

This Issue

Presidents Brief **Cover**

2015 NZBGBA AGM **P.2**



| | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Birth of the Red Boer | P.4 |
| Fact Sheet - Coccidiosis | P.7 |
| Fact Sheet - Weeds | P.8 |
| You're Kidding – Don't Panic | P.9 |
| Theuns Botha | P.16 |



Presidents Brief:

Welcome to Issue 5 June 2015.

Hopefully all members have adequate feed, water and shelter for their goats to thrive over the winter. The AGM this year was held in Oamaru and attended by just over ½ our membership. A good turnout and a great informative time. To Owen Booth, my thanks for your time and effort in organising the venue, the accommodation and allowing us to critique your Boer goats on Sunday morning.

Owen, your choice of speaker was outstanding, Sharon Price was a breath of fresh air as she discussed the merits of how and what to select for so as to improve our Boers.

On my regular viewings of goats for sale on Trademe, it concerns me the number of times I read “Registered Animals” on adverts from non-members of our association.

Can all members when selling stud stock emphasis to buyers, that they can only sell stock as “Registered” if they become members of our association, maintain an active membership, and have the animals transferred to them as registered animals at time of purchase.

On behalf of the New Zealand Boer Goat Breeders Association we offer sincere condolences to Theuns Botha of South Africa who lost his wife Paula earlier this month. Theuns, Paula, his son Willem and 2 grandkids were driving to Namibia for a family hunt when a Kudu collided with their vehicle killing Paula instantly. Many of you will remember Theuns from 2009 / 2010 when he judged the Dorpers at the Canterbury show and held a series of Boer Goat Breeder Workshops and Judging Schools. Theuns has played a major role in the development of the Boer Goat and Dorper Sheep in Australia and New Zealand. A few members have stayed with Theuns and Paula in South Africa over the last 10 years.

With Ron and Sue Cornelius (Parklands Boers) not renewing their NZBGBA membership this year it is timely for me to say thanks to you both for your outstanding commitment to the Boer Goat over the past 25 years. From being part of the quarantine process in the late 1980's with Landcorp, to the heady days of many thousands of dollars being paid at auctions, to seeing the dominance of the boer goat shift from Kerikeri to Auckland to Waikato and now Canterbury/ Central Otago. Within this newsletter you will find an article written a few years ago by the Geoff Minchin.

You will find a “Fact Sheet” styled information sheet that the Executive is proposing to develop to use as part of the New Members package and also for hand outs at Field days, Trade sites and Shows. As this is something that was asked for by the members at the AGM, your feedback will be appreciated.

We are into winter now and hopefully you have all planned your matings and kidding for the 2015 year. Included in the newsletter is some timely information on kidding and emergency kidding. Very interesting and informative reading.

I am encouraged by the exposure that goats in general have received over the past months. Three articles in the Ag mags, one on our AGM and two about Dairy goat expansions to over 2500 milking goats and a small boer goat cameo role on Country Calendar - program about Molly Gardiner and Thistle Downs.

2015 New Zealand Boer Goat Breeders Association AGM - Oamaru

Mid May saw 15 NZBGBA members arrive at Oamaru for the NZBGBA Annual General Meeting. A very low key, low cost and friendly AGM was held at the Criterion Hotel. With no nominations to fill the outgoing Executive positions both Owen Booth and Warwick Ferguson agreed for another two year term.

The Executive was able to present to members a few simple tools to help them advance their breeding stock or recording ability along with making yourself visible to buyers.

A passionate, well constructed presentation on Breeding Values, animal recording and what to select for was given by Sharon Price. Even by selecting two things that are highly heritable Sharon was able to demonstrate how recording these traits and then using that information we could all improve our goats. If we were all to follow Sharon's advice by keeping it simple but measureable then in three years the base of our herds will have improved by 25% or more.

This was followed by a presentation on Classimate which is a private Australian firm that has its roots in the Boer goat. Through Classimate there exists the opportunity to have your Boer goats assessed and classified by a trained Classimate assessor, photographed and uploaded to a site that is accessible by anyone in the world looking for livestock. Some parts are free some are a cost to you but the end aim is to get enough breeders on board so that Classimate can set up a live auction to go world wide. Classimate can be a huge help to getting International sales as a group but we as individuals often struggle to fill such an order or to be seen. In a way Classimate could be your website – check it out www.classimate.net

The Executive also took the opportunity to survey the 15 members present at the AGM with some interesting results.

- ✓ With 15 studs out of 29, this equates to 52% AGM representation which also justifies the choice of venue.
- ✓ North Island members 2 – 13%, South Island members 13 – 87%
- ✓ Mainly Stud Breeder 12 – 80%, Mainly Commercial Breeder 3 – 20%
- ✓ Years as a NZBGBA member – the bulk at the AGM fall between 7 to 14 years – 53%
- ✓ Most Studs fall between 40 to 100 Boers, most Commercial units fall between 50 to 300 goats
- ✓ Projected forward from the paid up members at AGM time, the overall North Island members 6 – 21%, South Island members 23 – 79%
- ✓ This is not an accurate breakdown of the total membership only those who attended the AGM at Oamaru but if you were to extrapolate these figures for 29 members you should get a fair idea of the NZBGBA membership makeup.

You can see that with such a small membership it is paramount that we do all we can to retain members, encourage new members, stud or commercial and continue to run a low cost Administration setup.

Besides taking every opportunity to grow membership the Executive has three goals to complete by April 2016.

1. Review and change process / information that is sent to a new member.
2. Working towards providing a basic setup / information / format for members who hold field days or trade site. This material will also be used at shows like NZBGBA North and South Champs, Wanaka Show etc.
3. To have sorted out the Registration and Transfer system (Sheep Breeders) or have an alternative in place.

Once the AGM closed, drinks and dinner were held, then off to bed so as to rise early for a visit to Whitestone Boer Stud

On a bleakish Sunday morning we all met at Owen and Annette's farm to see and hear how they manage their goats.

NZBGBA members at Whitestone Boers



After a brief introduction about farming practises we had a leisurely walk about the farm stopping to talk about each age group presented. The farm walk finished with members assessing a few groups of Boers which overall was a good educational opportunity for both the stud and commercial breeders.

The Courier Country paper also had a reporter present and an article was printed in the 27th May edition.

The birth of the New Zealand Red Boer

By Geoff Minchin

If the staff at Landcorp had been more aware of the strict cull policy on red boers imposed by South African stud breeders then the red Boer may never have been allowed to establish itself as a Boer breed in its own right.

When Landcorp went to Zimbabwe to get embryos the focus of their attention were angoras where they had obtained access to some animals from one of the top South African studs that were “almost stud quality”. While Landcorp have been reluctant to admit it those involved in the embryo work claim the boers were literally an afterthought. “The breeders where we were taking the angora embryos had access to some boers which they claimed were purebred. Quite honestly we didn’t know for sure if they were purebred but they looked pretty good,” said Lance Morley one of the people hired to assist in the embryo work.

