Dairy and Meat Goat Online Certification Courses

Langston University has recently launched an online certification program for dairy goat producers and updated and relaunched its popular online certification program for meat goat producers.

New goat producers, as well as some established producers, have an expressed need for current, correct information on how to raise goats and produce safe, wholesome products in demand by the public. Information is needed in all areas, from basic housing and management to nutrition, herd health, reproductive issues, marketing, product safety, and value-added products.
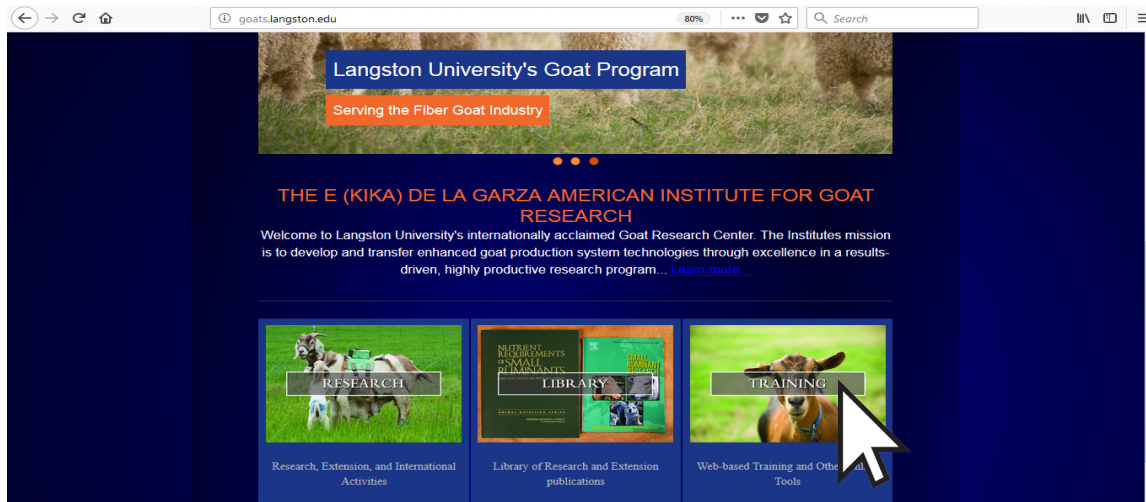
Many producers obtain information from the World Wide Web. While proper, science-based information does exist on the internet, producers with little to no livestock experience have no background to discern "good" versus "bad" information. In some cases, information posted could be harmful to animals and to the economic viability of goat enterprises. As the goat industry grows and evolves, a quality assurance program, that is compatible with HACCP-like programs, is essential. Such a program ensures the production of a safe, healthy product that satisfies consumers and increases profit for the production industry. The objectives of this certification website are:

1. *to provide reliable educational information incorporating a Quality Assurance Program that is suitable for dairy and meat goat producers, county agents and other agriculture professionals and*

2. *to provide testing methodologies allowing for certification of dairy and meat goat production for those producers desiring certification.*
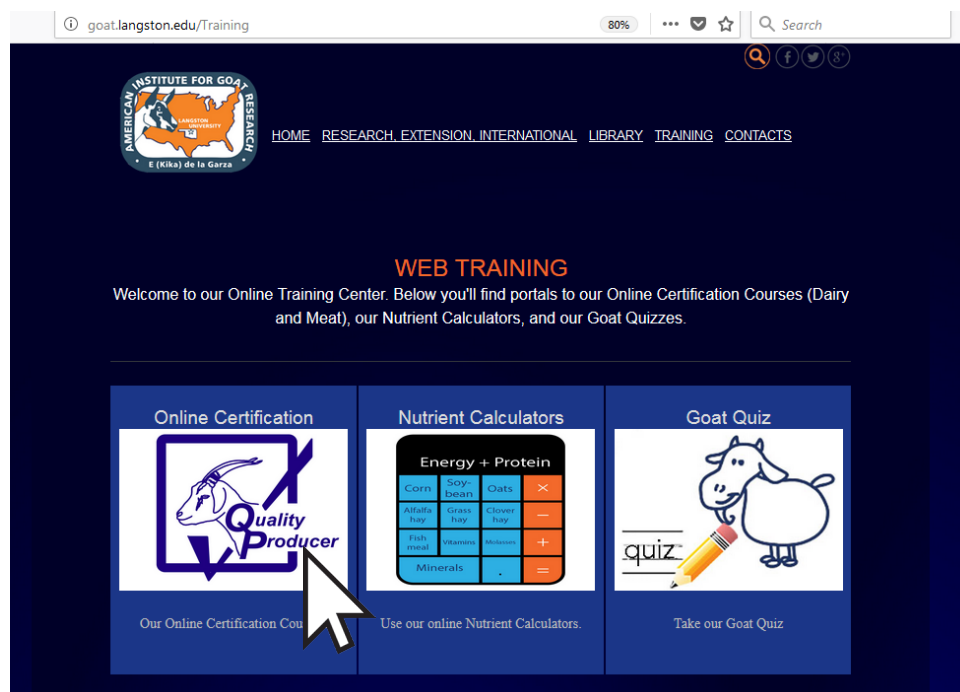
How to Enroll in the Online Certifications

