

# SOUTHERN FARM NEWS

A QUARTERLY Publication Of Southern Goat Producers Association

Volume 1 ISSUE 3 Third Quarter 2009

[www.southerngoatproducers.org](http://www.southerngoatproducers.org)

A NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION

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Well, surprise, surprise! THE ECONOMY is not what it used to be, or so they say, thus the main reason to adjust the size of the Southern Farm News. Check out the Editorial on page 10 for ways you can help to change the economy.

I am trying to get caught up from a traumatic year of goat health issues...kidding went well...it was the aftermath, brought on by wet weather and just about any illness that could befall a goat, that just about "did me in", thus, the reason this issue of the Southern Farm News is slightly delayed (the farm comes first, you know!) You must read the Coccidiosis article. It might be the most important economical information you can have on hand in your medical file.

Over the years, I have solely managed my farm, and have been fortunate and knowledgeable enough to handle just about any (goat) health problem. I was lucky to have learned to treat and medicate from the very best producer mentors...only calling a veterinarian for an unmanageable emergency. My past experience with veterinarians was purely medical and it never really entered my mind to ask about any farm or management questions, After the rainy spring (not fussing, mind you, grateful for the rain), after the unexpected and unwanted bouts with Coccidiosis, lice, foot-rot, anything that could befall a goat, well, I shall stop there... I met a Vet Tec ... what a wonderful experience ... she came to my rescue. I learned by pure happenstance at one of our membership meetings, that the Vet Tech that presented an educational seminar to the South-

ern Goat Producers, managed a large farm and in addition to that, had time to work on other farms for consultations. A conversation led us to talk about my adult does that had kidded recently, their awful condition as a result of kidding, and what we could do to make things better in general on the farm. She came...took a look...and the rest is history. I now have a "personal traveling vet/advisor". Kathy Daves of Summerton, SC., came to a SGPA meeting for a workshop and left with a new job, but most importantly, a new friend. She regularly commutes to Pelzer to help

us now ... So the next time you need help and wonder if an outside opinion matters, well, let me tell you the answer is, unequivocally, YES! Consider giving Kathy a call—she has some great ideas about common farming issues—she sees things in an entirely

different perspective. Our farm was about to have a "train wreck" and Kathy saved us from some costly issues and animal losses. Kathy manages an 1,800 acre Llama farm in the low country, manages her own goat farm, and still finds time to help other producers in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Arizona. You can reach her by email at [dxdarlin1@yahoo.com](mailto:dxdarlin1@yahoo.com).

Judy

## IN THIS ISSUE:

**CLASSIFIEDS pg 11**  
**Calendar of events pg 5**  
**Farm Profile pg 13**  
**Grass Tetany pg 2**  
**Coccidiosis pg 5**  
**Editorial pg 10**  
**SGPA News 15**  
**Calcium Pg 9**



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EDITOR Judy Langley

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## GRASS TETANY (STAGGERS)

Grass tetany, also known as grass staggers and hypomagnesaemia, is a metabolic disease in goats. Although often called wheat pasture poisoning, grass tetany is not restricted to wheat fields. This disease usually occurs in springtime in lush pastures, but it *can also appear following cool rainy weather in the fall when cool season grasses and green cereal grains are beginning to grow.*

Like prussic acid poisoning and nitrate poisoning, grass tetany kills quickly. Death often occurs within two to three hours of onset of the disease. It is basically a magnesium deficiency caused by an imbalance of potassium with calcium and magnesium that requires veterinary assistance

to treat and producer involvement to prevent.

Symptoms include wide-eyed staring, muscle twitching in the ears and flanks, hypersensitivity to sound and touch, staggering, foaming at the mouth, and convulsions. Goats most at risk are lactating does (milk production involves the utilization of lots of magnesium) and older goats. Least at risk are young goats, wethers, dry does, and younger adult bucks.

Soil conditions and fertilization practices can contribute to grass tetany. Soils and fertilizers high in potassium and nitrogen can produce plants that contain high potassium and low calcium and magnesium levels that can suppress magnesium absorption.

