THE STAGES OF DAIRY GOAT FARMING

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Introduction

The various stages of dairy goat farming will be examined. We will follow one family’s adventures in dairy goat raising from their decision to purchase their first goat, through thirty-one years of expansion, to their expected herd size this summer of 1000.

This family began as two young people, both born in Brooklyn, New York, meeting at the University of Oklahoma, one majoring in political science the other in philosophy. During their first year of marriage one taught elementary school in Oklahoma City; the other had a teaching assistant ship at OU. Near the end of that year they made the decision to become part of the “back to the land movement” of the late 1960's. It was during their second year of marriage that they began homesteading and purchased their first dairy goat. The couple this presentation will follow is Christine and Vincent Maefsky. This couple was chosen for two reasons: first, I’m very familiar with them and second, I happen to have recorded their odyssey in pictures which will hopefully make for an entertaining presentation.

I know that it is the wont of proceedings compilers to have a script of the presentation for future review by participants, or for the edification of those not attending. Due to the personal nature of this presentation, including the integral, though sometimes feeble, attempts at humor by the presenter, a written account of the presentation won’t cut it. For those reading these proceedings in hope of gleaning significant information that was presented at this conference, you may now turn the page and look to the proceedings of other presenters to better fulfill your quest.
Considerations in the Planning and Construction of a Dairy Goat Barn

Not many years after acquiring our first dairy goat, mental ruminations began to plague me with the dreams of one day expanding to a commercial dairy goat farm. Having only a few goats in these early years, there was time to dream of my very own goat palace. Through the years, I sketched plans of “the big barn”, and as often as I put pencil to paper, I put eraser to lines. The dream underwent constant changes and modifications.

In the late 1980's, with the expansion of our milk market and herd, serious consideration was given to brining the dream to fruition. Ad deliberate undertaking was made to visit and research various goat and cow dairy operations to extrapolate from them the best of their ideas, and to combine them with those of my own visions. In the summer of 1991 we began construction of DOMUS CAPORUM (the house of goats).

This presentation examines the considerations that went into the planning and construction of the dairy barn. Of utmost importance in the construction of the barn was the efficiency of management, feeding, and milking of its occupants. Constant concern was given to the concept of simplicity and macro vs. micro management of the herd.

DOMUS CAPORUM
MCMXC

Main Barn: 60' X 200'
4 main pens
6 small pens
5 Mira Fount (energy free waterers)
16' X 200' drive-through feed aisle
Insulated
Natural ventilation

Milking Parlor: 22' X 50''
pit 5'X 35''
48 Humane Stanchions (double (24)
Clean in Place 2 ½" low line pipeline
NuPulse milking equipment
12 claws with self-contained pneumatic pulsators

Milk House: two 415 gallon Sunset bulk tanks
Automatic leaning equipment
Domus Caporum (House of Goats)
Main Housing Barn
Poplar Hill Dairy Goat Farm
Scandia, MN
Scale: 1/32=1'
Considerations in the Planning and Construction of a Kid Barn

With the size of our herd having expanded to fill the complete DOMUS CAPorum (the house of goats), it became apparent that adequate provisions had to be made to accommodate the subsequent growth in the number of young stock. What began as an idea for a 20' by 30' kid nursery, grew to be a 54' by 117' combined kid nursery, young stock barn, and farm shop. This facility addressed a number of our needs of our growing farm operation. Primary consideration was given to the comfort of the building inhabitants, both caprine and human.

Building:

*Overall:* 54' x 117''
Insulated and heated
Ventilation: natural & fans
Numerous floor drains

*Shop/Storage:* 54' X 27'
Equipment maintenance area
Materials storage room
Utility room
Bathroom/Shower
10' X 7' walk-in cooler
10' X 10' overhead door
18' X 10' overhead door

*Nursery:* 54' x 26'
12 “Litter Saver” plastic nursery tubs with individual floor drains
Storage cabinets and work counter
Double stainless steel sink
Pressure washer

*Young Stock Barn:* 54' X 64'
10' wide elevated drive-through aisle
Two 22' X 64' loafing pens
Each pen has 3 doors leading to 3 outside pens
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