1. Go to *http://goat.langston.edu* or *http://goats.langston.edu (*new server for Langston University Agriculture Research and Cooperative Extension).

2. Scroll down the home page and you will find three tiles labeled ACTIVITIES (RESEARCH), LIBRARY, and TRAINING.
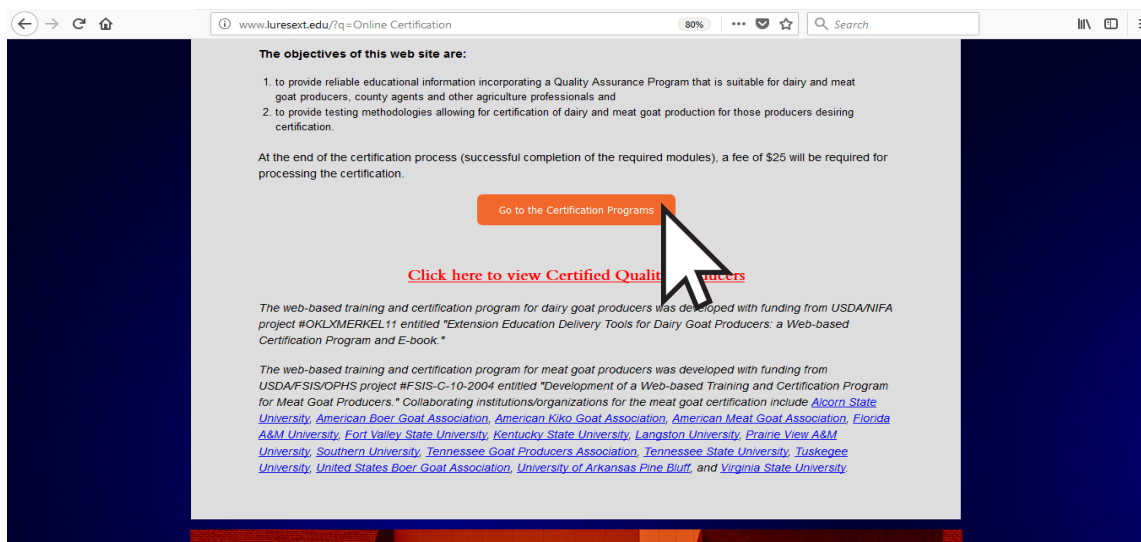

3. Click on the TRAINING tile. Alternatively, you can click on the TRAINING menu item at the top of the home page. In addition to being the gateway to the online certification courses, this page serves as the gateway to our Nutrient Requirement Calculators page, where you will find links to the Technical Version Calculator and the Producer Version Calculator. The Training page also give access to the Goat Quiz, where you can test your knowledge on goat facts.

