

Buck (male) goats are a one of a kind creature. My 4 year old delights in telling visitors to our farm, "You smell that stinky smell? That's Chewey, he's our boy goat and you wanna know why he smells that way?..." I have had LaMancha goats for many years, but always took our girls to another farm each fall for breeding. This past year, I had the opportunity to get Chewey from the sweet-hearted mother of one of my closest friends, and I quickly learned that bucks require a slightly different approach than does!

Like any farm animal, caution is required around a buck. They are generally significantly larger than does (Chewey weighs around 200lbs) and could definitely cause injury, especially to a child. Their larger size necessitates a larger space to move around, so keep this in mind when building a shelter or pen for your buck. Another thing to think about when preparing to introduce a buck to your farm is proximity. As you learned in the introduction, bucks have a unique smell. This is for two reasons: one, they have scent glands that produce a musky odor. Secondly (and perhaps most disgusting), during the rut, they spray themselves with their own urine to add to their smelly aura. Apparently, the does find it irresistible. I can guarantee that you won't, but you will get used to it. Nevertheless, if you are milking your does, you will want to house your buck away from your milk area, as the smell can taint your dairy products. Bucks are smellier during the rut, which is generally late summer through the end of fall. Still, keep in mind that they will pretty much smell all the time.

Bucks require a slightly different diet than does. They need a balanced ration of grain year round, along with hay and pasture (if available). However, during breeding season, their diet requires special attention. If they are actively breeding does or in the presence of does in estrus, they are going to be doing a lot of running around. This requires an increased grain ration of grain designed for MEAT goats. The increased protein will help them maintain their body condition as they chase the girls through the late summer and fall. As with any goat, access to clean water is a must.



Even though he smells horrible and pees on himself, Chewey is the sweetest and most docile of my goats. He loves animal crackers, dates (the fruit and with does), and cookies of any type. It definitely makes breeding simpler to have a buck on-site, and we have the added bonus of a friendly boy who visitors can't help but love.