As history now records it has been the Boer that proved the money-spinner for Landcorp earning millions of dollars over the space of only three years. Landcorp boers began with a handful of imported embryos implanted into recipient does on Soames Island. After 60 days the recipients were transferred to the Keri Downs Quarantine Station under the care of farm manager Ron Cornelius. There were no red kids born until 1988, the second kidding at the station.

Looking back Ron’s wife and co-worker, Sue Cornelius, says they were not that surprised at finding reds because they had been told almost nothing about the breed standards. In that year two bucks were born, Brownie (544/88) and another buck that was wethered due to inferior conformation and four does. Although they did not begin deliberately breeding reds to reds Sue found that whenever Brownie went to a red doe nearly all the kids were red but if he went to a red and white doe they would be mainly normal colouring with just the odd animal having a large covering of red. It was the same with the red does, only when put to a red buck would they produce mainly red kids.

Sue said it was obvious that the red genes were not strong enough to overpower the red and white genes but were “hovering” in the background ready to come out. But she said they also quickly found out that not every red was able to throw red consistently and in fact Brownie was one of only about two lines that could repeat the performance. Just about every buck and a good number of the does that have been able to throw red colouring when bred “red to red” have come from the Brownie line. The exception was a red-headed, white buck called “Star” (not the same “Star” that went to Nebraska for a price rumoured to be in excess of \$US50,000) but he would only throw red progeny to a doe line that goes back to A99.

On the dam side there was also a very narrow genetic base with most red progeny coming back to doe numbers 49/88 and 61/88 (1988 born). Since then one or two other doe lines have appeared which can produce similar results.

But right from the beginning the reds got no favours at Landcorp. There was no policy to breed reds as such in fact there was some argument by senior Landcorp personnel to avoid breeding red. Under this environment the reds had to be able to be in the top 10% or so of animals to avoid culling. Brownie was that sort of animal, recalls Sue. His performance statistics put him in the top half dozen animals and he was to peak at about 120kg, in spite of spending six weeks in plaster with a badly fractured foreleg when he was a yearling. He justified the decision by Ron and Sue to use him as a sire, not just for the red animals he left behind, but for some of the normal coloured animals he sired. It is also of interest to note that his full brother was the Old Man (536/88) one of the top sires imported into the US.

A look down Brownie's progeny line makes interesting reading and includes:

- * Booger (583/92) by Brownie from dam 49/88, the original red buck imported into the US by Norman Kohls in 1993. Booger died in 1997 after siring a number of champion meat goats.
- * 533/93 from dam 61/88 another Brownie son sold for the top price of \$US7500 at a special sale of red boers at Talpa, Texas in 1995 (eight of the 17 red boers sold at the sale were by Brownie).
- * 55/93, a Brownie doe, sold for the top price of \$US5000 at the same sale.
- * Bush (his US name) bought by McMorries of Texas from Landcorp.
- * Gideon another son (bred by Ron and Sue after leaving Landcorp) and sold to Rodney Robinson, Texas (Gideon's sister also ended up in the US but is now dead).

Sue said that the Boer was developed over many years in South Africa from a mixture of bloodlines including indigenous goats and genetics from the East, India and Spain. Included in these were Nubian type animals with strong red, black and brown colouring.

While the South Africans have bred for red heads and white bodies for many generations those colour genetics remain and only need the right mix to come back out," said Sue. She said it was interesting to note that while defence against skin cancer, some of the commercial animals available can have variable degrees of pigment. "At least with the reds you can be pretty sure of the pigment whether it is a stud or commercial animal." But as Sue points out: "you can make good cases for both animals, but in the end it is what you the breeder wants to see in your paddock."

Sue said she and Ron had often been asked if they had a preference for red boers. "We don't have a preference for all reds over white with red heads. We look at a goat, regardless of colour, to see if it is structurally sound and able to produce a viable agricultural product."

During their eight years as farm managers at Keri Downs Ron and Sue developed a soft spot for the reds largely due the interesting challenge that breeding coloured genetics presents, says Sue. They have since bought the original red sire and dams- Brownie, 49/88 and 61/88 (had to be put down last year) - that laid the foundation for the red boers which are now recognised as purebred under the New Zealand boer registration system.

While Ron and Sue say that it is nice having the original red genetics in case they have to go back to them, it is obvious that nostalgia and "softness" play a big part in the decision. Brownie can no longer chew properly and gets massive wads of compacted grass stuck in his cheeks, which he cannot swallow (looking like a kid with a huge gobstopper in each cheek). Every day or two Ron has to put his hand into this decaying mess to pull out the wads. I think that takes the special love of a man for his animals.

Both going on 10 years Brownie and 49/88 are supposed to be retired but someone must have forgotten to tell them. The two original reds spent some time together in the winter and in December last year 49/88 gave birth to a massive red buck kid.

The Cornelius's have a flock of about 20 red does and four bucks including Brownie, a son Rajah, Magnum who has Brownie several generations back on the dam side, and Aussie a red buck resulting from the introduction of the Terraweena (Australian) boer genetics from white parents. The Terraweena buck was brought in to provide a desperately needed new genetic line to add to the very thin Landcorp line. Sue said they would not normally use a buck unless it had several generations of red breeding to ensure repeatability of type colour and temperament.

She said that in the original crosses of red to red the percentage of red progeny was variable in the range of 50-80% but now that they have red to red going back four or five generations they are finding the colour pass down is closer to 90%.

Ron and Sue breed red headed boers as well as all reds and like both. They say there are arguments for each type depending on where you are farming and what you are trying to do. Some breeders in the USA and Australia favour the reds because they will blend with the background and be less vulnerable to predators such as eagles and coyotes. Pigment is another area where the reds can have an advantage, especially in the area of commercial animals.

The South Africans say that there are no red boers in South Africa, yet visiting overseas breeders have come back with photos of a large flock of does with a big red doe right in the middle. She said she was sure those does had only been kept because their performance was higher than the average of the other does.

How to pick your red bloodlines?

Sue said she can only really talk for Landcorp red bloodlines but it is probably fair to say most reds whether they are in Australia, USA or New Zealand (now also Korea), come back to Landcorp lines. She said the genes are recessive which means that you need to do your homework on the red bloodlines before purchasing. If you don't you could buy a buck (or doe) that is red but which can't pass the red genes on, except on a random basis, even when bred to other reds."

Sue, who maintained pedigree and mating records at Keri Downs for eight years, said that apart from the bucks described above, the doe lines to look for in pedigree papers were A99 and BL24. She said A99 was the superior line in both conformation and colour. There are also red lines from African Goat Flocks and Terraweena.

