

Preparation for angora and pygora goat shearing

Animals:

Goats are notoriously clever and escape artists. It's best if you can pen your goats up in a nice dry area before shearing - ideally without too much loose bedding (or it will work its way into the fiber), and close to the shearing area. If rain is called for, please put your animals inside before it starts, as shearing them wet can be both dangerous and ruin the fiber. Please do whatever you know is best to keep them as little stressed as possible. Our method of shearing goats is not stressful on them and takes an average of 5-8 minutes per goat.

Shearing area:

There are many methods for shearing goats: I use the same method as that for alpacas, which is a self-contained tie system with mats. This requires an approximate minimum space of 10' by 6'. The area should be flat and dry, and well lit. In the event of inclement weather, please let me know if you do or do not have an area to shear that is protected from the rain.

Manpower needed:

Two people are needed to actually shear a goat: the shearer and someone to keep the head steady. I bring headholders for jobs larger than 15 animals. We stretch the animal out on the ground with legs tied, which serves two purposes: it keeps the animals and workers safe, and it allows for removing the fleece in the most efficient method. You, the farmer, are responsible for fiber collection. If you need us to collect, label, and bag the fiber, an additional fee will be assessed.

Services performed:

In addition to the shearing, typically goat owners want to have toenails trimmed and I will take care of this unless you let me know otherwise. Some owners wish to administer vaccines and/or deworming shots at the time of shearing. I discourage this practice, as I have seen negative health results.

It's important for the owner to be present while the animals are being sheared. Sometimes physical conditions – scaly skin, bumps, lesions, lice, etc. – come to light when the fleece comes off and I want to be able to alert the owner to any such things found.

The process:

I tip the goat over gently and trim toenails, and shear the belly and between the legs. Normally belly wool is not collected, although some people use it for felting. We then stretch out the goat on the ground, tying the legs so that he is stable and cannot fuss. I push the fiber to the side as I shear, so that the fleece can be easily collected either during or right after shearing. The fiber collector or another helper sweeps off the mats, while the next animal is brought to the shearing area.

The Fleece:

Please have bags ready and labeled for each animal and/or color.

Biosecurity

I travel from farm to farm and in order to not transfer any diseases between flocks, I take the following precautions:

- (1) Wipe down mats and my shoes with disinfectant
- (2) Use new shearing blades and wipe down shearing machine
- (3) Disinfect hoof trimmers

If there are any conditions your animals have that I should know about, please tell me so that I can take extra cleaning steps before travelling to the next farm. *Please note: If animals are out in the field and need to be caught, there will be a surcharge.*

Please let us know if you have any questions or special requests, and thank you for working with Shroeder Shearing.

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