

Livestock Judging Guide



By

Neal Smith

Extension Area Specialist – 4-H

Module 9: Goats



Judging Market Goats

Judging Market Goats



- ❧ Ideal market goat:
 - ❧ Weigh varies, no “ideal” weight
 - ❧ Fat covering important, but harder to detect
 - ❧ Goats lay down fat from the inside out
 - ❧ This differs from other animals, like lambs
 - ❧ Goat should handle trim and uniform
 - ❧ Correctly finished = 0.08 to 0.12 inches of backfat

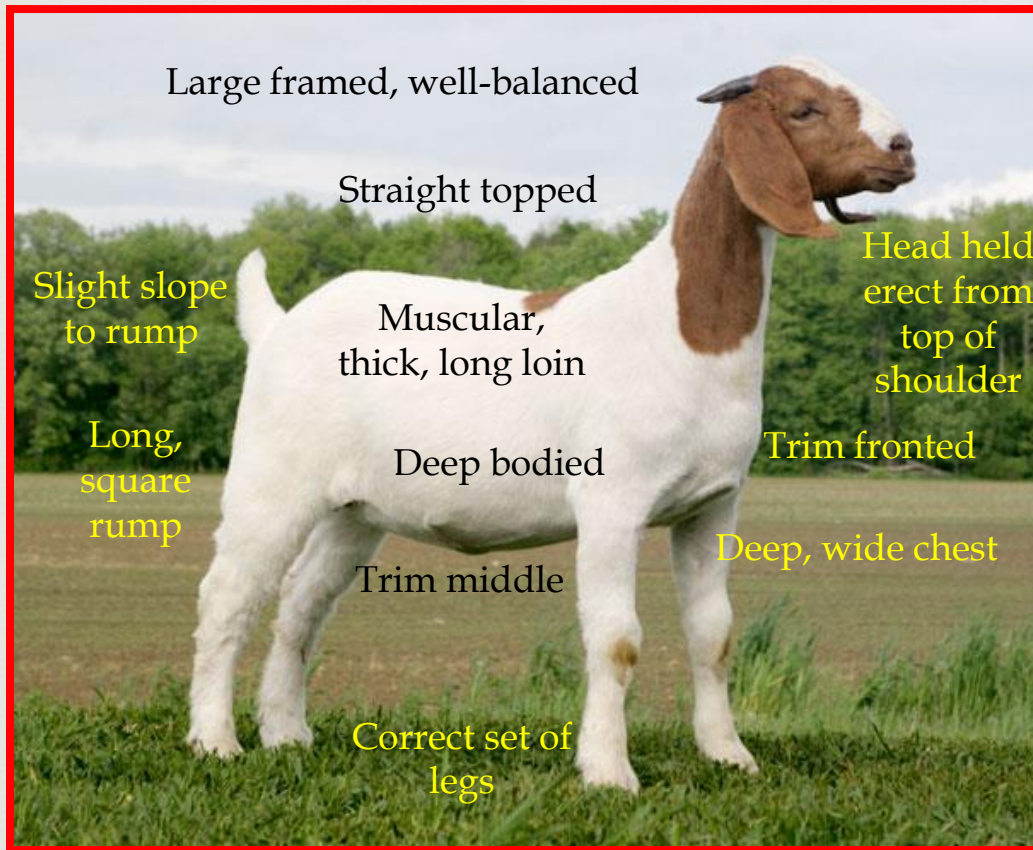
Judging Market Goats



- ❧ Ideal market goat:
 - ❧ Based wide behind
 - ❧ Abundance of muscling in hindsaddle
 - ❧ Heavy muscled leg and loin
 - ❧ Bulging forearm
 - ❧ Firm, trim finish is desirable
 - ❧ Adequate size and scale
 - ❧ Bigger, longer, heavy-boned
 - ❧ Structurally sound



Judging Market Goats



Judging Market Goats



Steps to Judging Goats

- Begin from the ground and work up
- Then from rear to front
- Rank based on traits of importance they possess
- Put greatest emphasis on most valuable traits
- Eliminate easy placings
- Rank the remainder on bases of volume of important traits

Judging Market Goats



- ❧ Ranking of Traits for Market Goats
 - ❧ Degree of muscling
 - ❧ Soundness and structural correctness
 - ❧ Volume and Capacity
 - ❧ Balance and Style
 - ❧ Degree of finish (fat cover)