4. Click on the Online Certifications tile. You will arrive at the online certification page. The certifi-
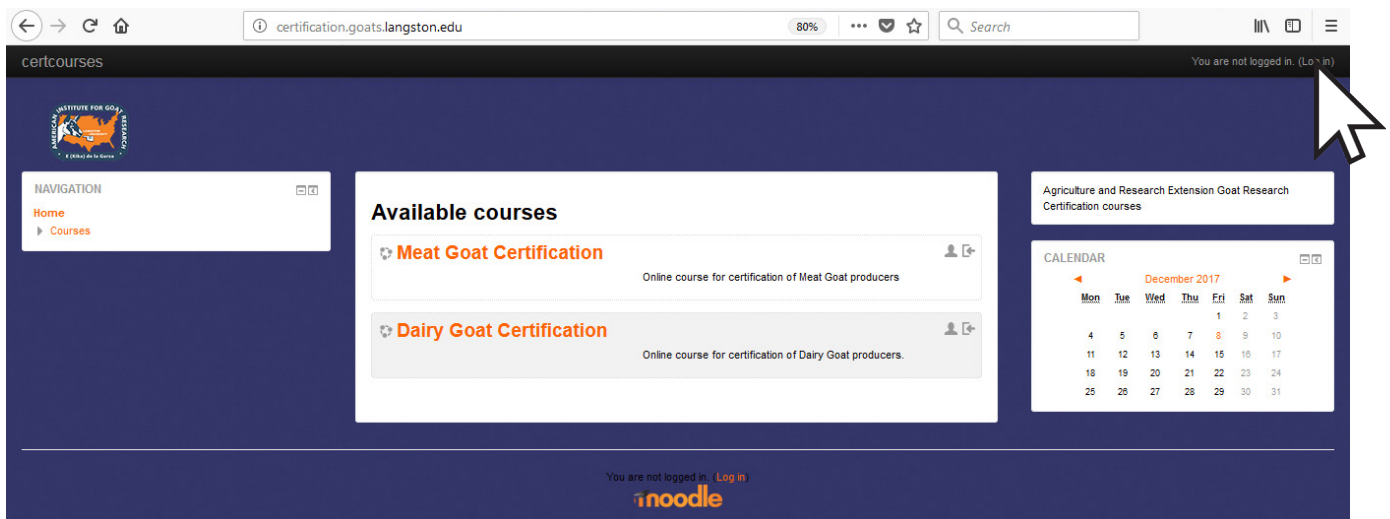
cation home page showcases the various dairy and meat goat Quality Producer icons that will be awarded to participants who successfully complete the certification process and pays the $25 fee for a completion certificate. In addition, links listing the modules of the Dairy and Meat Goat Producer Certification Courses are provided. To qualify as a Quality Dairy Producer or Quality Meat Producer, you must successfully complete all of the 18 core modules and 7 of the 10 elective modules of the dairy goat certification all of the 21 core modules and 9 of the 12 elective modules of the meat goat certification, respectively.
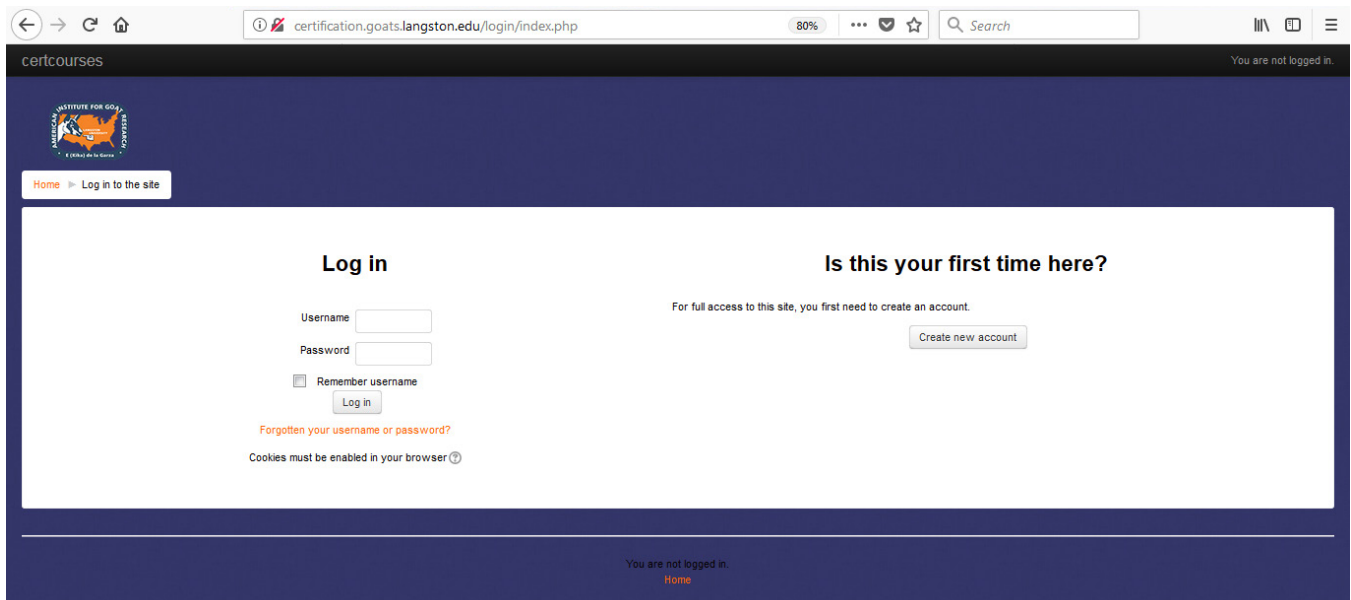

