass always greener on the other side of the fence?). Hoof care, grooming and pregnancies are also much easier to deal with.

Our goats regularly come running to us when they see us, mobbing us, demanding cuddles and wanting to be picked up (as can be seen in the photos). Even our big buck is quite happy to curl up in a ball with his daddy and go to sleep at the end of a hard day.

So go ahead, what are you waiting for? Cuddle your goats today....

This is a most remarkable story. After receiving it I went out to my paddocks and gave my goats a hug.

Thank you Sharon and Glenn for giving permission to put the photographs on the arapawagoats.com website.



Happiness is a cuddle. Photos by Sharon Taylor



Move over; it's my turn

New owner's story - by Tracey Davey

Our Little Star

Introducing Wainui Vega. Born on 8th January, we believe her to be the first New Zealand Arapawa kid born in 2017.

First June last year we went to collect a doe with her month old kid and a young buck who had just joined her at her prior home. Sadly her kid died after 3 days of being with us. Not wanting to split them up and putting the doe under even more stress as they were our only goats at the time, we decided to leave them together.

As first timers we were not sure when she became pregnant again, but had our suspicions. By mid-December she was well and truly showing and the buck started getting very aggressive toward her, so on the 23rd it was time to move her into a paddock on her own next to him.

Within a couple of days she was pawing the ground, was very restless, her tummy seemed to drop. We were on tender hooks, but the days passed, by the time the New Year break was over even asking the question 'do goats have false pregnancies' as nothing was happening. Each morning we would stick our heads out of the door and check and there she would be waiting for her breakfast. (Special rations as eating for 2 or maybe 3)

Finally on the morning of the 8th Jan, we looked again and initially were disappointed, yet again, but wait, she was by the gate waiting for her breakfast but there was a little lump laying at her feet.

It was all worth the wait, the cutest thing I had ever seen (I know, I bet your first was cuter).

Vega has just gone from strength to strength. I just love watching her every chance I get, trying to copy what Mum does, hilarious trying to eat leaves, having her mad moments running around the paddock like a whirlwind, she has even gone through the fence into the bush for a look around and into the paddock next to her where she had the shock of her little life so far being confronted with our other new addition, a feral wether we have now acquired to keep Dad company. She sure can run fast with another goat chasing her.



Vega: 12 hours old



Vega at 17 days old

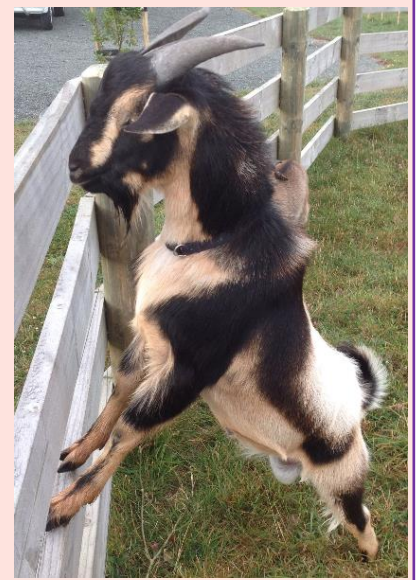
As long as we go in with a bowl of corn for Mum, she is now fine with me having a cuddle and I think even Vega enjoys it, for a while anyway. Making the most of it as it will not last long.

Can't wait for number 2, but that will be a while, as Mum is going to have a rest for a year or so.

Just in case you wondered about the name - Vega (pronounced vee-ga) is 25 light years from Earth, blue-white star part of the constellation of Lyra, the Harp. - Tracey



Proud mum (Kaipara Coast Kowhai (AG239) with Vega on the left.



Proud dad, Ellerslie Stables Nikau (AG241) on the right.



DANGER

Better to be safe than sorry

A new kid snug and comfortably contained for its first few days with new owners. But is it really safe? Spot the danger. Sometimes we learn a painful lesson from another person's misfortune. **(A doe hung herself in the hay net.)**

Please share your sad stories as well as the good stories, so that other owners can prevent a tragedy. - Alison

ATTENTION BREEDERS

I am regularly receiving requests about the availability of Arapawa goats, kids, does and bucks throughout NZ. While we have the goats' registry and I have kept email and postal addresses of many people connected with the Arapawa goats, it has become a bit of a hit and miss when trying to match breeders to potential owners. It is perhaps time to start a formal register of breeders that people can contact directly. This can be done in one of two ways:

Become members of the NZ Rare Breeds Association and register as a breeder of Arapawa goats on their website: www.rarebreeds.co.nz/join.html. As well as people contacting you directly, you also benefit by advertising your kids for free. (Highly recommended). Another huge benefit of being a member of the NZ Rare Breeds is receiving a copy of the quarterly Rare Breeds NewZ magazine which is full of invaluable and interesting information and stories about all sorts of rare animals.

In addition to this (or alternatively if you prefer), you could register with the NZAGA as a breeder who would like to be approached directly (i.e. buyers are given your contact details), or indirectly (a) where I contact you as a group when someone is wanting an Arapawa goat within your greater area and you contact them if you have something available.