Judging Market Goats



☞ Evaluating Degree of Muscling

- ☞ First - evaluated through center of leg for thickness
 - ☞ Inside & outside of leg
 - ☞ Evaluate length of muscle, should be deep into lower leg
- ☞ Second - Examine width between rear feet
 - ☞ On the move
 - ☞ Standing
- ☞ Compare base width to top width
 - ☞ Heavy muscled goats - base width = top width
 - ☞ Don't be tricked by additional width due to fat cover

Judging Market Lambs



œ Evaluating Degree of Muscling

œ Other areas to evaluate degree of muscling:

œ Shape of forearm

œ Better indicator for goats than lambs

œ Bulging forearm = good indication of heavy muscled

œ Shape over rack or withers

œ Harder to evaluate when unable to handle goats

œ If able to handle, should feel like a roll of coins

œ Larger coins = more muscle

Judging Market Lambs



☞ Evaluating Degree of Muscling

☞ Other areas to evaluate degree of muscling:

☞ Length of hindsaddle (loin and leg)

☞ From last rib to tailhead

☞ Hindsaddle should be as long or longer than foresaddle

☞ Width & length of loin

☞ More difficult to evaluate than with lambs

☞ Many contests don't allow contestants to handle goats

☞ Could confuse with bloom

Judging Market Goats



Center Leg and Base Width



Light muscled
(Narrow width)



Average muscled
(Average width)



Heavy muscled
(Wide based)

Judging Market Goats



Shape of forearm

Light muscled forearm



Bulging forearm



Judging Market Goats



∞ Shape over Rack (Withers)



Narrow & steep
over the rack



Wide & flat over
the rack

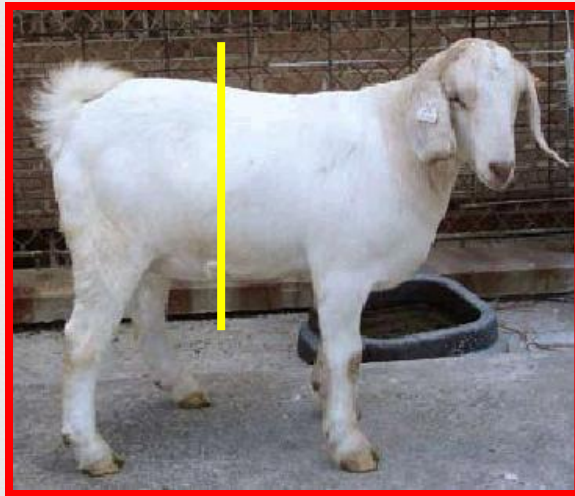
Judging Market Goats



☞ Length of Hindsaddle

☞ Contains most valuable cuts

☞ Should be greater in length & weight than foresaddle



Judging Market Goats



œ Evaluating Soundness

- œ Correct set or angle to feet, legs & joints are extremely important to:
 - œ Production (growth)
 - œ Longevity (soundness)
- œ Legs should be squarely placed under the goat
- œ Evaluate soundness by observing:
 - œ Feet and Pasterns
 - œ Hocks
 - œ Knees
 - œ Topline
 - œ Rump

Judging Market Goats



Feet and Pasterns

- Strong with slight angle
- Provides cushion for joints

Correct

Big feet with even toes, set flat on surface and square with animal's body



Incorrect



Weak set to pastern

Judging Market Goats



Incorrect Structure

Splay-footed,
toes turned out



Uneven toes



Weak pasterns

Too much set or angle to pasterns

Judging Market Goats



∞ Hocks

- ∞ Correct structure is critical to:
 - ∞ Mobility
 - ∞ Longevity
- ∞ Should have 20 degree of set or angle
- ∞ Should be clean, flat & free of swelling
- ∞ Gives flex & power on the move
- ∞ Good measure of correctness:
 - ∞ Ability to get rear leg beyond the tailhead when walking