However, because many people have now bred up lines from indigenous local species such as Spanish goats in the USA it will soon be possible to find good red lines without any help from the above bloodlines.

"In the end though, if you want to buy something that will breed true you need to see proof that the last two or three generations have reliably thrown red," she said.

Article reproduced from "The Goat Farmer" by Geoff Michin

Note: Since this article was written full Reds are now bred for by the South Africans and a very healthy genetic export trade existed to all parts of the world until a ban because of a Foot and Mouth outbreak in South Africa. The South African National Boer Goat Show regularly has over 100 Red exhibits.



Fact Sheet

Produced for the information of members and the general public

Coccidiosis – the black death

Coccidiosis in goats can cause ill thrift, severe diarrhoea and sometimes death. Most often seen in kids and younger goats, it requires good husbandry practices to minimize or eliminate it.

CAUSE:

Coccidiosis is caused by protozoan parasites of the order, Coccidia. In goats the disease is caused by coccidian of the genus Eimeria, which invade the cells of the intestinal wall. Coccidia are highly specific, but sheep and goats may share some species of coccidia.

SIGNS OF INFECTION:

The coccidia invade and destroy intestinal cells, resulting in loss of blood and electrolytes, and poor absorption of nutrients. The most common sign of infection is diarrhoea which may be severe and the faeces may contain blood. If the infection is very acute, goats may die within 24 hours without developing diarrhoea. Infected animals also show a rough hair coat, poor weight gain (or actual loss) and weakness.

PREDISPOSING FACTORS:

Young or previously unexposed goats are the most susceptible, particularly at times of stress, e.g. at weaning. Goats appear to develop resistance to coccidia with age, but stressful conditions can cause this resistance to break down. Environmental, nutritional and management factors can all act as stressors and predispose goats to the disease.

These factors include poor nutrition, lack of shelter, overcrowding and excessive handling. Overcrowding of goats in damp conditions where food and water are liable to faecal contamination, can also lead to a build-up of oocyst numbers and make a disease outbreak more likely.

SPREAD OF THE DISEASE:

A goat becomes infected by ingesting mature oocysts of coccidia. Each oocyst ingested has the potential to destroy thousands of the host's intestinal cells. Once inside the intestine the infective stage of the coccidia emerge from the oocyst and penetrate the cells of the intestinal wall. They then pass through further stages of development during which they multiply rapidly, rupture the host cells and invade new cells.

This process is repeated several times until finally new oocysts are formed and passed into the external environment via the infected goats, which pick them up from contaminated food and water and from licking contaminated hair. A kid can also pick up the infected oocysts from a does udder.

Moist temperate or cool conditions favour the maturing process. It can be as short as one day in summer or several weeks in winter.

Once mature, oocysts are very resistant to disinfectants and can survive up to two years under favourable conditions. If exposure to oocysts is stopped the infection becomes self-limiting.

The degree of damage depends on the number of oocysts ingested.

CONTROL:

Control is aimed firstly at preventing access of goats to large numbers of oocysts, and secondly at reducing stress in the goats environment.

The use of preventative drugs is a third avenue of control that may be necessary in high risk situations.

Preventing access to oocysts

- ✓ Use feed and water troughs which goats cannot defecate in.
- ✓ Ensure water troughs do not overflow, leaving the ground around them wet.
- ✓ Avoid overcrowding, especially on damp pasture.

Preventing Stress

- ✓ Provide good, well drained shelter.
- ✓ Avoid yarding goats for long periods.
- ✓ Avoid mixing young kids with older animals.
- ✓ Maintain good health by good nutrition and worm control.

Cleanliness in shedding, food and water and provision of dry pasture free from contamination will go a long way to ensuring your herd remains free from this disease, whose symptoms are often discovered when the damage has been done.

NOTE:

The above may not solve the issue, but its preventative recommendations need to be taken on board.

Always consult your Veterinarian.



Fact Sheet

Produced for the information of members and the general public

The battle between farmer and weeds

Every landowner has to contend with both nuisance and noxious weeds. Nuisance weeds often lower farm production and therefore should be controlled, but there are no laws compelling land owners to do so. However, there are laws in New Zealand regarding the control of noxious weeds. As with all laws, ignorance is no excuse and land owners risk penalties if they fail to comply with these laws. Indeed a noxious weed is one which causes serious economic loss to agriculture or damage to the environment, which involves us all in both a personal and community responsibility.



Council has the right to enter private land and eradicate noxious plants, if the owner has not complied with a legal notice and can legally recover costs without the possibility of prosecution.

Councils usually seek to control noxious weeds by co-operation rather than litigation. It is very important that all land occupiers work with their local Councils to control noxious weeds, and there is absolutely no excuse for not doing so.

Up till now, most council's strategies for all weed control have been substantially based on the use of chemicals. These strategies are usually quite costly and they do not always produce satisfactory results in difficult areas. In recent years the health risks associated with the use of weedicides have become a matter of community concern. Farmers are especially becoming very concerned about the risks to the health of themselves and their families; to the risks of chemical build up in their stock, their crops and their pastures; and to the threat of litigation caused by chemical drift.

Fortunately, as we Boer goat breeders are aware, the dietary preference of goats offers us a very viable alternative to reliance on chemical controls. There have been many studies over the last twenty five years proving the usefulness of goats in controlling weeds, both noxious and nuisance.

There are a few weeds that goats will not eat and some that are toxic to them. In these instances, other methods of weed control remain important. The truth is that Boer goats offer huge benefits when properly managed within overall weed control strategies.

If you are looking to diversify, increase productivity or simply have a problem with weeds or re-growth the Boer goat industry offers some interesting benefits.

- ✓ Goats prefer to browse weeds given a choice
- ✓ Goats utilise land that is too steep or inaccessible to sheep, cattle and man.
- ✓ Have different grazing preferences to cattle and sheep so they tend not to compete with each other.
- ✓ Used in correct rotation with other livestock goats can reduce worm burden
- ✓ Few seed heads eaten by Boer goats remain viable so they will not spread weeds to other areas.
- ✓ Well managed Full blood Boer or Boer infused goats have heavier carcase weights, faster growth weights and a higher dressing percentage over all types of other goats.



- ✓ Boer infused meat is heart friendly.

You're Kidding - Don't Panic!

Your doe needs you to be calm and gentle. The vast majority of births will proceed in a normal and healthy manner, but it is good to know what to do in an emergency.

If you have small goats, you will need small hands in order to intervene. Extend your hand and try to compress the fingers as much as you can. If your hand is about the same size as a normal kid's head, you should be able to go in. Note that your hand will pass through the *very* bony construct of the pelvis, and will be heavily constricted. This means that you must work gently, but quickly, before the blood supply to your fingers is cut off.