5. Click on the orange button that is approximately ¾ of the way down the page and you will be taken to the courses home page. Further down the page, you will find a link to see enrollees who have received certification. On that page, certified producers are organized alphabetically by name. Tables detailing geographical association or certification program affiliation can be found.
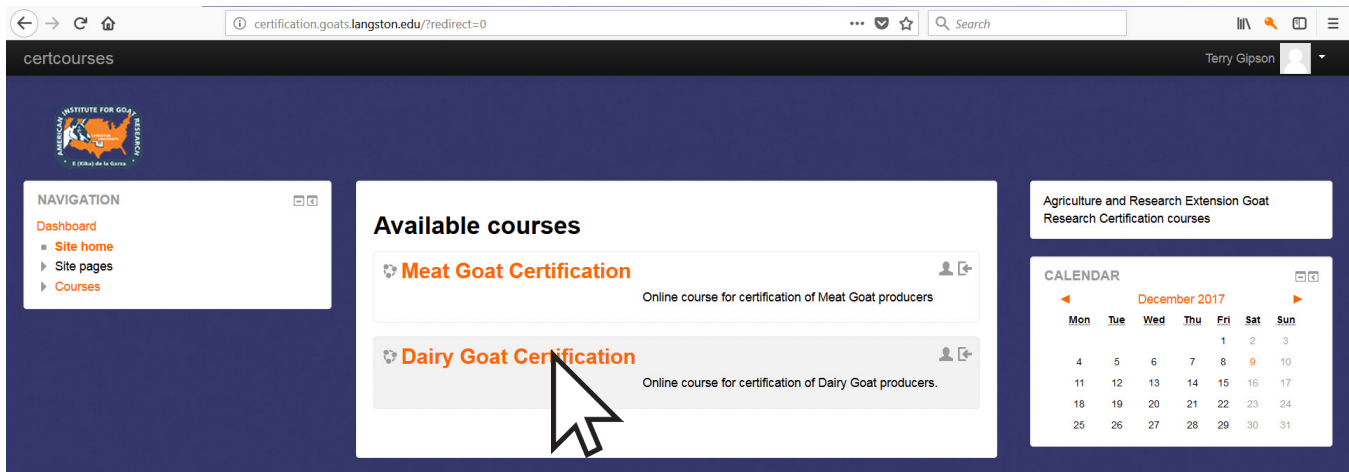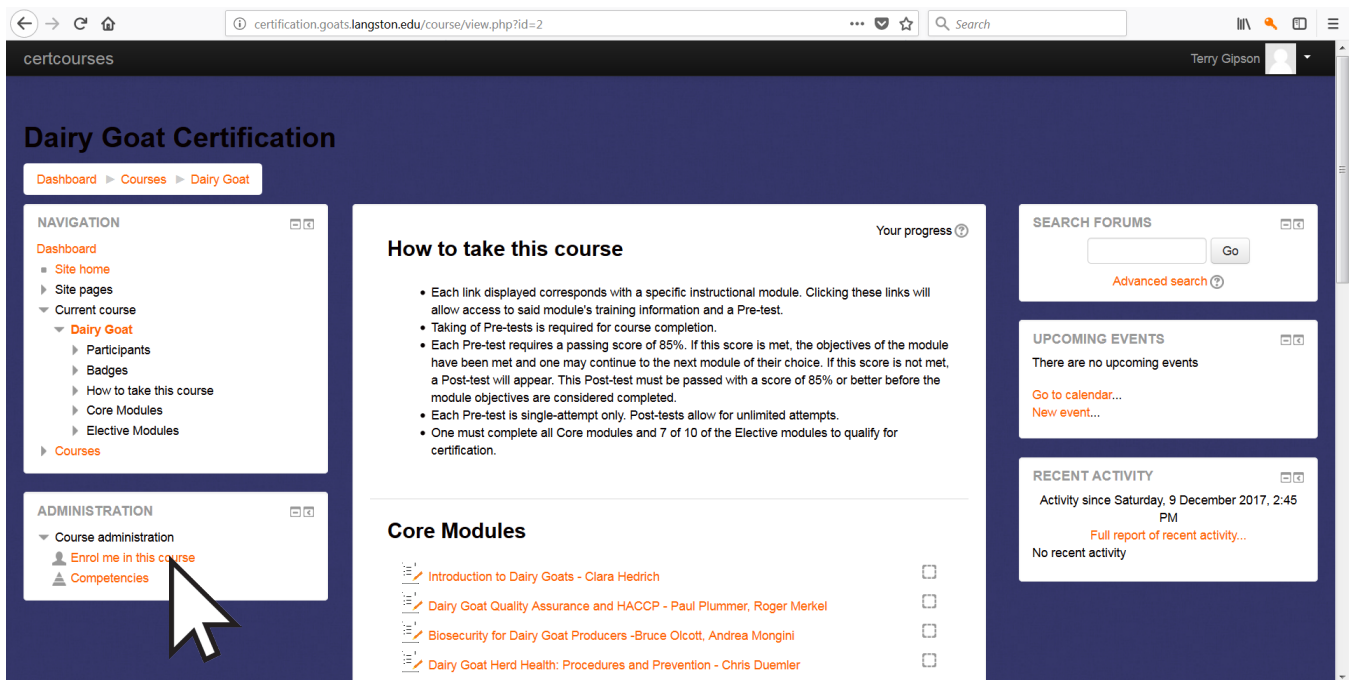
6. Alternatively, you can type *http://certification.goats.langston.edu* into the address bar at the top of your browser and you will be taken there directly. Bookmark the courses page so that you can easily return to it. The certification courses have been constructed in Moodle, which is a Learning Management System (LMS). Moodle is a free Open Source LMS designed to help educators create effective online courses. If you have had no experience with an LMS or specifically Moodle, the learning curve is easy and the interface is intuitive.