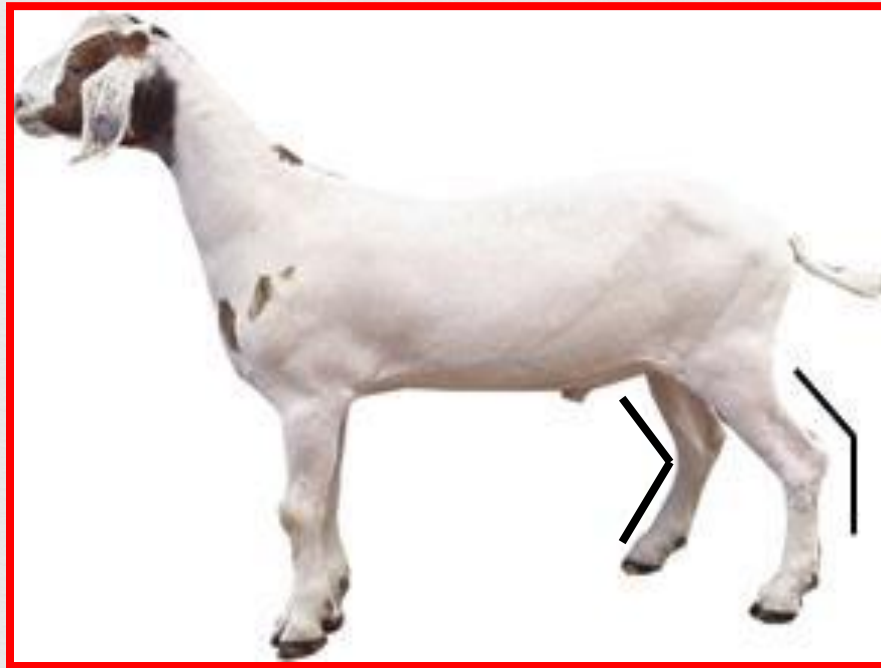


Correct set to hocks

Judging Market Goats



Sickle-hocked



Too much set to the hocks

Judging Market Goats



☞ **Knees** should be:

- ☞ Square with the body when viewed from the front
- ☞ Slightly set back when viewed from the side

Correct



Knee straight
or slightly set
back

Judging Market Goats



Knee “bucked over”, lacks cushion & will restrict movement



Knock-kneed



Knees bowed slightly inward, when viewed from front

Judging Market Goats



☞ Topline

☞ Should be nearly level

☞ Slightly higher at the apex of shoulder, than at hooks

Level topped



Weak topped



Judging Market Goats



☞ Rump

- ☞ Long, with slight slope from hooks to pins
- ☞ High tail set
- ☞ Square appearance

Short, steep
rump



Long, level
rump



Judging Market Goats



œ Evaluating Volume & Capacity

œ Three-dimensional relationship between:

- œ Width of body
- œ Depth of body
- œ Length of body



Judging Market Goats



œ Evaluating Volume & Capacity

œ Body width

- œ Wide through chest floor
- œ Bold spring of ribs
- œ Open rib shape
- œ Wide, expressive rack & loin
- œ At the rear, widest from stifle to stifle
- œ Wide base