You must secure the doe, preferably with a gentle handler at her head and shoulder, or tied to an immovable object, so that you don't have to chase her around. When entering the doe's reproductive tract, your hand must be CLEAN, well LUBRICATED, and move slowly and steadily.

It can be *extremely* difficult to determine what you are feeling with your fingertips. For instance a pointy little rump can feel like a muzzle, I find it easier to visualize what I am touching by closing my eyes while I feel around.

ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT:

A nice, soapy disinfectant. This is not to protect you; it is to protect the doe.

Fill a clean bucket with hot water and keep it in a place where it will not be knocked over. Before intervening in any way, scrub your hands and arms thoroughly (up to the elbows, please!) and dry them on a scrupulously clean towel or disposable paper towelling. Buy paper towel in bulk and you won't be tempted to scrimp on it.

Scrub again as needed if you are going in more than once or get dirt or bedding on your hands or arms.

Some prefer to use long latex gloves, but I find them awkward. I'd rather scrub!

Lubricant - KY jelly works well - Vaseline is too thick and goeey, and is not water-soluble, so I cannot recommend it. Buy **lots** so that you don't feel obliged to skimp when you need it.

Appropriate **thin, soft rope** or "lambing snare" for pulling. Look for something with a fine, soft finish and good grip. I have used both with good success. .

In a pinch, baling twine or the familiar yellow nylon will do, but it is slippery, does not hold well in a leg noose and harsh to the touch (think of your poor doe if you have to use it internally!).

Your vet's number - preferably one that will make on-farm calls. While this is listed last, it is **THE most important tool at your disposal**.

Every goat breeder should be willing to pay the cost to retain a professional when a situation is beyond our ability, and should possess the wisdom to know when to make that call.

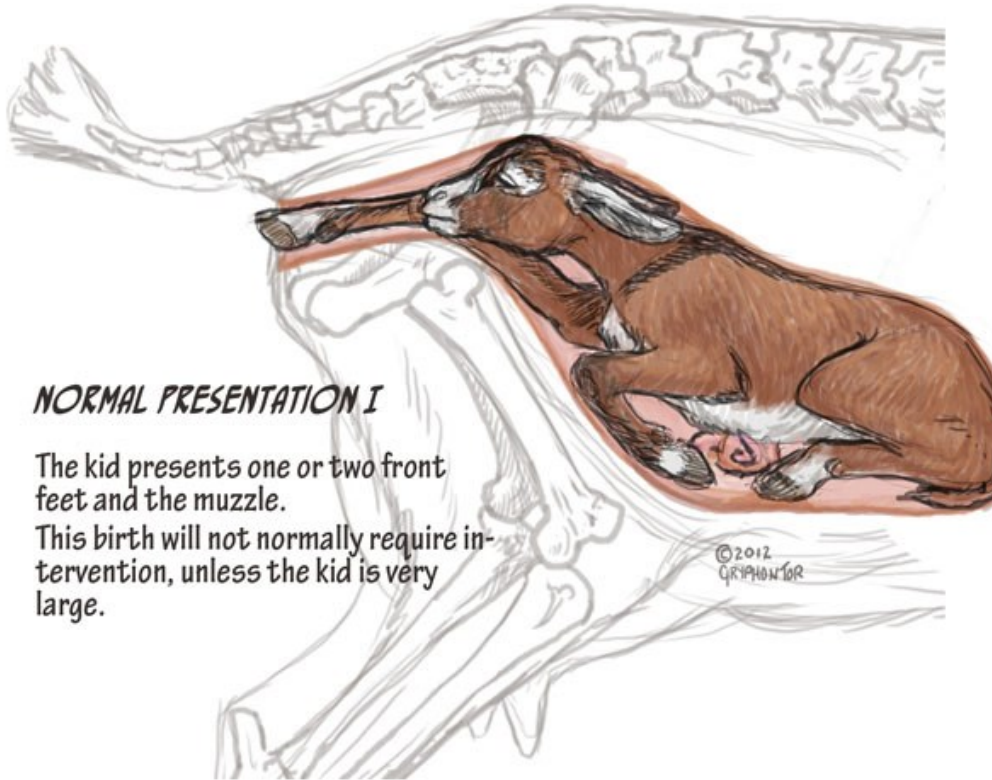
Danger signs - STOP and call the vet if:

- The kid is really stuck, if you note bleeding (bright red blood), any prolapsing of the uterus, if a kid has died some days previous and has become necrotic ("off-smelling," pieces come off when pulling - or any signs that the doe is in extreme distress. Know when to call. She is worth it. The kids are worth it. You are worth it. Too many times, we hear that the goat owner cannot afford an emergency vet call. Here's what I do. Every month I put a little money into a savings account. \$25, \$50...then forget about it. It adds up, and chances are you may never have to use it, but when you do, you will be far less stressed.

Let me repeat the most important rule: DO NOT PANIC.

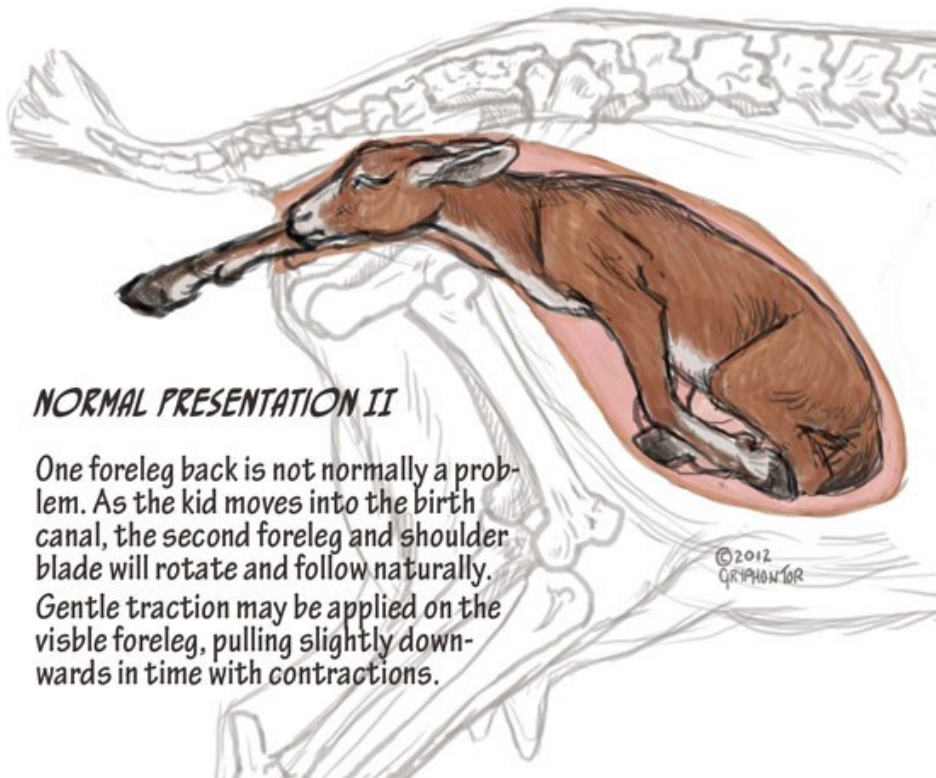
Note: If in doubt call your vet early enough for them to be a help. Do NOT risk the health of your goat!

