

Baughmans boast benefits of Boer goats



PHOTO BY GRACE JEURISSEN
Kathleen and Paul Baughman own and operate Sunset Trail Farm near Cannon Falls. One of their favorite things is watching their goats grow up at a 4-H of FFA member's home.

Family developed fond connection with caprine

BY GRACE JEURISSEN
STAFF WRITER

CANNON FALLS—Sunset Trail Farm, a place where passersby stop to admire the four-legged long-horned caprine, most commonly known as a goat.

“This is something Kathleen and I like to do together,” said Paul Baughman.

Paul and Kathleen Baughman started their goat endeavors 15 years ago as a way to clean buckthorn from their woods and to provide a source for ethnic food interest in the area.

“If you want to start raising goats, find an ethnic calendar and breed for their holidays,” Paul said.

After years of trucking, Paul has finally retired and spends much of his time at the farm caring for the goats.

During his time trucking he developed relationships with people from



PHOTO BY GRACE JEURISSEN

The horns on goats are used as defense mechanisms. All of the wether goats that Baughmans sell are disbudded, so they won't continue to grow the horns.

different backgrounds and they suggested he start raising goats because of the lack of available goat meat in Minnesota.

“Before we got into goats, I took every class on raising goats that the U of M had to offer me,” Paul said.

Paul grew up in St. Paul and had limited farm experience coming into their goat business. Kathleen on the other hand, grew up on a cattle and hog farm in Illinois and had a solid understanding of how challenging raising livestock can be.

“Going into getting goats many people think it's easy,” Kathleen said. “Goats need their hooves trimmed, need to be watched for health issues, need proper feed and need regular maintenance.”

The Baughman's raise Boer goats, and currently have 53. Boer is the Dutch word for farmer. Boer goats are known for their docility, meat growth capabilities, brownish-red heads with white bodies, lop ears and their backward-curving horns. The breed originated in South Africa and over the years found their way to the U.S. with the immigration of people around the world.

Kathleen loves her unique colored goats, but the Baughman's make

sure to breed some for the original Boer coloring because there are a variety of preferences when people choose their goats.

“We sell quite a few goats each year to 4-H and FFA kids,” Paul said. “We breed several does to kid in January, so we can get the 4-Hers taken care of.”

The Baughman's say ‘Kidding’ is the term used for the birthing process in goats. The pregnant doe will carry her kid or kids for 150 days, about 5 months.

Being they begin kidding in January, the Baughman's have a barn dedicated for kidding.

They put in heat lamps and keep the pens bedded deep with straw to keep the newborn kids from feeling the cold Minnesota elements.

Once spring rolls around the goats are itching to get out into their 61 acres of fenced in woods and pasture.

Goats are browsers meaning they start high and end low. They eat leaves of bushes and trees and will eat grass if it's one of the final things available.

Baughmans page 8

PHOTO BY GRACE JEURISSEN
A nanny goat peers through the fence line in the pasture at the Baughman's farm in Cannon Falls.

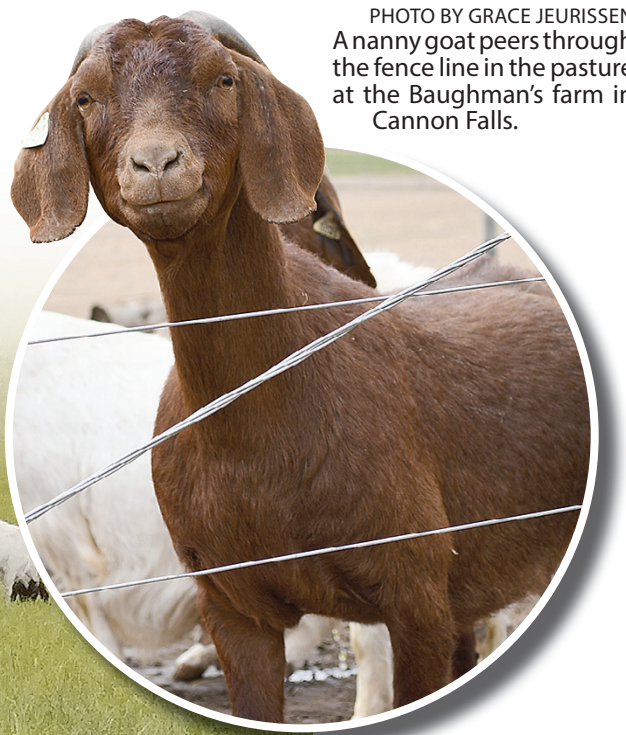


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In the summer the goats graze in grass pastures and in the woods surrounding the farm.