

HOW TO PUT ON A GOAT SHOW

It is always a good idea when planning a goat show to at least start a year in advance. Sometimes that doesn't happen and I have seen shows be put together in a few short months (this is not the best suggestion).

First, have a group of people that are willing to know that they are going to be the only ones doing all the work.... When the date of the show draws closer, approximately 4 to 6 months before, ask for volunteers to help with set up, raffle table, ring stewarding, and check in. Dedicate someone to be Show Secretary and someone else to be Show Coordinator. The Show Secretary's main job will be accepting the entry forms as well as filling in the Show Reports. The Show Coordinator would oversee all aspects of the show. You may want to have a couple of people for the Ring Stewards. They are the ones that will check that all the goats are present for each class that enters the ring. If you are going to have a fund raiser, you may want to ask for a volunteer for this job. The Show Committee may want to work on a budget for the show. Expenses may include: show grounds, pens for the animals to stay in while on the grounds, insurance, judges, hotel rooms, car rentals, show sanction fees, meals and more. You may want to ask for donations for the raffle table (which helps offset costs), auction items and sponsors for the show or classes.

Second, have a good location for the show, a place that will attract exhibitors around your state as well as from surrounding states.

A good location might be your local fair grounds or even someone's back yard. It is ideal to have a location that has pens already in place for the exhibitors but a show can be put on without them. There have been many shows that have had no pens available. Exhibitors will bring their own pens or they show out of their trailers. A good location would also mean having convenient hotels and motels nearby. It is a good idea to have a set of rooms "blocked" off just for the exhibitors. The location could offer camping or RV hookups. The location may want liability insurance. If they do, they will let you know when you contact them. It is always good to ask and not have to scramble at the last minute to try to get insurance if it was forgotten along the way. Sportsman Insurance in New York is the only company that I know of that offers insurance for this type of event. Most facilities will require a deposit. If there is a 4-H or FFA involved, don't hesitate to mention it and the facility may offer a discount.

If there is a local 4-H or FFA chapter in your area, it would be a good idea to contact them to see if they would be willing to set up a food booth. This helps out the exhibitors by having food on hand (pun may be intended) and to help the 4-H or FFA raise some extra money.

The next step is to decide what classes to offer. Classes for Junior does, Senior does, Junior bucks and Senior bucks (depending on breed or breeds) are usual.

Once you have decided what breed or breeds, judges need to be contacted to see who will be available to judge. You can contact whichever organization you are sanctioning with for a list of judges. Most of the organizations have their judges listed on their websites. Ask judges for either a contract (or you might be asked for one, if so, ask the judge if they have their own or what they would like to have included in the contract). A contract can be as simple as stating what the sponsoring organization is willing to pay for. As the judges what their usual fees are.

Airfare, meals, transport to and from the airport (rental car if necessary), judge's fee, hotel or motel room are usually what the judges will ask for. Don't be afraid to shop around. Different judges ask for different fees and some may ask for a higher judging fee than others.

Once you have your judges lined up (this may take a while to get worked out), you want to check with the organization(s) what they require for sanction forms and fees as well as deadlines to get them turned in. Most organizations will take the information (and most prefer this) months in advance to start advertising the show. The actual sanction forms and fees may not have to be turned in until 45 days or more before the show, but please don't wait until then to advertise the show! Also, make reservations at the "host" hotel/motel for your judges!

Show packets (class lists, entry forms and fees, directions to the show grounds) will need to be put together and it's a good idea to ask the sanctioning organization(s) if they provide mailing labels to members. Some organizations may or may not charge to provide the labels.

Show packets can be sent out 3 weeks to 6 weeks before the show (you may want to lean toward the 4 or 5 week mark). The show packet would be a good place to ask for advertising. You can also list those that have sponsored or donated to the show. Fund raisers are a good idea to start prior to the show (can be started 6 months before the show) to help offset costs. Contact local feed stores for donations in exchange for advertising in the show packet.

The rosettes and show forms should arrive 2 to 4 weeks before the show. Check the contents to make sure they are correct! Please read instructions and/or show rules in the entirety! (there will be a test later, trust me, the exhibitors will ask!)

Awards may or may not be given (it cuts costs to not give them but exhibitors like them). Donations to give awards are always appreciated!

Check again with the facility to make sure they haven't forgotten about you 6 months prior to your show date (this is not a joke).

Tables and chairs may be needed for check in and raffle table (the chairs are for the show secretary and judges between classes). A hand sanitizer for the judge is a good idea too. A microphone is always a good idea to have but may not be necessary depending on the size of the show. Assembling a box of supplies that will be needed for the check in table would be ideal: Things like paperclips, scissors, tape, ink pens, the show report forms when those are received, etc.

Contact the judge(s) a couple of months before the show to confirm itinerary and to let them know where the hotel is located or if there will be someone to pick them up and drop them off.

The day of the show is always hectic to the people (or person) putting on the show. Getting the exhibitors and their animals settled (hopefully the day before), checking in the exhibitors and their animals. It is a good idea to have two people doing this, one to check in and the other to make any changes (there are ALWAYS changes).

Try to start the show as close to the time assigned as possible. This makes for a very smooth running show. Have your ring steward(s) ready and your judge there. (yes, sometime this is forgotten). Introduce your judge to your exhibitors/audience. And start the show!

Make sure that the Show Reports are filled in correctly and everything has been signed!

The best advice I could give is, HAVE FUN! This is very hard but it is why we put on shows! Enjoy the people! They have the same love you do, the goats! It is very important to make sure that the atmosphere is light so that the other exhibitors are having fun too! (I would say to not stress out but, from experience, it wouldn't work).

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