

SURE•CHAMP[®]

IN THE CLASSROOM

GOAT NUTRITION 101

What ingredients make a “balanced feed ration” for my show goats?

There are lots of ingredients that can make up a balanced feed ration. Perhaps what is more important than the types of ingredients, is the nutrient composition of the “balanced” feed ration. The nutrient composition consists of certain amounts of protein, energy, vitamins and minerals. These proportions will vary greatly based on an animal’s genetics, health status, age, performance expectations, etc.

There are so many show feeds on the market, how do I know which one to use?

There is no shortage of high quality show feeds on the market for your show animals. Whether it is a name brand show feed or in-house mill mix, every animal is unique and will need a ration customized to their needs and genetic potential. The best advice is to reach out to the person you bought your goat from, your 4-H leader, FFA advisor or extension agent, or talk to a nutritionist to get a plan that will suit your animal and your production goals.

How many pounds of feed and forage per day should my goat eat?

Similar to other ruminants, goats should eat anywhere from 2 to 3 percent of their body weight in dry matter every day.

Why is forage important when feeding my goats and how much should they get?

Ruminants have a unique digestive system that allows them to utilize energy from fibrous plant material. However, due to the small scale of a goat’s digestive system, they need a high quality forage source when compared to that of cattle. Their smaller stature gives them less time to physically absorb all the nutrients they consume so quality is essential. Amaferm[®], found in Sure Champ[®] Spark[®], is most notable for its impact on forage digestibility and improving the nutrient utilization and digestive efficiency in high forage diets.

How can I keep my goat’s appetite and intake consistent?

Besides good feeding and management practices, there are many high-quality supplements on the market to help your goats maintain a consistent appetite. Two of those products are Sure Champ Spark and Sure Champ Extreme with Climate Control. Both of these products offer the Amaferm advantage to increase intake, digestibility and nutrient absorption, as well as MOS to trap bad bacteria, limiting their ability to do harm to digestive health and intake. Furthermore, Sure Champ Extreme contains a unique ingredient to help maintain circulation to support animal performance in extreme temperatures; garlic, a natural insect repellent; and zinc and biotin for hoof and coat care.

How often should I feed?

Regardless if you are feeding wethers, does, or bucks, consistency is key. Typically, you will feed morning and night and want close to 12 hours between those feedings. Hot weather during the summer can decrease appetite, so it is beneficial to feed early in the morning and later in the evening. Make sure you clean out any old feed before providing fresh feed. Goats are particularly notorious for “making a mess” in their feeders.

Why is water important?

Water is the most important nutrient to an animal. Water drives intake and is a key component of health. Your animals should always have access to abundant, clean water. In the winter and summer months it is also important to monitor water temperature.

For additional livestock nutrition and stock show resources, visit surechamp.com/blog.