



Body Condition Scoring of Goats

Body condition scoring (BCS) is a quick, easy method of describing how thin or fat goats are, using a numerical score from 1 to 5. A goat may be given a half score, such as 2.5, if it is between BCS 2 and BCS 3. Assigning a BCS cannot be done by looking at the goat, one must feel for muscle and fat cover. An appropriate BCS range for goats is from BCS 2 to BCS 4, as seen on the reverse side. Goats that are too thin (BCS 1) may have nutritional or health problems reducing productivity. Overly fat goats (BCS 5) have reduced fertility, increased birthing problems, and health problems.

BCS is commonly assessed in the loin area. Feel the amount of tissue covering the ends of the spinous and transverse processes of the vertebrae. Feel any loin muscle and fat filling the space between the backbone and horizontal bones. In very thin goats the bones can feel "sharp." As the animal gains condition, the thicker tissue covering makes the bone ends feel more rounded and smooth.

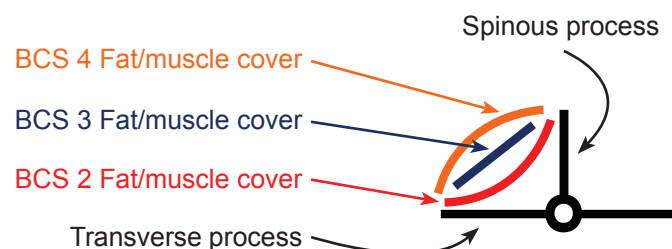
Recommendations

Does

- BCS between 2.5 to 3.5 at breeding
- BCS of 3 to 3.5 prior to wintering and prior to kidding (Does may drop 0.5 or more in BCS during lactation, regaining condition after weaning with sufficient nutrition.)

Bucks

- BCS 3 to 3.5 prior to the breeding season

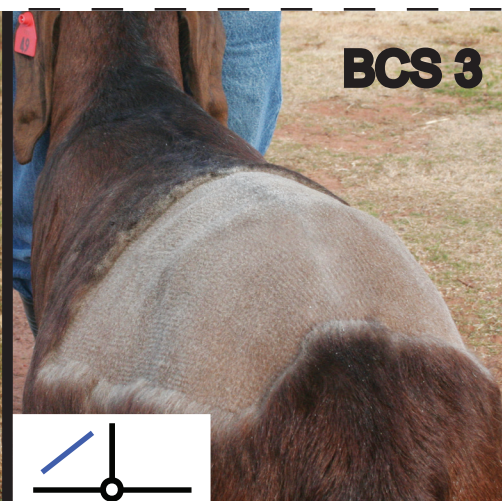


<http://www2.luresext.edu/goats/research/bcshowto.html>

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BCS 2 - Spinous process is felt as a ridge. A depression is felt between the spinous and transverse processes. Little muscle and fat can be felt. If bone ends are sharp and individual vertebrae felt, the BCS is 1.



BCS 3 - Spinous process does not feel like a ridge, but smooth with small ripples indicating the bones. Area between spinous and transverse processes is filled with muscle and fat cover and felt as a straight or slightly bowed out slope.



BCS 4 - Spinous process feels smooth but not buried in tissue. Individual bones are difficult to feel. Area between the spinous and transverse processes feels full and rounded. If bones are buried in tissue and not felt, the BCS is 5.