Possible Kid Presentations:



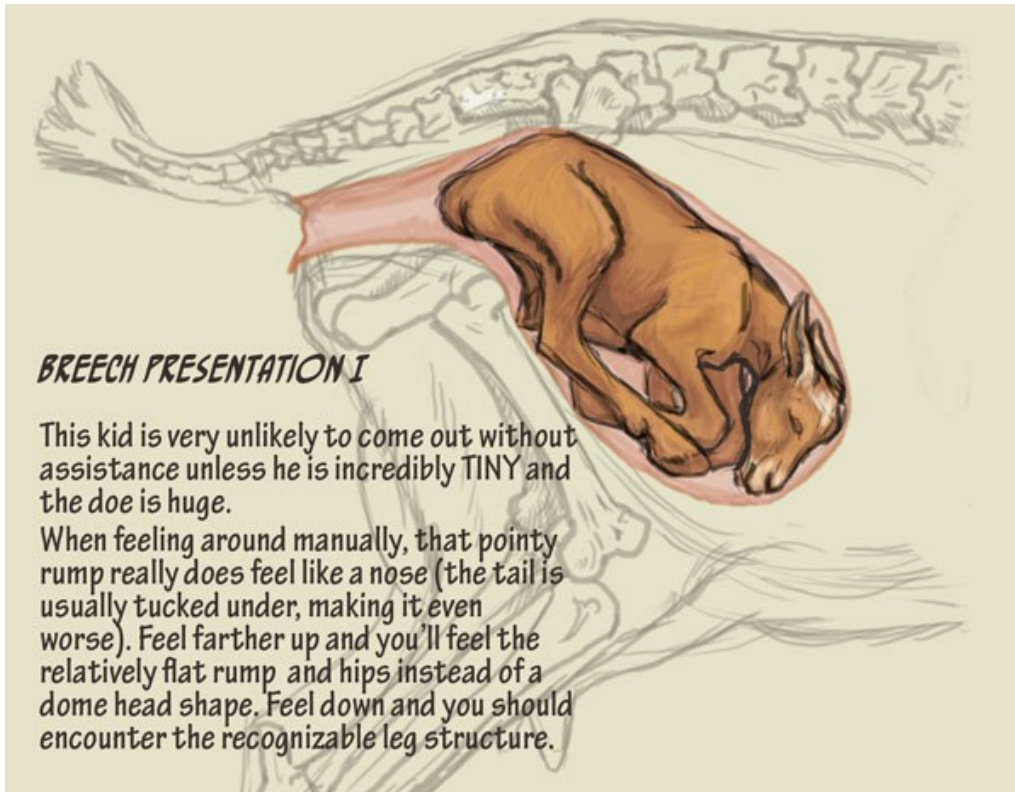
NORMAL PRESENTATION I

The kid presents one or two front feet and the muzzle.
This birth will not normally require intervention, unless the kid is very large.



NORMAL PRESENTATION II

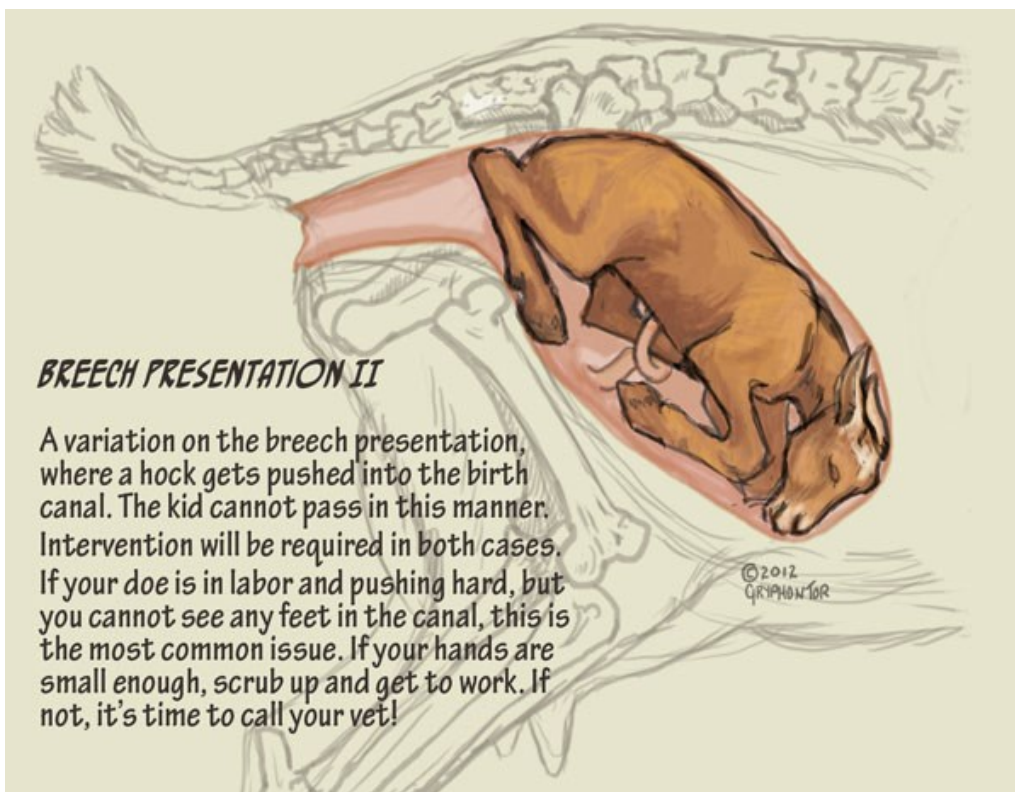
One foreleg back is not normally a problem. As the kid moves into the birth canal, the second foreleg and shoulder blade will rotate and follow naturally.
Gentle traction may be applied on the visible foreleg, pulling slightly downwards in time with contractions.