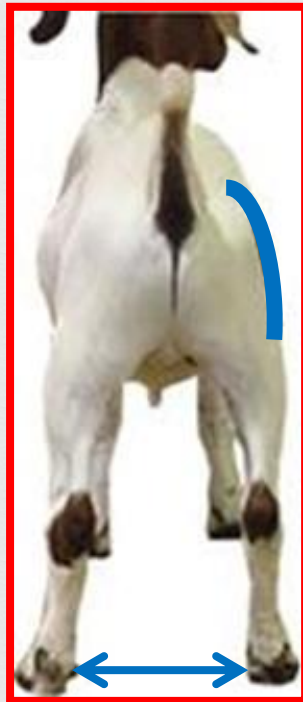


Wide, deep
chest

Judging Market Goats



Flat-ribbed.
Narrow based



Open-ribbed.
Wide based



Judging Market Goats



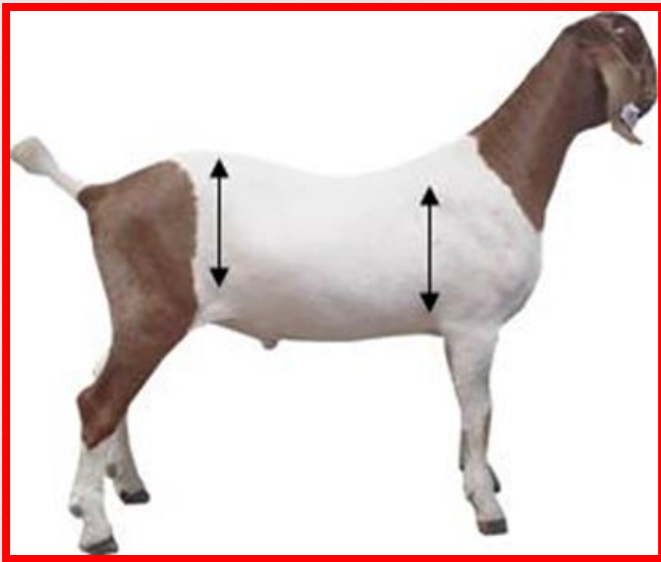
œ Evaluating Volume & Capacity

œ Body depth

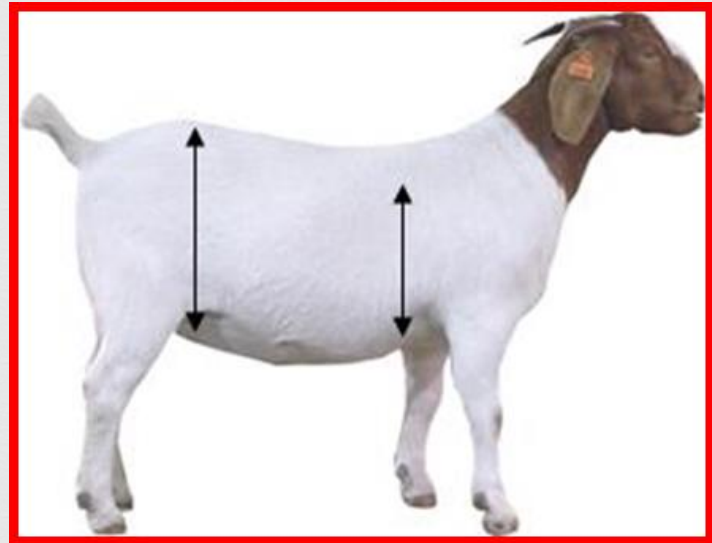
- œ Deep-ribbed
- œ Deep heart girth
- œ Deep rear flank
- œ Level underline from chest to flank
- œ Nearly level topped



Judging Market Goats



Shallow bodied



Deep bodied

Judging Market Goats



☞ Evaluating Volume & Capacity

☞ Body Length

- ☞ Longer bodied preferred
- ☞ Hindsaddle should be as long, if not longer than foresaddle
- ☞ More hindsaddle = higher placing



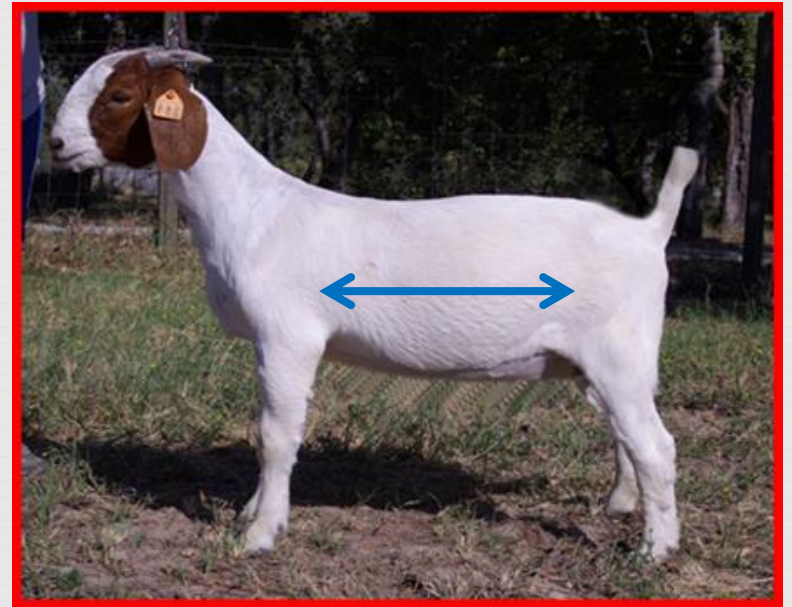
Judging Market Goats



Short bodied



Long bodied



Judging Market Goats



☞ Evaluating Balance

- ☞ Body parts blend together
- ☞ Body length, width & depth are proportional
- ☞ Length of body & length of neck proportional to width & depth of animal
- ☞ Again, as much or more mass in rear half than front