If the producer can obtain veterinary assistance quickly, the proper treatment involves slow intravenous (IV) administration of calcium and mag-

nesium. This is not something that the average goat producer can do. In an emergency when a vet is not available, the producer can try to save the goat by treating it as if it had "milk fever" (hypocalcaemia) with repeated dosing of CMPO or MFO orally. See this writer's article on Hypocalcaemia on the Articles page at [www.tennesseemeatgoats.com](http://www.tennesseemeatgoats.com).

Prevention is the key. Producers should offer quality hay free choice to goats that have access to pastures that can cause grass tetany. Goats should also receive a quality loose mineral properly formulated with higher levels of magnesium and offered on a free-choice basis.

**By Suzanne Gasparatto of Onion Creek Ranch,  
Lohn, Texas**

**\*\* See note on page 15**

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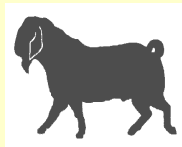
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## ***COCCIDIOSIS***

Coccidiosis is a "stealth killer" of goats because symptoms are easy to miss and irreversible damage can be done if the illness is not quickly treated. The protozoan organism which causes Coccidiosis is the intestinal parasite of the genus *Eimeria* and is species specific—which means that Coccidiosis in one species of animal cannot infect animals of another species. Example: The long held belief by some livestock breeders that chickens can infect goats with *Coccidia* is not true.

The parasite causing Coccidiosis is passed through fecal-to-oral contact. While adult goats can contract Coccidiosis (particularly does that have recently kidded -- their bod-

ies are under stress from the demands of nursing multiple kids), young kids' immature immune systems make them susceptible to this disease. Recall how kid goats pick up and "mouth" everything in their surroundings. Some of those objects are goat "pills" (feces) that are *coccidia*-infected; the parasites quickly take up residence in the kids' intestines.

*Coccidiosis is a disease caused by stress from overcrowding, dirty and/or wet pens, and unclean water. Coccidiosis is very contagious and will spread through a herd like wildfire. The first symptom is usually -- but not always -- diarrhea. Along with diarrhea always comes dehydration and sometimes fever. If treatment isn't begun immediately,*

*(Continued on page 6)*

permanent damage will be done to the intestinal lining and the goat won't be able to absorb nutrients from its food. Weight loss is substantial and sometimes chronic (cannot be cured); if it lives, the goat will always be "poor." In advanced cases of Coccidiosis, diarrhea can be watery, and may contain mucous and blood. Bloody diarrhea is blackish in color.

Fecal testing is essential. A fecal sample placed under a microscope will quickly reveal to a vet the presence of coccidia oocysts in the goat pills. Begin doing your own fecals to keep better control over the health of your herd. This writer's article explaining an easy and inexpensive fecal-testing procedure appears on the Articles page. Diarrhea in kids does not always mean Coccidiosis, but it must be considered. Fecal testing removes any doubt. Remember, diarrhea is a symptom of an illness and not an illness in and of itself. See this writer's article on Diarrhea on the Articles page .



Dewormers have no effect on coccidia. Medication required for treating Coccidiosis, both preventatively and curatively, is totally different from deworming products. Over-the-counter products for treating Coccidiosis include Albon, its generic equivalent Sulfadimethoxine 12.5% (Di-Methox 12.5% Solution by AgriLabs), and CoRid. CoRid is no longer recommended by many professionals because (a) some strains of coccidia have become resistant to it, and (b) CoRid is a thiamine (Vitamin B 1) inhibitor. The importance of thiamine in keeping goats healthy is difficult to overstate.

This writer prefers to use the DiMethox 12.5% solution; it is a generic of Albon and much less expensive. Although Di-Methox 12.5% comes in both liquid and powder, the liquid is easier to dose prop-

erly. To treat a herd that is already infected with coccidia, administer three to five cc's of undiluted liquid Di-Methox 12.5% orally to each kid daily for five consecutive days. For adults, dose at eight to ten cc's in the same manner. Di-Methox 12.5% can also be added to drinking water; follow package directions. Limit access to the water source being medicated. Automatic waterers must be turned off to maintain correct dosage strength. Do not fail to individually orally dose each goat, even if the herd's water supply is also being medicated. Preventative dosage is usually one-half the curative dose; read product labels.

