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Spring 2010

2010 Dues are
due NOW!

(See page 5 for more information)



Note from the Editor

Another season has come and gone. With the warmer weather comes new babies, goat shows, and, most of all, friends!

This issue of the East Coast Pygmy Goat Club Newsletter has changed design, once again. The secondary page headers showcase pictures from breeders and the club-sponsored show. These new headers represent the unity and commitment to learning that is so important in this club. It is my hope to keep the header like this but to change the pictures each issue. I would love any cute photos you would like to share.

Thanks for reading and I hope you enjoy the newsletter!

The East Coast Pygmy Goat Club

Polio

Kay Orlando, DVM

Polioencephalomalacia (also called PEM, cerebrocortical necrosis, or just polio) is a central nervous disorder of ruminants caused by the lack of thiamine (vitamin B1) or inhibition of available thiamine. Thiamine plays an important role in key glucose metabolism. Nerve cells of the brain depend on glucose metabolism for energy. Decreased cell metabolism leads to cell death and edema in the brain. The symptoms of PEM are due to the death of brain cells and edema in the cortex of the brain. These lesions are specific to PEM on post mortem.

Clinical signs of PEM are those associated with these brain lesions. They include blindness, head pressing, convulsions, altered gait or incoordination, stargazing, and an inward and upward deviation of the eyes. There is usually no fever except during convulsions. The neurologic symptoms may be preceded by diarrhea or anorexia. Young goats – 2 to 6 months - are at most risk for the condition although goats of any age can be affected. PEM usually affects only one or two goats in a herd although once diagnosed in a herd, the rest of the group should be considered at risk. The course of the disease can be as short as a day or two or as long as a week. Goats usually die 1 to 2 days after the onset of severe neurologic signs.

In the normal goat rumen, the bacterial flora produce ample thiamine. Anything that disrupts them will decrease the amount of thiamine available to the goat. Because young goats do not have as large or active rumens as older stock, they are not able to compensate for small disruptions in thiamine production or availability. Rumen acidosis from the overfeeding of concentrates or sudden feed changes predisposes to PEM by decreasing the thiamine producing bacteria and increasing the thiaminase (destroys or interferes with thiamine) producing bacteria. Stress of weaning or shipping can decrease the amount of roughage intake and thus decrease the amount of thiamine production. Ingestion of certain substances containing thiaminase can also cause PEM. Bracken fern (which contains thiaminase) ingestion has been reported to produce the condition. Amprolium (Corid), thiabendazole, moldy hay, prolonged diarrhea, and excess sulfur in the diet can all predispose to PEM due to destruction of thiamine or interference with available thiamine. Corid is an analog of thiamine and kills the parasite by disrupting its thiamine availability. If you do use Corid for treatment of coccidia, be sure to give the correct dosage and do not overdose.



Bracken fern. Copyright © 2002 University of Pennsylvania.

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Diagnostic procedures can be done to determine the levels of thiamine present. But since immediate treatment is needed, many cases of PEM are diagnosed by response to treatment. PEM may be hard to distinguish from other neurological conditions such as tetanus and Listeriosis. Veterinarians may choose to treat for PEM while a diagnosis is being made. The only effective treatment is thiamine (thiamine hydrochloride) given as soon as possible once symptoms develop. Give 10mg/Kg every 6 hours for 24 hours. The first dose should be given intravenously. Subsequent doses can be given intramuscularly or subcutaneously. Thiamine injections (10 mg/Kg) should then be continued every 6 to 12 hours for another 2 days. If only multiple B vitamins are available, they should be dosed according to the thiamine content. Early cases treated vigorously from the onset of symptoms respond well and the goat may have a full recovery. Most severe cases have variable recoveries.

Some measures can be taken to prevent PEM. Avoid sudden feed changes. Do not feed moldy hay. Reduce amount of concentrates especially those high in molasses. Increase the amount of hay and browse. Young stock being weaned or other wise stressed should receive adequate amounts of roughage (good quality hay and browse) and not overfed concentrates. Corid should be used only in adult animals. If coccidiosis is a problem, an alternate treatment with one of the sulfa drugs should be used in young goats. And do not use Corid, thiabendazole, or levamisole when the goat may be stressed by something else such as weaning, castration, or being moved. When more than one of the factors that predispose to PEM are present at the same time, the risk of the goat developing symptoms greatly increases.

