

# Disbudding Kid Goats

Texas Cooperative  
Extension



## Why disbud?

- Marketability
  - ✓ Show wethers
    - Required by some shows
  - ✓ Avoid getting head caught in fence
- Human safety
  - Older people
  - Children

## Why NOT to disbud?

- Marketability
  - Loss of "handles"
    - Drenching
    - Handling (catching & holding)
  - Breed character
    - Fullblood Boers
- Defense against predators

## Equipment Required

- Disbudding box
  - Box on right too small
- Disbudding iron
- Leather gloves
- Wire brush
- Optional items
  - Hair clippers
  - Hoof shears
  - Tube dehorner
  - Topical antibiotic



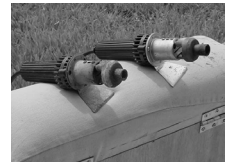
## Disbudding Box

- Headpiece
  - order from Caprine Supply
- Box
  - Inside dimensions
    - 27.5" long
    - 20" tall
    - 7.5" wide
  - Belly block
    - 9" back from front
    - 9" down from top
  - 3/8" plywood & 1"x8"
    - Avoid too heavy
  - **Stout** hinge on lid



## Disbudding Iron

- Rhinehart X50
  - 216 watts
  - Retail \$78 (+ freight)
- Lenk 200
  - 200 watts
  - Retail \$81 (+ freight)
- L&H Dehorner
  - 240 watts
  - Use 3/4" ID for larger horns
  - Retail \$43
- Specify 8' cord when ordering



## What about the lower wattage, less expensive irons?

- ✘ Irons like the Lenk125 (125 watts) and the Rhinehart X30 (200 watts) generally:
  - take longer to heat
  - do not get as hot
  - do not retain heat as well
- ✓ If you're only doing a few goats at a time, and you are willing to be patient between goats, they are sufficient.
- ✓ They are suited to producers with *lots of patience and time ...*

## Accessories

- Something to hold the iron (and other tools) when not in use is quite handy
- ✓ Conserves heat
- ✓ Reduces melting of cords
- ✓ Reduces risk of fire
- ✓ Reduces risk of burning someone



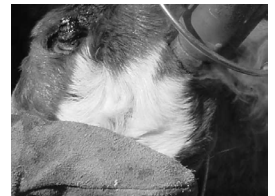
## When should it be done?

- Horns grow differently
  - bucks > does
  - breed differences
    - Spanish
    - Saanen
- 1-3 weeks old
  - Ideal time is just as the horn is coming through the skin



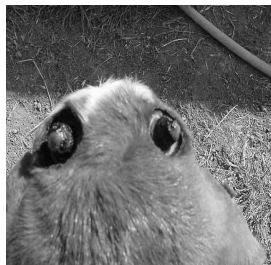
## Step #1a

- Hold goat's head across the rigid part of the nose.
- Apply hot iron with medium pressure until a ring the color of new leather encircles the horn - *usually* not more than 15 seconds
- Clipping hair around horns (not required) will greatly reduce smoke and will facilitate monitoring of progress. *Note: Clipping greatly increases the time required for disbudding.*



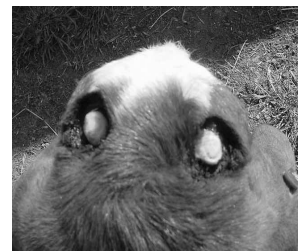
## Step #1b

- Apply hot iron to other horn until a ring the color of new leather encircles the horn - *usually* not more than 15 seconds



## Step #2

- Using the disbudding iron or a 5/8" or 3/4" calf tube dehorner, remove the horns. Usually a scraping motion is most effective.
- If the horns are burned appropriately, the buds can be removed with very little effort.



## Step #3a

- Reapply the hot iron until the exposed bone is slightly yellow in color. Typically, 4-6 seconds is sufficient.
- Horn bud on the right has been reheated.



## Step #3b

- Repeat step 3a on the other horn bud.
- Use the edge of the iron to cauterize any small bleeders
- Optional
  - Apply a topical antibiotic spray
    - Furox
    - Scarlet Oil
    - Blue Lotion
  - Repel flies
  - Prevent infection



## What then?

- Scabs will form within 5-7 days
- Scabs will then shed
- Skin will grow over site where horns were
- Evaluate kids 3-4 weeks after disbudding for scur formation



## Equipment Suppliers

Caprine Supply  
P.O. Box Y  
De Soto, KS 66018  
1.800.646.7736

Nasco  
901 Janesville, Ave.  
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538-0901  
1.800.558.9595

Jeffers  
P.O. Box 948  
West Plains, MO 65775-0948  
1.800.533.9977

Valley Vet Supply  
1118 Pony Express Hwy.  
Marysville, KS 66508  
1.800.360.4838