The prescription antibiotic of choice is Primor. Administer one tablet orally in the morning and the second tablet by mouth in the evening of the first day -- and then one tablet orally each day thereafter -- for a total of five consecutive days. Primor comes in body-weight dosages, and the tablets are scored so that they can be split in half for accurate dosing. Endosorb, a prescription tablet that calms the gut, dissolves readily in ReSorb, other electrolytes, or water for easy oral dosing. If Endosorb is not available, over-the-counter Tagamet 200 can be given to goats; kid dosage is one-half of a Tagamet 200 tablet daily for five consecutive days. Use one Tagamet 200 tablet daily for adult goats. Pepto-Bismol given orally may also be used to reduce to coat the lining of the stomach and reduce gut irritation.

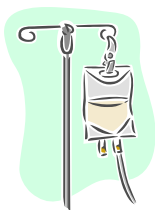
*For controlling life-threatening watery diarrhea, the liquid antibiotic Sulfamethoxazole & Trimethoprim Oral Suspension 200mg/40mg per 5 mL (prescription) is excellent. Given orally, the dosage is 2 cc per 100 pounds bodyweight. Dose accurately, as overdosing will constipate the goat. If the prescription antibiotic Primor is not doing the job of stopping watery diar*

*(Continued on page 7)*

rhea, consider changing to the ultimate prescription antibiotic for goats -- Baytril 100. Baytril 100 is available both in injectable and tablet form, but the oral treatment is believed to work faster in the gut of the goat. Occasionally a goat has an allergic reaction to Baytril 100 and joint swelling (usually in the knees) occurs, so use it sparingly and as a last resort. Treatment is available to resolve this rare problem; it takes a long time to achieve a cure. Injectable Baytril 100 is easier (and safer to the producer) to use than oral tablets when medicating big and strong goats -- particularly bucks. **NOTE: Some jurisdictions prohibit use of Baytril or Baytril 100 in any form (injectable or tablets) in food-production animals; check with your vet.**

Banamine is an excellent prescription medication for both calming the gut and bringing down fever. Normal goat body temperature ranges from 101.5 degrees F. to 103.5 degrees F. Banamine should be administered intramuscularly (IM) at a rate of 1 cc per 100 pounds of body weight. A newborn kid would receive .1 - .2 cc (one-tenth to two-tenths of a cc) of Banamine. Banamine should not be used but once every 36-72 hours; it has the potential to cause stomach ulcers.

A severely dehydrated goat should receive Re-Sorb electrolytes, both in an oral drench and in its water supply. Additionally, Lactated Ringers Solution (an inexpensive vet prescription that no producer should be without) should be given under the skin (SQ) at both shoulders -- dose 30 cc per shoulder SQ for kids. A 60 cc syringe with an 18-gauge needle should be used for this procedure. Keeping the goat hydrated with Re-Sorb (or equivalent) electrolytes and Lactated Ringers Solution (LRS) is critical



to the animal's survival. Gatorade or Pedialyte may be used in place of Re-Sorb in emergencies, but these products don't have enough glucose -- so keep a supply of ReSorb packets in the medicine chest. Rehydrating an adult goat that won't drink on its own requires stomach tubing in order to get enough liquid into its body. No amount of oral drenching or giving Lactated Ringers SQ will rehydrate an adult goat. See this writer's article on Stomach Tubing Goats on the Articles.

Green leaves are the best natural product to feed to a sick goat, regardless of the illness. Green leaves will be the first food that it will eat, followed by hay. Don't offer sacked/processed grains to a sick goat; they are too difficult to digest. A goat will begin eating sacked or processed grain feeds only when recovery is well underway.

**NOTE: This article provides information on a variety of medications for use with Coccidiosis. Do not try to use them all at one time. Faced with Coccidiosis in a goat, this writer would start treatment with Sulfamethoxazole & Trimethoprim Oral Suspension in an animal with very watery diarrhea, then switch to Di-Methox 12.5% liquid oral solution when the stool begins to achieve a "pudding-like" consistency. On run-of-the-mill cases of Coccidiosis, my choice would be Di-Methox 12.5% liquid oral solution. If fever exists, a Banamine injection would be given. If fever is not present, either Endorsorb, Tagamet 200, or Pepto-Bismol would be used. If Di-Methox 12.5% liquid oral solution didn't work, then Primor tablets (prescription) would be dosed. The prescription antibiotic Baytril 100 would be used as a last resort, when no other treatment has worked. Lactated Ringers Solution would be given SQ at the shoulders to a kid who is not drink**

(Continued on page 8)

ing on his own. In all cases, ReSorb electrolytes would be used to avoid/cure dehydration in both kids and adults. Green leaves, if available, should be offered to all sick goats old enough to eat solid food.