If you would like to be on the NZAGA breeders' registry, please send the following details to: alison@xtra.co.nz

- ~ Your name
 - ~ Your HERD/breeding name
 - ~ Contact details (e.g. email address, phone number, street address)
 - ~ Your local area and region
 - ~ Your preference to be contacted (a) directly, (b) indirectly, or (c) either
-

Note: I will only contact you regarding someone wishing to purchase Arapawa goats if I receive confirmation that you wish to be contacted.

ATTENTION ALL OWNERS

This is also a good time to update the registry. If you no longer have your Arapawa goat/s, either through selling or through death, please let me know: alison@xtra.co.nz

Q & A

I am always a little wary of giving advice about the goats as I am far from being an expert. However, sometimes people just want reassurance and they are not sure where to turn. If any of my comments seem wrong to you, please put me right and I will put an amendment into the next newsletter.

Q. **Catching more Arapawa goats**

“I would love to be part of the breeding programme as soon as possible! We have Arapawa Goats in Port Underwood that is on the opposite side of Tory Channel. Apparently there's some good stock in there but the adults are very feral and travel large distances. Like Arapawa Island's exposed coast, the Strait side of Port Underwood is very steep and treacherous.”

A. I was not quite sure how to respond to this email as goats that have not been born on Arapawa Island, or can be proven to descend from goats born on the Island, cannot be registered as 'Arapawa Goats'. Of course we now know that goats were on Arapawa Island when the first whalers arrived (the evidence is in the book 'No Ordinary Goat') and we also know Guard moved to the Port Underwood area within 18 months of setting up the Te Awaiti whaling station, no doubt taking some goats with him for his family's needs. We also know that new settlers came to the area after this date, no doubt bringing goats with them. It is the isolation of Arapawa Island that enabled the goats released by Cook to breed back to their original phenotype which is closely linked to the genuine old English (also in the book). Sadly, any goats born on the Mainland, including Port Underwood and around the western side of Queen Charlotte Sound (i.e. Ship Cove area), cannot be considered to be genuine Arapawa goats, although many of the feral goats in those areas closely resemble them.

The writer's response ...

“That was my original hesitation also as I also know some Angora goats were released into the Port by a failed angora farm..... I also didn't like the idea of transporting them from down there, especially in knowing now there are goats available up [in the North Island]. Quite a refreshing perspective. I am really keen to learn all of this! Is there information somewhere that I can read? Otherwise I am scared you will have no time for anything else but all my questions!”

A. Please never be reluctant to ask your questions. We are all relatively new at this and the questions you ask inspire me to research and write the articles that help the process.

Q. We have a concern about getting Arapawa goats.

“My only reservation is the proximity of the paddocks to the house. After reading your notes on their ability to escape and the possibility of them calling for attention, we are a little concerned for both our tranquillity and our gardens as we have just spent a lot of time and money getting them established. What can you tell me to put my mind at rest?”

- A. It is quite normal to have concerns while you await your new paddock pets. Our goat paddocks are quite close to our house and I love their morning greeting as they wait for me to give them some hay in the morning. Your escape concerns are really only for the first few days as they get to know you. I would suggest you contain them in a shed, barn, garage, whatever you have – then spend some time with them so they get to know you (get some sheep nuts in, but no more than a handful a day). I have lovely gardens, veges, flowers, trees, all around the place and have never had a problem with the goats. Once they have established their ‘home paddock’, the minute they get a fright (I often let them out to browse the surrounding paddocks), they always rush back to their paddock. They are also easy to manage with bribes of sheep nuts. The only goats that have been a nuisance for their owners are when there is only one and they want your company, or an entire buck on his own. You will love having them around.

Q. Are sheep company for goats?

“Do goats consider sheep to be company or does it need to be other goats or humans? Are there any issues running the two together? Having said that we would never buy one only. We would get at least two or more. ... sorry about all the questions.”

- A. Feel free to ask any questions you want. I appreciate the questions as I use them in the newsletters (keeping the person asking the question anonymous; sometimes reducing it in length). If one person wants to know something, there will be others out there also asking the same questions. Incidentally, when I started this journey I knew absolutely nothing about goats whatsoever. The knowledge comes from the questions. Ok, are sheep company for goats. Not really. Sheep and goats share a worm burden so they are best kept separate. Some people run the two together all the time, which means they have to drench the goats regularly (we don’t have to drench very often as Arapawas are usually fairly worm resistant; I’ll drench if they have diarrhoea). We run them on different paddocks, leaving at least 3 weeks before we put goats onto a paddock grazed by sheep. Historically however, pre-sheep dogs, they put a goat or two in with a flock of sheep because the goats became the leaders. They would then call the goat/s to them, and all the sheep would follow. I wouldn’t put an entire buck with the ewes though, for obvious reasons. Good paddock companions for goats are horses and cattle; they don’t share the same worm burden. But again, it is personal preference.