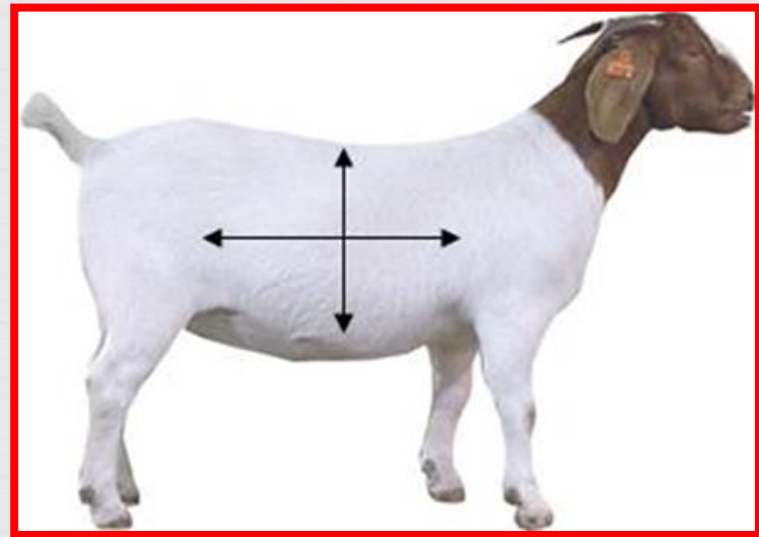
Judging Market Goats



Balanced Doe



Wide based



Long, deep bodied

Judging Market Goats



❧ Evaluating Style

❧ Style deals with:

- ❧ Correctness of structure
- ❧ Straightness of design

❧ Goats should have:

- ❧ Nearly straight top line
- ❧ Neat shoulder that blends smoothly into neck and ribs
- ❧ Long, clean neck sitting high on shoulder
- ❧ Clean breast

Excellent Style



Judging Market Goats



œ Evaluating Degree of Finish

- œ Should be lean with 0.08 to 0.12 inches of backfat thickness
- œ Goats store fat internally before putting it on externally
- œ Goats do not marble (intramuscular fat)
- œ Degree of finish is influenced by:
 - œ Amount of muscling
 - œ Frame size
 - œ Stage of maturity
- œ Fat goats should be discounted heavily

Judging Market Goats



Ideal Finish



Very trim, with
base width & clean
fronted

Ideal Finish

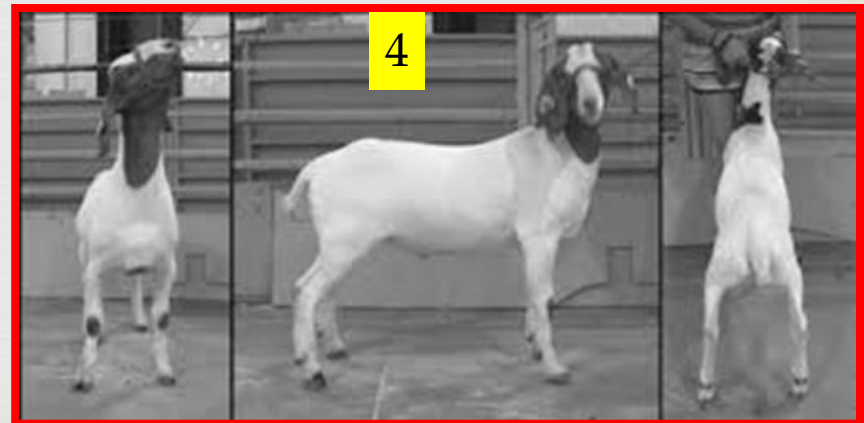


Very clean and trim over & behind
the shoulder, extremely trim & neat
through underline

Test Your Skills



Place this class of market goats.