BREECH PRESENTATION I

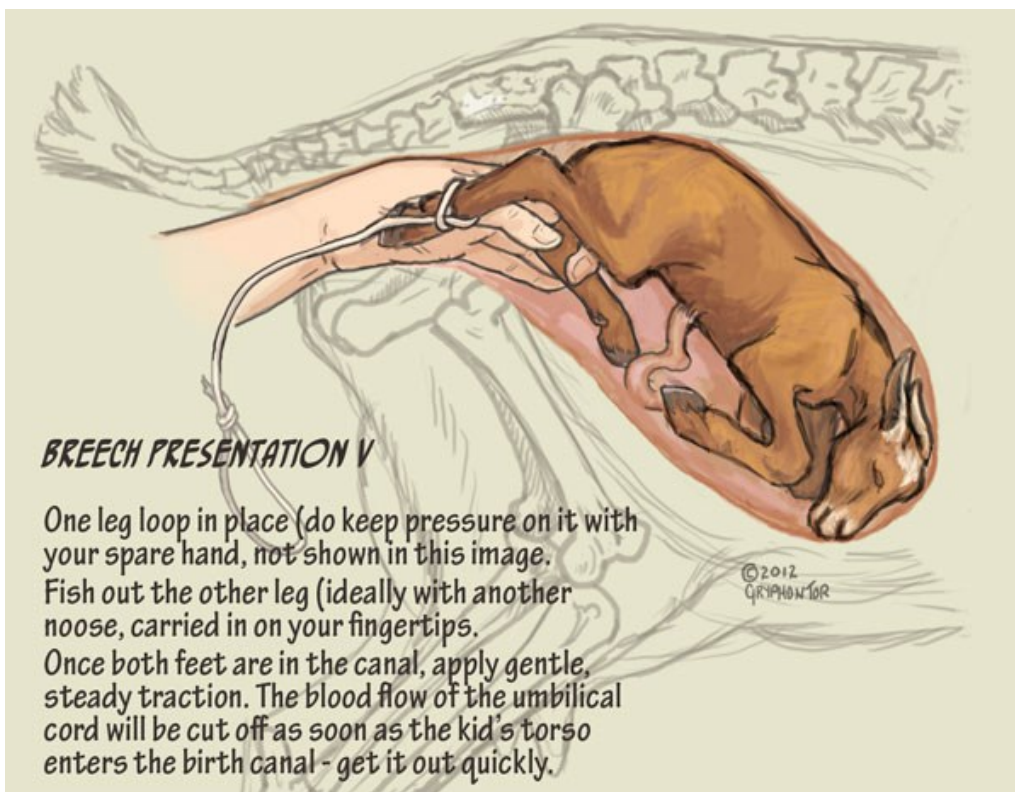
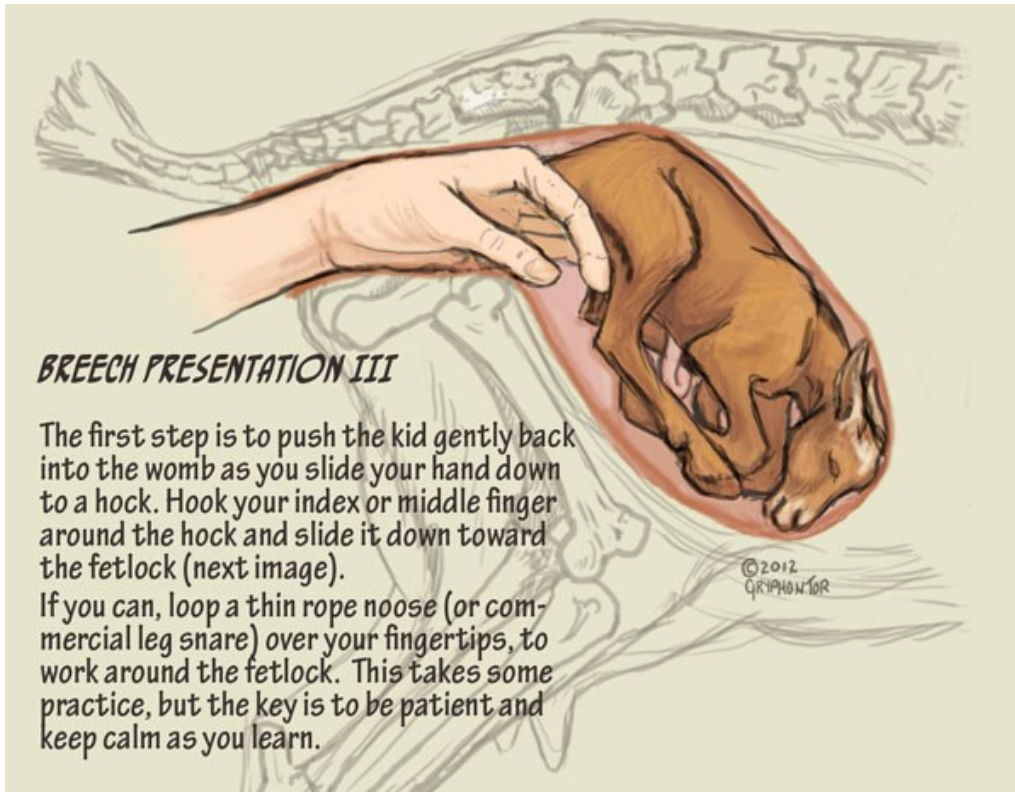
This kid is very unlikely to come out without assistance unless he is incredibly TINY and the doe is huge.

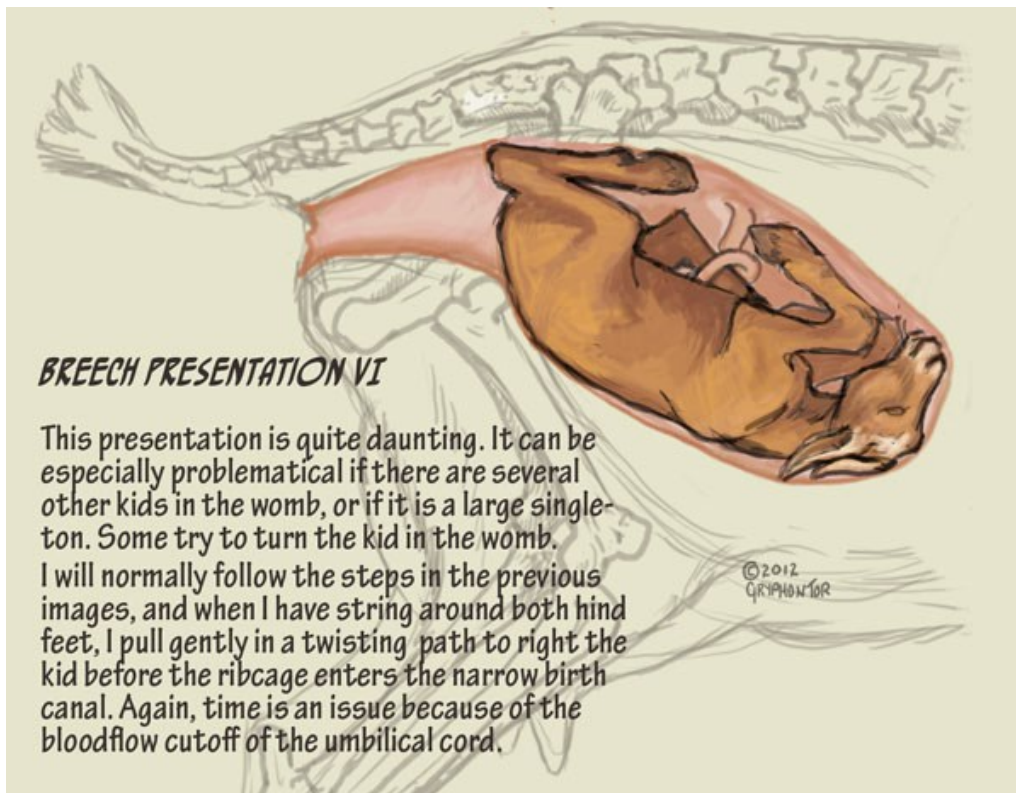
When feeling around manually, that pointy rump really does feel like a nose (the tail is usually tucked under, making it even worse). Feel farther up and you'll feel the relatively flat rump and hips instead of a dome head shape. Feel down and you should encounter the recognizable leg structure.



