

Body Condition Scoring Goats

Body Condition scoring evaluates the fat reserves of your goat. It helps you evaluate your feeding program and adjust your ration accordingly. Important times to evaluate body condition in your does are 1) prior to breeding and 2) right before the last trimester of pregnancy. It is important to gage the body condition of your bucks a month or so before breeding season starts. If possible weigh your goat kids regularly to see how they are growing as well as keeping an eye on their body condition. Body condition scoring also helps you decide if your slaughter goats are ready to market for meat or need to be fattened up a little more.

Score 1 (Body condition is very lean and the goat is so skinny that it is no longer healthy. As well as having minimal fat covering, the goat may be losing muscle tissue because of nutritional stress).

- There is no fat over the sternum of the goat and the end of the sternum feels like a pencil point.
- Skin is drawn tight over pelvis with no tissue detectable in between
- Pinbones, hips and short ribs easily seen. Edges feel sharp

Score 2 (Body condition is lean. Does will benefit from flushing if ready to breed and will need more fat cover prior to kidding. Slaughter goats will not dress out as optimally as a Score 3 animal but may have better feed efficiency.)

- There is a little fat pad on the sternum so it no longer sticks out like the point of a pencil. No fatty tissue felt between skin and pelvis, but skin is supple
- Ends of short ribs are sharp to the touch. Long ribs can be seen but are not protruding. While bones are less prominent, they are still angular and can be easily distinguished by touch

Score 3 (Body condition is moderate. We often want does in late pregnancy as well as growing kids to have a body condition score of at least 3 or 3.5. You usually do not want your slaughter goats to have a body condition score that is much higher than 3.)

- The chest has a noticeable fat pad and the sternum cannot easily be felt. The long ribs can no longer be seen.
- Ends of short ribs can be felt with moderate pressure. Slight depression visible in loin area. Hips and pinbones can be felt but have some covering of flesh. Back has lost angularity and appears smooth

Score 4 (Body condition is fat. Pet wethers, meat goat breeds in show condition and dairy does in late lactation can often reach a body condition score of 4.)

- The chest has enough of a fat pad on it that you can wiggle the fat pad back and forth. Patches of fat are apparent under the skin and may dimple or jiggle a little. Pelvis is felt only with firm pressure.
- Short ribs cannot be felt even with firm pressure. No depression visible in line between backbone and hipbones. Back and area between hips and pins appear smooth

Score 5 (Body condition is very fat and the health of the goat is endangered. Feed costs to get this heavy may be high and inefficient although the animal is often now easy to maintain. Does may be more susceptible to ketosis, dystocia and, ironically, low birth weights kids from limited blood supply from placenta because of fatty uterus.)

- Tail head is buried in fatty tissue. No part of the pelvis or short ribs are felt even with firm pressure.
- Area between the pinbones and tailbone rounded with skin distended. The animal often has “free moving” fat over its ribs, shoulders or rump that jiggles as it walks or forms dimples.

Body Condition Scoring



Body Condition Score 1



Body Condition Score 2



Body Condition Score 3



Body Condition Score 4



Body Condition Score 5