At the completion of every five-day antibiotic treatment, repopulate the goat's gut with live bacteria by dosing with an oral probiotic. Goat Guard Probiotic Paste sold by Register Distributing in Wade, North Carolina is this writer's choice. Furney Register can be reached at 1-888-310-9606 or on the Web at [www.goatsupplies.com](http://www.goatsupplies.com)

When kids begin eating solid food at around two to three weeks of age, the producer should consider offering a goat feed containing a coccidiostat to help prevent a coccidiosis outbreak. The general timeframe that kids are at risk for Coccidiosis runs from about two weeks of age (when they begin to pick at solid food) and through five or six

months of age (when the immune system is somewhat developed). Feeding a coccidiostat-laced feed will not overcome overcrowding and filthy living conditions. Once goats are infected, coccidiostat-treated feed will not cure Coccidiosis. Some types of coccidiostats are toxic to other farm animals; investigate before choosing a coccidiostat.

Prevent Coccidiosis by keeping pens and bedding clean, water fresh, goats uncrowded, and areas dry. Wet and dirty conditions are incubators of Coccidiosis for both kids and adults. Don't forget the absolute necessity of rotating pastures. No amount of treating for Coccidiosis (or deworming) will offset the need to rotate goats every three weeks into clean, uninfected, and uncrowded paddocks.

By Suzanne Gasparatto,  
[www.tennesseeemeatgoats.com](http://www.tennesseeemeatgoats.com)

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

**FACT:** The Southern Goat Producers Membership increased by 70% in 2009

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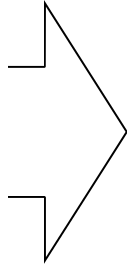
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**CALCIUM**



**Calcium by Nancy Silva**

I think most of us believe there is an abundance of calcium in our diets considering many of us consume a great deal of dairy products. Interestingly, however, this is not the case! It turns out that calcium deficiency is extremely common. The average dietary intake of calcium in the U.S. is well below the recommended levels. You may ask yourself how can this be so after all of that Ben & Jerry's? Well, it just so happens that consumption of dairy products such as milk, cheese, ice cream and yogurt are only a small piece of the puzzle when it comes to calcium. Many factors



affect the absorption of the calcium in our diets, and even more surprising is that calcium is actually more absorbable in foods such as dark green leafy vegetables—something many of us are sorely lacking in our diets!

**Role in the body**

When I hear the word calcium—a vision of strong teeth and bones comes to mind—however, calcium has many other important roles in the body. Besides acting as a structural component of bones and teeth, calcium plays a large role in muscle contraction, nerve impulse transmission, and the maintenance of a regular heart beat. It also acts as an intracellular messenger—mediating the con-

*(Continued on page 14)*

## EDITORIAL

By Judy Langley

**A**n economics professor at a local college made a statement that he had never failed a single student before, but had once failed an entire class. That class had insisted that the government's wish for socialism worked and that no one would be poor and no one would be rich, a great equalizer.



The professor then said, "OK, we will have an experiment in this class on our present government's plan". All grades would be averaged and everyone would receive the same grade so no one would fail and no one would receive an "A". After the first test, the grades were averaged and everyone got a B. The students who studied hard were upset and the students who studied little were happy.

As the second test rolled around, the students who studied little had studied even less and the ones who studied hard decided they wanted a free ride too so they studied little. The second test average was a "D". No one was happy. When the third test rolled around, the average was an F. The scores never increased as bickering, blame and name-calling all resulted in hard feelings and no one would study for the benefit of anyone else. All failed, to their great surprise, and the professor told them that socialism would, also, ultimately fail because when the reward is great, the effort to succeed is great but when government takes all the rewards away, no one will try or want to succeed.

