



# AGRI MAGAZINE

(International E-Magazine for Agricultural Articles)

Volume: 03, Issue: 05 (May, 2026)

Available online at <http://www.agrimagazine.in>

© Agri Magazine, ISSN: 3048-8656

## Practical Tips for Profitable Sheep and Goat Farming

\*Dr. K. Vijay

Asst. Professor, College of Veterinary Science, Rajendranagar, P.V. Narsimha Rao  
Telangana Veterinary University, India

\*Corresponding Author's email: [vijjuvet@gmail.com](mailto:vijjuvet@gmail.com)

The increasing demand and attractive market price for meat have encouraged many farmers to take up sheep and goat farming. Telangana is the leading state in India in sheep population. Small ruminant farming is highly profitable, and farmers can improve their returns further by following a few scientific management practices.

### Selection of Animals

Farmers should choose breeds that are well adapted to the local climate and management conditions. Suitable sheep breeds for our region include Nellore Sheep and Deccani Sheep. Popular goat breeds include Osmanabadi Goat, Mahabubnagar Goat, Jamunapari Goat, and Black Bengal Goat.

- Animals should preferably be purchased directly from reliable farmers or known flocks rather than from livestock markets.
- The ideal time for purchase is during October–November or March–April. Avoid buying animals during peak summer or heavy rainy seasons.
- Select healthy animals that are either first-time mothers, 3–4 months pregnant, or between 1–2 years of age with one or two pairs of permanent teeth.
- Breeding males should be around two years old, healthy, and possess two well-developed testes of equal size.
- Male and female animals should be purchased from different flocks to avoid inbreeding.
- Maintain approximately one breeding male for every 20 females, or four males for every 100 females.
- Breeding males should not be retained beyond 5–6 years.

### Feeding and Nutrition Management

Fodder cultivation should begin even before purchasing animals.

- Around 4.5 acres of fodder area is required to support about 50 animals.
- During the onset of monsoon, farmers should sow perennial grasses such as Guinea grass, Anjan grass, and Dinanath grass, along with leguminous fodders like Stylo and Hedge Lucerne.
- In irrigated areas, Hybrid Napier Grass stem cuttings or root slips can be planted at 2–3 feet spacing.
- Fodder trees such as Subabul, Agathi (*Sesbania grandiflora*), Neem, and Drumstick can be grown along bunds and around animal sheds to ensure year-round green fodder availability.
- Newborn kids and lambs must receive colostrum within 30 minutes after birth for better immunity and survival.
- From three weeks of age onward, young ones should be offered grasses, leaves, and tender twigs so that rumen development occurs early and dependence on mother's milk decreases.

- Under semi-intensive management, animals can be grazed for 6–8 hours during the day and provided with 200–500 grams of concentrate feed in the evening depending on age and body condition. This improves growth, reproductive performance, and profitability.

### **Housing Management**

Proper housing protects animals from environmental stress and diseases.

- Sheds should be constructed in an east–west direction so that sunlight enters during morning and evening hours.
- The floor should be firm, dry, and well-drained to prevent water stagnation.
- Ideal shed dimensions include:
  - ✓ Roof height: 10–12 feet
  - ✓ Wall height: 6–7 feet
  - ✓ Roof overhang: about 3 feet
  - ✓ Side wall height: 2–3 feet with wire mesh above

Such housing provides protection from heat and rain while ensuring good ventilation and sufficient natural light, thereby reducing disease occurrence.

### **Reproductive Management**

Efficient reproductive management is essential for maintaining flock productivity.

- Sheep should attain breeding age by 9–13 months, while goats should come into heat by 10–12 months. Balanced nutrition plays a major role in timely maturity.
- The gestation period in sheep and goats is approximately five months.
- Females should be rebred within about three months after lambing or kidding so that the interval between two parturitions does not exceed 8–9 months. Ideally, two lambings/kiddings should be achieved in every one-and-a-half years.
- Since “a breeding male contributes half the strength of the flock,” breeding males should be replaced every 2.5 years. Farmers may exchange rams or bucks with other flocks or purchase new ones.
- Continuous breeding among closely related animals leads to inbreeding, resulting in weak offspring and genetic defects.
- One vasectomized teaser male may be maintained in the flock to identify females in heat.
- Keeping too many males together or grazing males along with females continuously is not advisable, as this leads to fighting and injury to pregnant females.

### **Disease Prevention and Health Care**

The saying “Prevention is better than cure” is especially true in sheep and goat farming.

- Deworm animals once every three months, rotating different deworming medicines periodically.
- To control external parasites such as ticks and lice, spray suitable parasiticides on the animals and in cracks and corners of the shed.
- Vaccinations should be administered regularly according to schedule:
  - ✓ January – PPR vaccine
  - ✓ March – Foot and Mouth Disease vaccine
  - ✓ May – Enterotoxaemia vaccine
  - ✓ September – Anthrax vaccine
  - ✓ November – Haemorrhagic Septicaemia vaccine

By following these simple but scientific management practices, sheep and goat farmers can significantly improve productivity and earn better profits from their livestock enterprises.