BREECH PRESENTATION II

A variation on the breech presentation, where a hock gets pushed into the birth canal. The kid cannot pass in this manner. Intervention will be required in both cases. If your doe is in labor and pushing hard, but you cannot see any feet in the canal, this is the most common issue. If your hands are small enough, scrub up and get to work. If not, it's time to call your vet!



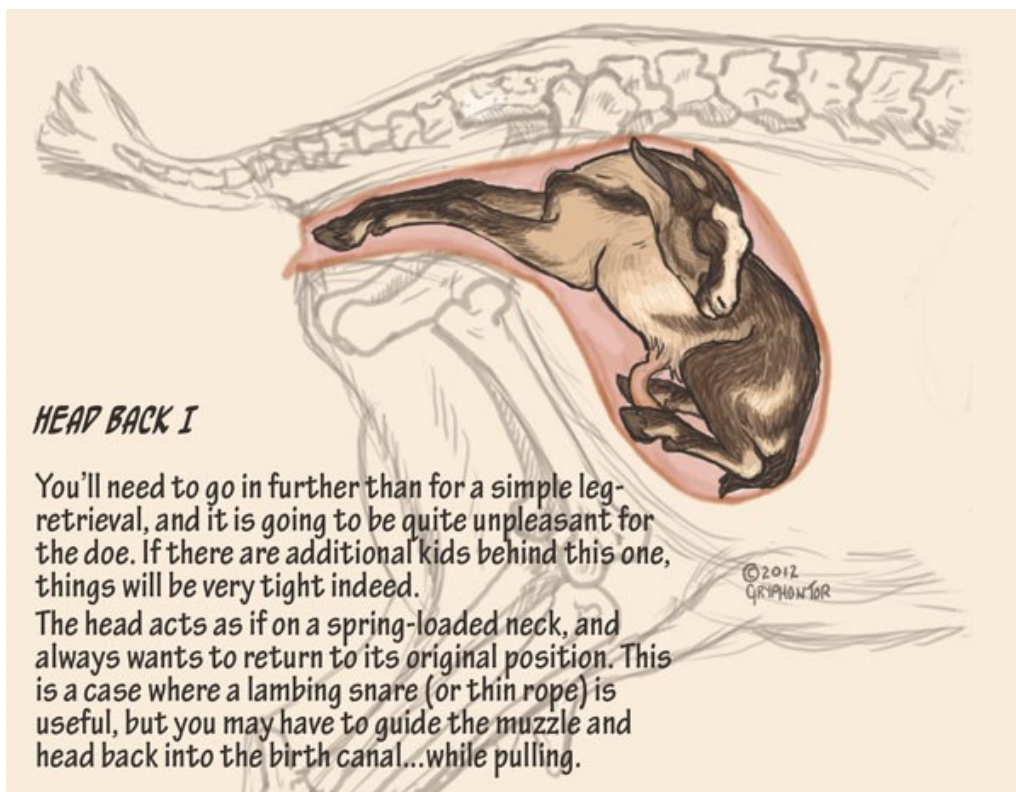


BREECH PRESENTATION VI

This presentation is quite daunting. It can be especially problematic if there are several other kids in the womb, or if it is a large singleton. Some try to turn the kid in the womb.

I will normally follow the steps in the previous images, and when I have string around both hind feet, I pull gently in a twisting path to right the kid before the ribcage enters the narrow birth canal. Again, time is an issue because of the bloodflow cutoff of the umbilical cord.

