

# Goat Nutrition 101

**Your goat's health and production will depend on how well you feed your animal.**

Feeding an animal can account for 60% or more of its annual cost. Therefore it's important to understand what your animal actually needs as opposed to what you think you should provide.

Below are some tips to help you out on the journey!

## 1st: Know your goat?

In order to provide your goat with proper nutrition, we need to determine the actual nutrient needs of your goat. Those needs depend on several factors including; age, sex, pregnancy status, lactating or not, and level of milk production.

## Approximate Nutrient Requirements for Goats

Goats	Crude Protein (%)	TDN (%)
<b>Bucks</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Dry Doe</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>58</b>
Late Gestation	12	66
Lactation avg Milk	9	60
Lactation high Milk	11	65
<b>Weanling</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Yearling</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>65</b>

Oklahoma State Extension, Feeding small ruminants ch.5 & An introduction to feeding small ruminants, Schoenian, S. 2003/2015 Maryland Small Ruminant Webpage



## 2nd: TDN & CP

Total digestible nutrients or TDN is one way we talk about energy in an animal's diet. We all need energy to function. Different feedstuffs contain varying amounts of energy that an animal can utilize to grow, reproduce and/or lactate. As shown above TDN requirements are shown as a % of the total diet. Along with energy, animals require protein. The most common way to express this protein requirement is in terms of Crude Protein or CP. As you can see the amount of CP required vs. TDN is relatively small! Keep this fact in mind!



## Did You Know?

Goats have other nutrient requirements as well.

Vitamins and minerals, which can be supplied through supplements specifically designed to meet small ruminant needs. You may want to purchase a goat specific mineral supplement because their needs are slightly different than those of sheep.

**Don't forget the water!**

A clean fresh supply of water should be available at all times. A mature animal will drink between 3/4 - 1 1/2 gallons per day. Consumption is increased when temperatures rise above 70 degrees and during high production times such as lactation.



## Get the Facts TEST your Hay or Grain supplement

A very simple sampling process can save you money! Extension Agents are happy to help you with learning about sampling your hay or grain. The take away message here is if you don't measure it, you can't manage it!

Hay or other fiber supplements can vary greatly in their CP & TDN content!

Test yours and know what else is needed to meet the nutritional requirements of your goats. Don't guess - TEST!

The cost of testing can vary but UF/IFAS Extension Forage Laboratory charges \$7 for CP & TDN evaluation.



For additional information contact your local UF/IFAS Extension Agent!



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