Could not be any simpler than that? (Author unknown)

I prefaced this article because it is time that we Americans take a stand on issues and let it be known to our Congressmen and Senators how we expect them to vote. By voicing our opinion, we exercise our rights to help Washington understand that the average people are tired of "their" stupidity and greed. Our government is moving close to socialism and we need to take our Government back. Things have gotten out of control and we cannot continue to standby and ignore their idiotic actions. I am not an activist of any sort, but we need to let our voices be heard. We should contact our representatives when things are getting "screwed up" or before they vote on a bill (not after). I urge you to become more involved—go online and read the Bills that are introduced. One site to find them is [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov). Once you are online, switch over and read the Editorial: The Economics of Raising Goats (April 2009) on Meat Goat Mania by Suzanne Gasparatto—boy, did she hit the nail on the head! [www.tennesseemeatgoats.com](http://www.tennesseemeatgoats.com).

An example of "exercising our voice" is the NAIS bill that the government has been trying to get passed for several years now. I know you know about it, I have published articles and sent you emails about it; it will profoundly impact farmers and cause a great deal of unnecessary paper work, animal identification and government involvement on YOUR farm. The NAIS may still get passed, but in a lesser degree with not so harsh wording. But because farmers and producers across the country voiced their opinions and spoke out loud and clear, it seems very likely that another Bill has been introduced to (replace and) lower the NAIS funding by half.

*(Continued on page 11)*

Well, you say, they will still enact the Bill anyway, they will, but they will only get half funding and if more people (yes, that means you!) had called their representatives the funding may have been cut all together. So, you see, we have to get off our butts and make time for issues that effect us...we can not sit back and just watch from the sidelines anymore...all the issues at the present time from Washington, DC are effecting us dras-



tically...you have to make the calls (or email, fax or letters), read the Bills (they really are quite easy to read and understand even though they are long and drawn out, but that is exactly the image that Washington wants to portray) find them here: [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov) ... and spend a little time communicating with your representatives.

We CAN make a difference!

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PRESS RELEASE

AUGUST 18, 2009

Split Creek Farm, Anderson, SC, received a third place win for one of the farm's artisan goat cheeses at the American Cheese Society's 2009 competition held in Austin, Texas in August. The American Cheese Society encourages the understanding, appreciation, and promotion of farmstead and natural specialty cheeses produced in the Americas and Canada. Nearly 200 artisan cheese producers were represented at the competition.

Split Creek Farm is a Grade A goat dairy producing artisan goat milk products since 1985. Visitors are invited to stop by the farm shop to sample and purchase all of Split Creek Farm's award winning products.

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## FARM PROFILE



On the drive to Dusty Acres Farm, the home of Dottie Martin and Billy Bryson, as the name implies, I think was expecting to see land similar to mine—showing the effects of drought with little or no grass. Quite the contrary...lush, almost knee deep pastures. As I traveled up their driveway it became clear that their piece of Heaven was definitely a naturalists paradise—lush pastures, pecan trees, apple and peach trees, a Muscadine vineyard and a garden to die for. Actually two gardens. If anyone could make a living off their land, it would be Dottie Martin.

Meeting her for the first time a few months back was such a delight to me.

But getting to know her personally makes me realize I have found another real friend. She is such a refined farmer. On our first meeting, she seemed to be a “girly girl” (a compliment, of course), but seeing her in action totally blows that concept out of the water. Everyone knows that if it “looks good”, somebody is getting their “back” into it and getting their hands dirty. Dottie is totally grounded to nature and has a green thumb to top green thumbs.

Her lovely 10+ acre farm was a former chicken farm. You can still see chicken houses in the distance...wonder if that is the reason the pastures are so lush...all that chicken manure. Did she they go “green” before it was fashionable to do so?

D u s t y Acres is also home to a family of Cochins (chickens) and the site of Billy Bryson’s famous Beagles. Their lineage is awesome with a lot of champions in the

mix. Billy trains the Beagles himself and has a lot of fun doing it.

Looking out over the front lush green pasture you could see her healthy Boer goat herd. Dottie raised Angora goats a few years ago, but had to give them up because of a demanding job. When her job situation changed, she realized living without goats was not an option.



After a couple years of living without them, she and Billy got back into the goat business. Elvis, the herd sire, was there with Horny, Spot, and the rest of the gang. We missed seeing their shy Pyrenees, Sam; I suppose he was resting in the shade.

I hope you are privileged to get to know them. You can find Dottie and Billy gardening, antiquing, and enjoying their wonderful farm in Royston, Georgia.