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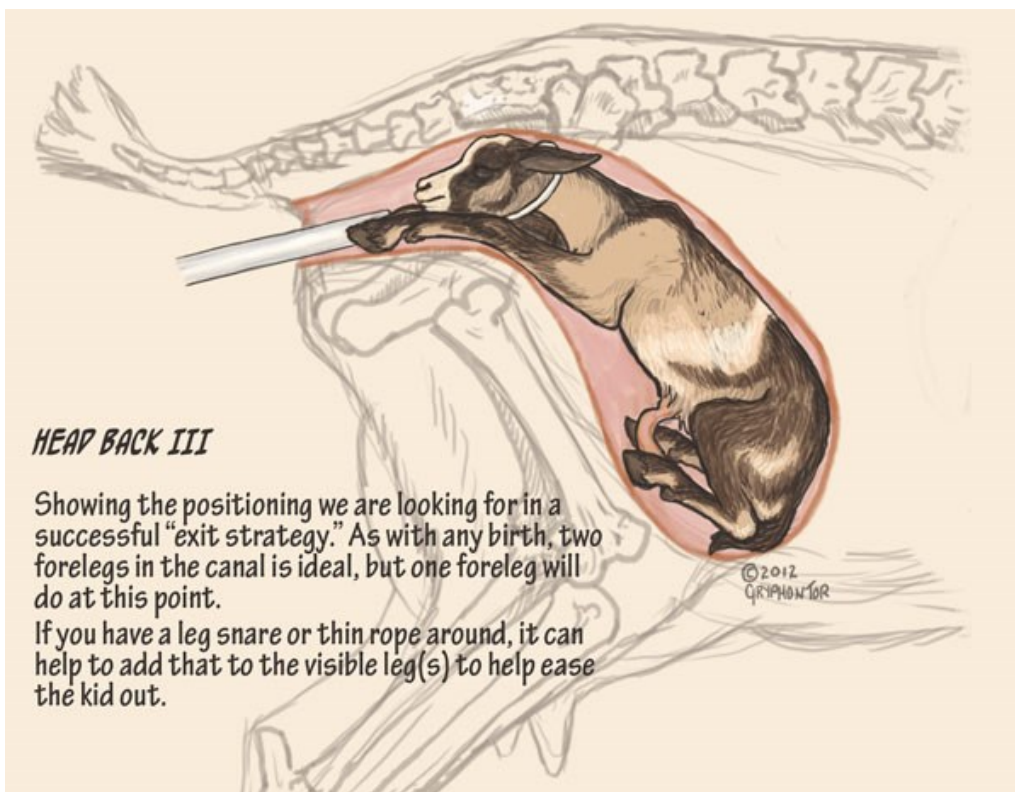
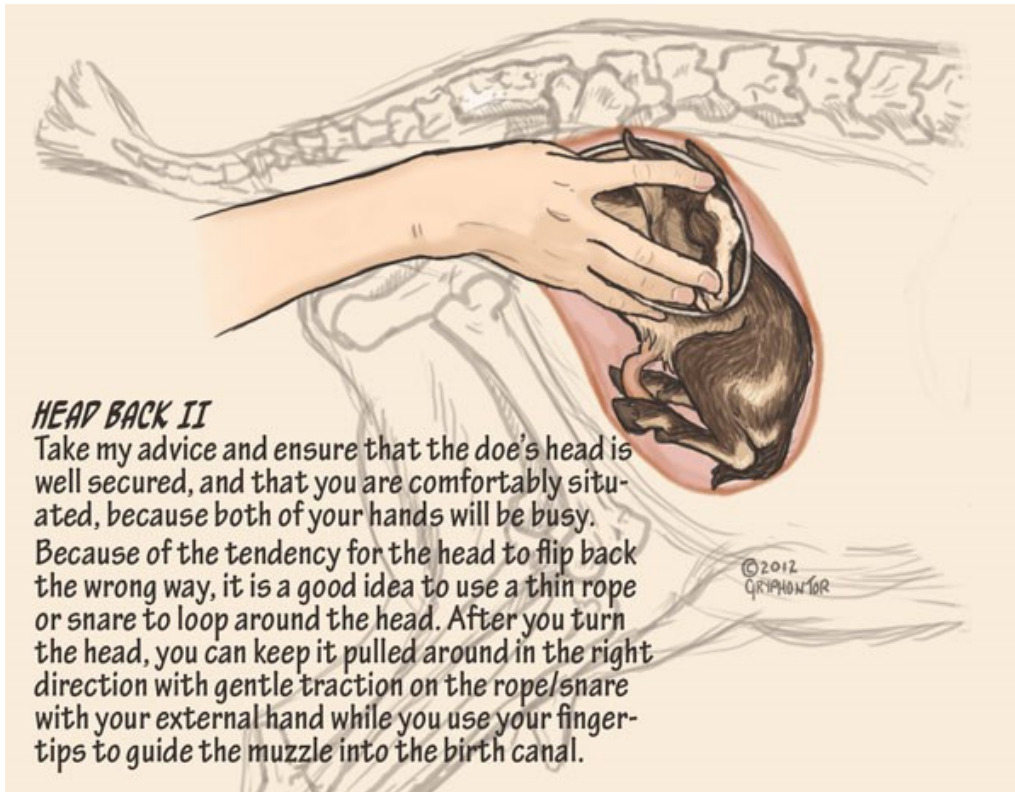


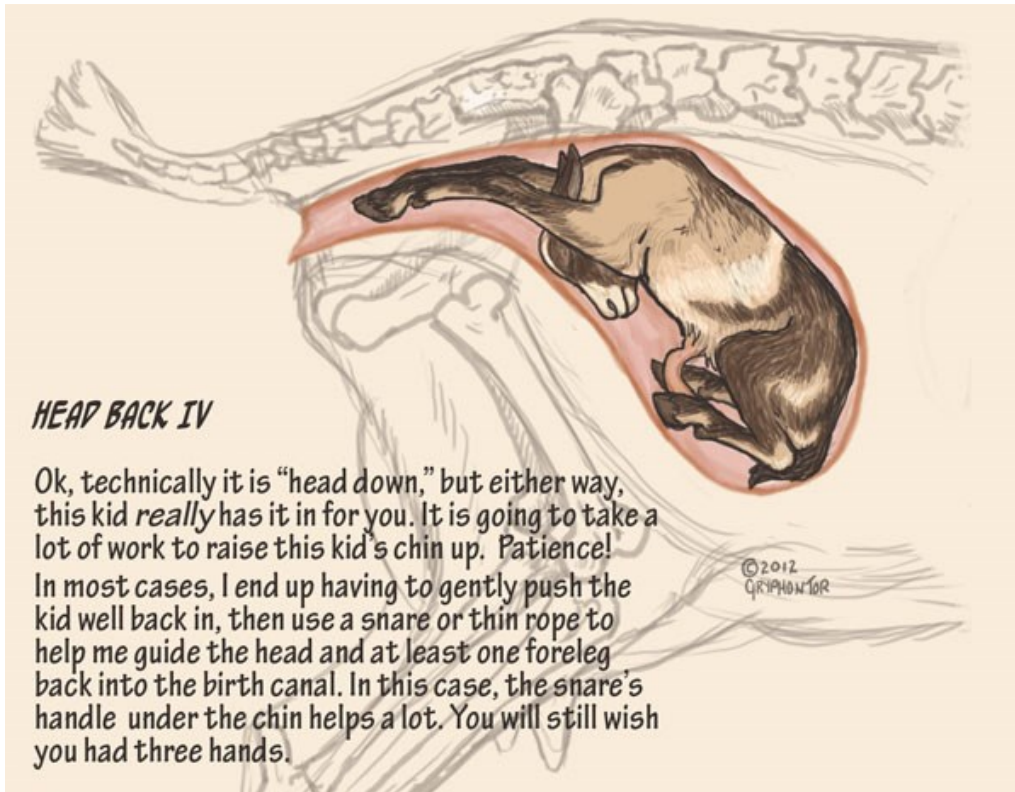
HEAD BACK I

You'll need to go in further than for a simple leg-retrieval, and it is going to be quite unpleasant for the doe. If there are additional kids behind this one, things will be very tight indeed.

The head acts as if on a spring-loaded neck, and always wants to return to its original position. This is a case where a lambing snare (or thin rope) is useful, but you may have to guide the muzzle and head back into the birth canal...while pulling.

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The end result of any mating should be the successful birthing of the kid/kids and then being able to wean well grown kids that have been reared by the doe.



2010 Breeders Workshop in Christchurch



Theuns Botha - middle

The picture below was taken at Kanonfontein Farm and can be seen on the Kanonfontein Boer Goat website.
www.theunsbothaboergoats.co.za



A goat is welcome on my grave as well!