Official Placing



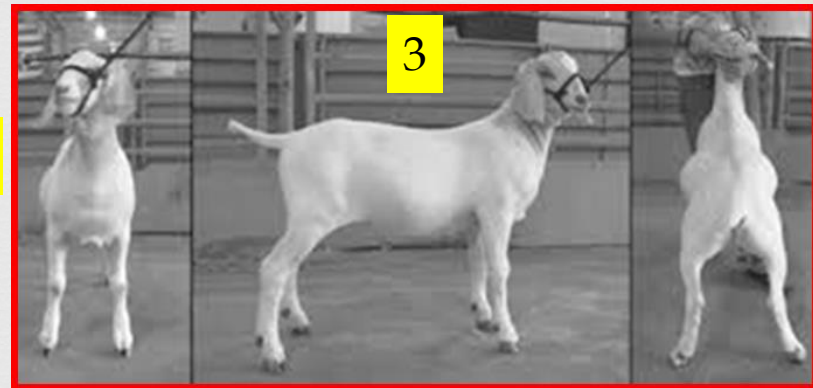
Official Placing: 1 - 3 - 4 - 2

Cuts: 3 - 2 - 4

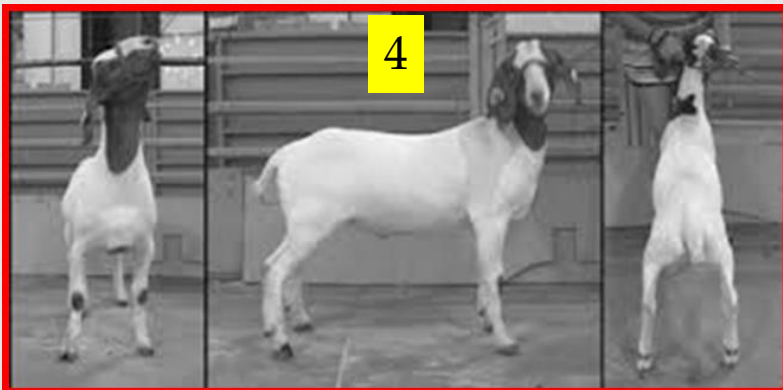
1st



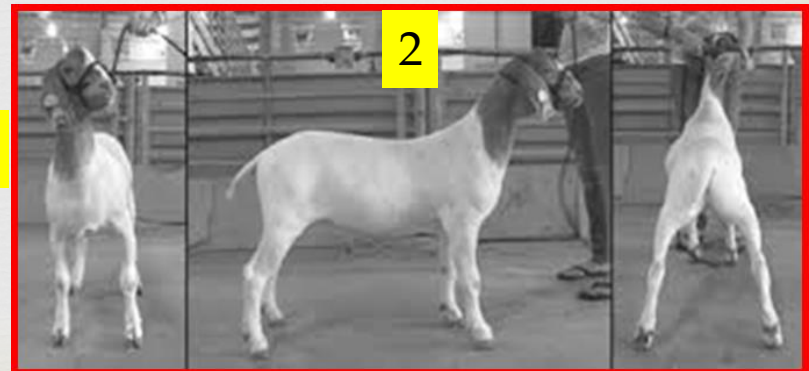
2nd



3rd



4th



Reasons for Placing



- ❧ I started the class with the combination goat of the class. The Number 1 doe was the heaviest muscled, strongest topped goat that stood on the heaviest bone.
- ❧ In the initial pair of 1 over 3, Number 1 was more expressive in its muscle shape and dimension from end to end, exhibiting more mass on the inside and outside of the leg, more width down the top and more bulge to the forearm. Number 3 did show more volume with a bolder spring of rib. But, 1 was straighter down its topline and had a more correct set to the hocks when viewed from the rear.
- ❧ In the intermediate pair, the lighter-colored Number 3 placed over 4 in a fairly close placing. Number 3 showed more overall dimension and capacity, being deeper in the heart girth and flank, as well as being wider through the center of the leg. The Number 4 wether; however, was more structurally correct in his rear legs and had more length in his neck and smoother in his shoulder. But, 3 was leveler from hooks to pins with a higher tail set.
- ❧ In the final pair, Number 4 exhibited more muscle shape in the leg and forearm. Four was squarer in the rump and thicker over the rack. Recognizing Number 3 was a more stylish goat, it still placed fourth because it was the lightest muscled, shallow made individual in the class.