(Continued from page 9)

striction and relaxation of blood vessels. When levels of calcium are low, the body will use calcium stores in the bones—this is a precarious situation as it can eventually lead to osteoporosis and many other physiological problems such as arthritis, muscle cramps, muscle pain, high blood pressure, irritability, and parasthesias (numbness and tingling in the hands and feet).

### **D e f i c i e n c y**

Unfortunately, absorption of calcium from our food is not a straightforward matter. Many factors affect its absorption in both positive and negative ways. Calcium needs other nutrients such as vitamin D for proper absorption. There are also some obstacles: foods containing oxalates decrease absorption of calcium. Oxalates are found in high concentrations in spinach, rhubarb, Swiss chard, beetroot, peanuts, tea, and cocoa. Other problematic substances include:

*caffeine* – approximately 2-3 cups a day of coffee can promote excessive urinary loss of calcium  
*sodium* - increased sodium intake results in in-

creased loss of calcium  
*phosphorus* - diets high in phosphorus and low in calcium promote calcium loss

Unfortunately, this is not a difficult feat to accomplish as Americans consume approximately double the RDA of phosphorus daily. This is a result of drinking soda and eating processed foods containing polyphosphate food additives.



### **Include it in Your Diet**

Excellent food sources of calcium are dark green leafy veggies such as Brussels sprouts, kale, broccoli, bok choy, cabbage, mustard, collard and turnip greens. Other good sources include milk, cheese, yogurt and fortified tofu.

**Nancy Silva, ND** is a licensed naturopath with a penchant for good food. Her monthly column discusses the nutritional aspects of some of the foods available through LocalHarvest. You can contact Nancy at [Nancy.Silva@bastyr.edu](mailto:Nancy.Silva@bastyr.edu)

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## SGPA NEWS:

The SGPA Board of Directors appointed a committee, consisting of members from the SGPA, SCMGA, and the SCDGA, to plan a Fall Field Day. The SGPA will coordinate the event in cooperation with several other goat associations from Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida, in an attempt to bring goat associations together.

The T. Ed Garrison Livestock Arena in Clemson, South Carolina was the site for The SC Dairy Goat Show held in mid May. The show was a lot of fun and enjoyed by all that attended. Our own, Evin Evans, was a judge at that event. The SGPA's J & J Honorary Boer Goat Show was also held in May and was quite a success. It brought many big, beautiful BOER goats to the area. There were in excess of 100 entrants that traveled from six

states. The highlight of the day came when Troy Vils, President of the American Boer Goat Association, presented an award to Jim Burns for his commitment to show standards and superior genetics. If you were unable to attend, well, you missed an exciting event. Congratulations to Tommy Cannon's Boxcar Willie.

The SGPA membership continues to grow and along with that growth, we get an amazing caliber of producers. The SGPA website, under the guidance of Renee Mendola, continues to be very successful - [www.southerngoatproducers.org](http://www.southerngoatproducers.org) has a lot of "hits" which translates to animal sales, grazing contracts, products sold via classified ads, and medical information given. If we continue to work together, be positive, fair, and helpful to others, I am sure the SGPA will continue to prosper.

### IMPORTANT CONTACTS:

**Southern Goat Producers Association WEBSITE:** [www.southerngoatproducers.org](http://www.southerngoatproducers.org)

**Membership list**

**Goat Links and Schedule of Events**

**Jeff Campbell**— SGPA member and owner of Eastanollee Livestock Auction  
864 449 4275 or [www.agriauctionservices.com](http://www.agriauctionservices.com)

**Judy Langley**, Editor, Southern Farm News, 864 430 2265 or  
[judylangley@bellsouth.net](mailto:judylangley@bellsouth.net)

**Renee Mendola**, SGPA Website Editor [rdmendola@southerngoatproducers.org](mailto:rdmendola@southerngoatproducers.org)

**Roy and Judy Tilson**, Owners—Snow Creek Meat Processing 864 972 1570

\*\* The Grass Tetany article on page 2 was taken from MeatGoatMania, a monthly online goat informational site, that Suzanne Gasparatto of Onion Creek Ranch produces. You can go directly to her website or you can link through [www.southerngoatproducers.org](http://www.southerngoatproducers.org) on the RESOURCE right sidebar. Although Grass Tetany is more apt to happen in the spring, be mindful that cool season grasses in the (rainy) fall can cause the same conditions.



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