Don't miss out! Membership dues are due NOW!

Membership forms are available on the club website:

<http://ecpgc.yolasite.com/>

Forms and dues should be mailed to Stefany Hemmer:

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The East Coast Pygmy Goat Club

Looking for a vet who knows goats?

Try the vet search on the **American Association for Small Ruminant** website!

Search for a veterinarian specializing in goats--search by state, area, and name.

<http://aasrp.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=15>



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We've all been there: as new goat owners one of our goats has been sick or has had trouble kidding. What makes the pygmy goat community so great is our dedication to the breed, having fun, and helping one another. Thanks Christina Rader for sharing your story!

I am pretty new to the pygmy goat world, I just had my first baby born with my herd name! I have loved learning about the animals and most of the responsibilities that go along with them, but what I have found most amazing is the kindness of other pygmy goat owners/breeders.

My very first kidding experience ever was triplets, all breech! Being so new, I let the doe push them out....she was fine, but the first 2 babies were not....so, in tears, I called a friend in Ohio who I met through my pygmy goat search and told her what had just happened....she was so wonderful...she talked me through reaching into the doe and pulling the third baby out and explained how to do a uterine flush to help prevent infection....not at all what I expected for my first kidding!

Very fortunately, and thanks to great people, the doe and baby are thriving. I am overwhelmed at how helpful everyone is and how willing they are to share experiences that they have learned from. It would be so amazing if everyone in the world was like this! I hope someday I can help others as much as everyone has helped me... Thank you all so, so much!

Congratulations on the first baby under your herd name (Rader's Ranch) and good luck with your new herd.

Wishing you many more years of pygmy goat excitement.



The East Coast Pygmy Goat Club

HAY: THE FOUNDATION UPON WHICH SOUND NUTRITION IS BUILT: Always TEST The Hay

Suzanne W. Gasparotto, HC 70 Box 70, Lohn TX, 76852, (325)344- 5775

The following is a TRUE STORY, told for the purpose of illustrating the importance of the contents of this article.

During the winter of 2004-2005, this writer unintentionally starved her goats -- particularly kids born in early- to mid-2004 -- by feeding beautiful-looking custom-raised hay that turned out to be only 4.4% protein.

The year 2004 in West Texas was unusually wet. The annual rainfall was more than double the normal amount. Adult goats that never experienced problems with stomach worms were wormy and sometimes anemic; some young weaned kids died. Fortunately no does were lactating, so no nursing kids were affected. Goats on forage/pasture were provided with free-choice red-top cane (broad-leaf sudangrass) and Sweetlix #988 blocks. These products provided insufficient nutrition for this abnormal winter.

Goat nutritionist Kent Mills of HiPro Feeds offered his assistance. Hay was sampled and sent for testing. The results were eye-opening to this producer: 4.9% protein (4.4% protein "as fed"). The only saving grace was that the Energy level was .53. This was enough to keep the adults going but not the growing coming yearlings.

A local source of red-top cane was located; hay was purchased and immediately provided to the goats. This hay producer had tested her product: 10.75% protein, .68 Energy, and 65.62% TDN (Total Digestible Nutrients). Supplemental protein in readily available form was purchased and provided to the goats to boost nutrition levels. For forage/pasture animals, 20% protein sheep-and-goat blocks were offered. These 33-pound blocks do not have all the vitamins and minerals for goats, but they do have easy-to-eat and highly-digestible feedstuff; the plan was to feed them for a few months until the goats had caught up on their protein deficiencies. One sheep-and-goat 20% protein block per 10 goats was provided. Sweetlix's 20% protein blocks with minerals and vitamins added (#988) were offered free-choice side-by-side with the sheep-and-goat blocks on a 1:4 ratio (one Sweetlix block to 4 sheep-and-goat blocks) to keep mineral and vitamin balances correct.



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Between January 7, 2005 and March 7, 2005, this producer has fed 14 tons (60 blocks per ton) of sheep-and-goat blocks to about 1000 animals. For goats in large pens with access to small pastures (lactating does who had just kidded as the problem was discovered, old does, old bucks, and sick animals), HiPro's Exceleator 16% protein pelleted goat feed has been fed daily. After 60 days of sleepless nights on this producer's part, Spring is arriving, green plants and grasses are showing up in the pastures, and the goats are slowing down on hay and protein block consumption. The blocks will, however, continue to be offered free choice until the pastures dry out and the plant materials have more available nutrition and less water in them.