Q. How big do horns on a wethered buck grow?

“Do the horns on a wethered Boy Arapawa get as big as a bucks horns? I saw the horns on a buck at the animal farm here and they are pretty big. I’m thinking I might be better with a girl.”

- A. Wethered bucks’ horns are nothing like the entire bucks; they are more like a does. The goat on the left (below) is an adult wethered buck; the one on the right is his mum – a doe. Wethered bucks have a lovely nature and are well worth having as a paddock pet. You don’t have problems with their cycle so their behaviour is very consistent and they train well. Don’t hesitate to take one on. They are lovely. Alison



Shaken but not stirred. Mara Davison of Port Underwood (near Kaikoura) sent this pic of her Arapawa goats soaking up the sun on beanbags.

Q. Getting started in the breeding programme

“We are finally set up on our land and are keen to get our 1st goats. I am wanting to participate in the breeding programme and would love any advice or ideas you have. This is all very new to me but I am very keen to learn!”

- A. It is great news that you are ready to start your adventure with the Arapawa goats. Because you intend participating in the breeding programme I would personally begin with a doe. Assuming you are new to goats, an ideal start would be a young doeling and a neutered buckling as a companion for her (a pair of twins is great as they have established their relationship). You could enjoy their antics as they grow (who doesn't love babies?) and learn more about them in preparation for advising others in the future. Alternatively, two little doelings, preferably from different genetic backgrounds is another viable option. If however, you are keen to commence your own breeding and are experienced with goats, then you might consider acquiring (a) a breeding pair, (b) one mature doe (over 1 year old) and an entire buckling, or (c) two mature does. If you are not experienced with entire bucks, then I would go with one of the other options until you feel confident. Once you know which direction you want to go, please feel free to contact me again and we can look at the genetic combinations and where you might purchase suitable animals a little closer to your home.

Q. How often should I change my goats' water?

- A. My rule of thumb - if it's not good enough for you to drink, it's not good enough for the goats!

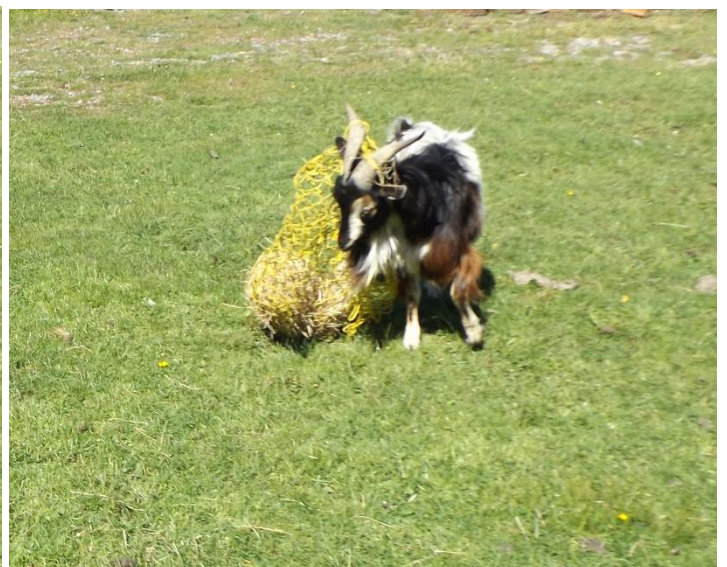


My question - What is the best drench for goats?

It is that season when the goats are vulnerable to worms. Tired of struggling to push vile tasting drench down the throats of distressed goats, I thought I would give Cydectin a go. Cydectin is a pour-on drench used with cattle and deer. Came the day when I trialled it with several of my does and the two bucks. It was stress free, easy to do (they ate animal nuts while I trickled the drench on the back of the neck) and not one bleat of protest. A few hours later I was delighted that all seemed well. A week passed and the two Island girls looked stunning – glossy coats, sparkling eyes, full of energy. I was onto something. So I used it with the rest of the herd. Two weeks later I noticed that two of the goats – both long haired – had a bald patch where I put the drench. Ouch. They are not in any distress, the skin hasn't broken or showing any sign of redness or swelling so I don't feel too guilty. One of the does has dysentery so I guess it didn't work with her. But off to the vet I'll go with my little container of poo. Hmm, maybe it wasn't the best idea after all. I'll look into it further. In the meantime, if anyone can suggest a pour on drench for goats that is proven to be safe and effective, I'd be delighted to hear from you. Alison



I really should listen to my own advice. Goats go well with horses, unless of course, there is a hay net in the paddock! This is Sultan entangled in the horse's hay net.



Worms in kids

Despite worming my kids a week or two before they left for their new home, a few weeks later they clearly had a worm burden. This is a reminder that kids need to be drenched at 2 months of age and at least every 2 months thereafter for the first year.

Worms in kids (photos sent by Vanessa)



The next NZAGA newsletter is due in May; articles, photos and questions welcome

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