

# GRAIN OR NO GRAIN

Grain is sometimes needed to help the pack, dairy, pygmy or meat goat with energy requirements or to keep the lumbar score at a 3 or to help with growth.

The decision to give grain can be helped by using the chart below. This is not an absolute decision but it can help.

It is advised NEVER to give wethered goats (or bucks) dairy goat-type chows or mixes. Wethered goats and buck goats are prone to urinary calculi which in some cases can be fatal. A specific mineral ratio needed in the diet of all wethers and bucks is the calcium to phosphorus ratio of at least 2:1 with 3:1 being an even better choice. Feeding a grain or even a hay with an inappropriate calcium to phosphorus ration will most likely cause urinary calculi (stones) to form and then block the urinary system. But, grain for pack goats is acceptable, if the right type is used and specific diet considerations, supplements, and feeds are used.

The following graph for determining if grain would be helpful to your goat looks at the age of the goat, their lumbar score, and their work status.

<b>Age of Goat</b>	<b>Grain Factor</b>
Less than 3 years	+2
3 year or older	+1
<b>Lumbar Score</b>	
2 ½ or less	+2
3	+1
<b>Work Status</b>	
Working Pack Goat Also in milk, pregnant, dry yearling To be bred, buck in breeding season Growing kids	+2
Not working Pack, dry doe Mature not pregnant, pet goat	+1

From each of the three above categories, take the grain factor and add the numbers together. If your total 3 or less then no grain need be given, 4 or more then grain would be advised.

## GRAIN OR NO GRAIN

### Examples:

1. A 2 year old wether with a lumbar score of 3, not packing currently:  $2+1+1 = 4$ ; grain would be advised.
2. A 14 year old wether with a lumbar score of 2, currently working:  $1 + 2 + 2 = 5$ ; grain would be advised.
3. A 1 year old doeling to be bred this coming breeding season and as she is only 1 year old she is still growing has a lumbar score of 3:  $2 + 1 + 2 = 5$ ; grain would be advised.
4.  
A 4 month old kid goat, lumbar score of 3:  $2 + 1 + 2 = 5$ ; would advise grain.  
Remember that kid goats should have a calf starter type grain and a pellet mixture such as a livestock blend instead of straight COB.