As this problem was being recognized at Onion Creek Ranch, the writer was getting calls and emails from producers around the country who were having similar problems. One lady said that she had lost five young bucks for no apparent reason. Her husband cut them open and the rumens were filled with undigested hay and plant materials. What had gone wrong? Answer: The goats were not receiving enough protein in their diet to produce microbes that would break down the fiber in their rumens, so they were starving to death on a full stomach. Enterotoxemia unknowingly induced by the producer!

Subsequent investigation has revealed that much of the United States received higher than normal levels of rainfall in 2004, resulting in plant materials high in water content but lower than normal in nutritional value. This writer's hay supplier of many years did everything as he normally did, including properly fertilizing the crop. The heavy rains leached both fertilizer and nutrients from his production.

MORAL OF THE STORY: HAY is the FOUNDATION of your feeding program. Always, always, always have it professionally tested. This writer has *lucked out* for 14 years by not testing hay, but the winter of 2004-2005 was a nutritional disaster. Never fail to test your hay. If you are fortunate enough to have sufficient forage and don't have to feed hay, have the forage tested. Do this every year. Conditions change from year to year that may require modifications to your nutrition programs.

Nothing is more complicated or more important in raising goats in any "managed" operation than proper nutrition. Consult a qualified goat nutritionist and have your conditions analyzed. It isn't expensive and goat nutritionists are not that hard to find. They don't even have to be local, but it is better. Get on the Internet or ask a neighbor. Do it yesterday.

There are numerous forage testing labs around the country. This writer's goat nutritionist uses and recommends DAIRY ONE INC's Foraging Testing Lab, 730 Warren Road, Ithaca, New York 14850. Telephone number 607-257-1272. Most labs provide collection packets for mailing with instructions on how to collect the samples. Current cost in early 2005 for hay testing is about \$40.00. Money well spent!

The East Coast Pygmy Goat Club



Word Find Answer Key

Did you find them all?

E	Z	I	Y	E	N	U	T	V	A	U	W	N	A	G	Q	E	Y	N	O	N	N	A	C	I	A	N	S	J			
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Got a funny or cute story about one of your goats? Share it with us!

Send your story to hma5010@psu.edu

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139 DAYS & COUNTING

By Dr. Kay Orlando, DVM (Reprinted from WPGC Newsletter, May/June 2000)

How far along in the pregnancy does a doe have to be before the kids will survive if she should go into labor? The definitive day seems to be day 139. Some variations will occur. Multiples of three or more may be so tiny that they won't survive. Large single kids may survive if delivered a day or two earlier. But on the whole, kids born before 139 days gestation die soon after birth if born alive and those carried 139 days or more can be expected to survive.



Upcoming ECPGC Show: The 2nd Annual Cynthia Malmrose Memorial Show

September 18, 2010 at Knee Deep Farm in Chestertown, Maryland

Judges: David Wortham and Tammi Josephson

Showmanship and Unregistered classes to be included.

For more information contact:

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The East Coast Pygmy Goat Club

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ECPGC Mission Statement:

The East Coast Pygmy Goat club is a nonprofit club founded January 2009 by fellow pygmy goat enthusiasts. Our knowledge, dedication and compassion will be the key to our success within this club. Our goal of dedication is to focus on the future of the Pygmy Goat by educating the new members, promoting health, longevity and the welfare of the pygmy goat. As a club we intend to have shows, seminars on management, health, reproduction and other challenges. Join us in our compassionate endeavor. The East Coast Pygmy Goat Club welcomes all. Owning a pygmy goat is not necessary to be a member. We do ask that you share the same interest, dedication and enthusiasm in the welfare of the pygmy goats and the future of the NPGA.

Current Club Officers and Contact Information:

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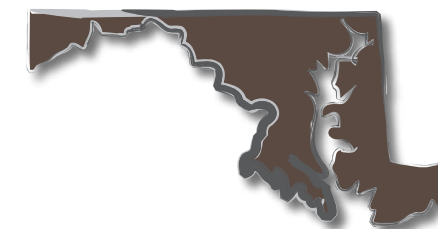
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