7. Create an account. If this is your first time to visit the courses page, you will be asked to create an account and subsequently to verify your email account. The email verification is to confirm your identity and to receive enrollment information and course updates. If you are a returning user, you will simply log in with the credentials that you used to establish your account. You only have to register once to have access to both the dairy and meat goat certification courses.

8. Once you have logged in, you can click "Site home" on the Navigation panel to see your available courses, which looks similar to a previous screen except now you are logged into the site.

9. Choose your course and enroll. When you click on either the Dairy Goat Certification or the Meat Goat Certification link, you will be taken to the individual course content page, which will display the course modules. However, you are not yet enrolled and will not have access to the modules.

10. Click on the "Enrol me in this course" link in the Administration panel. Enrollment is a **free** and simple self-enrollment process and you should receive an email confirming enrollment.

11. On the course content page, each link corresponds to a specific instructional module, either core and elective. Core modules are required for certification. There are 18 core modules for the dairy goat certification and 21 core modules for the meat goat certification. Not all elective modules are required for certification; however, 7 of the 10 elective modules for dairy goat certification and 9 of the 12 elective modules for meat goat certification are required in order to receive Quality Dairy Producer or Quality Meat Producer certifications. The combination of elective modules is your choice. Valuable information is in each and every elective module. When you click on a module link, you will be taken to the pre-test for that module. This pre-test measures your knowledge of the module instructional content before you have access to the module content; in other words, it measures your current state of knowledge. That particular module pre-test is only offered once during the certification process. Once you have taken the pre-test, you will be allowed access to the instructional module content, which is in pdf format and can be downloaded. If you score 85% or greater on the pre-test, you have sufficient grasp of the subject matter for that module, the instructional objectives of that module have been met, and you will not be required to take a post-test. Regardless of the pre-test score, you will now have access to the module and can study the module content. If your pre-test score was less than

85%, then a post-test score of 85% or greater will be required to meet the instructional objectives of that module. The post-test may be taken as many times as needed to achieve a score of 85% or greater.

12. You can see the red × to the right of the Introduction to Dairy Goats - Clara Hedrick module, by the way, Clara Hedrick is the author of that module. The red × means that the participant did not score an 85% or greater on the pre-test; therefore, taking of the post-test is required to fulfill the instructional objectives of that module. The blue check mark to the right of the module title means that the participant has accessed the module content. You can track your progress by clicking on "Grades" in the Administration panel. Upon successful completion of the core and elective modules, you will receive an email detailing the final steps in the certification process, which will include the option to purchase a paper certificate.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

For both online courses, the process is:

A. 1) take the pre-test,

B. 2) access the module,

C. 3) take the post-test, if required.

You cannot access the module content before taking the pre-test. The objective of the pre-test is to measure your knowledge **before** reading module content. The objective of the post-test is to measure your knowledge **after** reading module content.

You have one attempt at the pre-test and then later an unlimited number of attempts to take the post-test, if required.