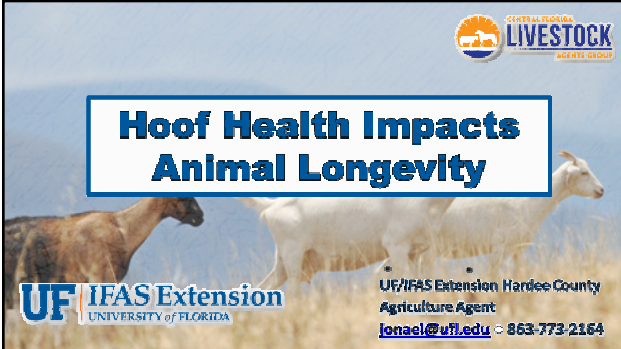




## Hoof Health Impacts Animal Longevity



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## Starting from the ground up

A good foundation is important for a long lived animal.







## Stating the obvious

**This is not in Florida**

- Sheep and goats originated in rocky terrain.
- Hoof wear was not an issue.







## Stating the obvious

Iraq




Morocco




**This is not in Florida**







## Stating the obvious



Peninsula (stretch of land surrounded by water).



Mediterranean region (body of water surrounded by soil).






## Stating the obvious

**Florida flat woods** pose a challenge for the natural wear of hooves.

- Our soils – sandy, **low friction**.
  - Promote overgrown hoof walls and soles.





## Stating the obvious

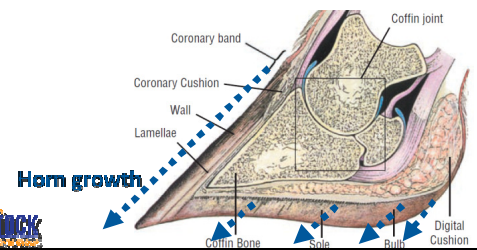
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Results:



## The Hooves

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## Why do we trim hooves?

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### Overgrown hooves will cause:

- Inadequate posture.
- Joint problems.
- Fungal infections.
- Lameness.
- Poor performance due to painful movement.



## Why do we trim hooves?

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- It is necessary to **allow air circulation** on the hoof area to eliminate anaerobic bacteria to colonize the foot.
- Under normal conditions, sheep and goats need to be trimmed 1 to 2 times per year. Every farm is different and more regular trimming is necessary in our soils.



## Why do we trim hooves?

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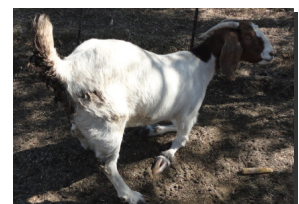
### Correct trimming promotes:

- A flat surface for animals to stand on.
- Removal of trapped mud and feces.
- Removal of excessive horn and sole tissue.
  - Reduces the chance for foot scald, foot rot and other conditions.



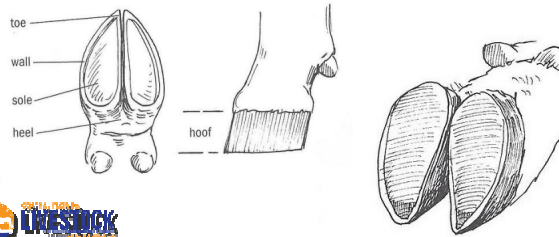
## Lameness – can be caused by lack of trimming

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## External Hoof Anatomy

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## Common Hoof Problems

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### Laminitis:

- Swelling of the sensitive tissue beneath the hard walls of the hoof, causing pain, lameness, and eventually founder.
- Results when the hoof wall gets thick and overgrown, often with the toes turning up. In some cases, permanent hoof damage could occur.
- Possible causes:
  - Sudden or extreme changes in the diet -- for example, too much grain -- trauma, or severe bacterial infections.



## Common Hoof Problems

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### Hoof Abscess:

- Caused most often by an injury to a hoof that allows the bacteria get inside the hoof.
- Symptoms: lameness from pain and swelling at the hair line just above the hoof.
- Treatment:
  - Trimming and treating the infected area and using antibiotics if necessary.
  - Proper hoof trimming can prevent abscesses.



## Common Hoof Problems

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### Granuloma:

- Also caused by injury to the hoof, granulomas are round, red swellings of "groud flesh" that grow at the injury site and keep the hard part of the hoof wall from growing normally. They bleed easily.
- Symptoms: lameness from pain and shoe shaped hooves or hoof walls.
- Treatment: removal of the growth and the application of a pressure bandage to the affected area.



## Common Hoof Problems

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### Shelly hoof (White line separation):

- The white line -- where the soft and hard part of the hoof meet can break down due to poor hoof care, and a pocket can form that may fill with dirt.
- Under certain conditions, infections can result, but usually no lameness or pain is associated with shelly hoof.
- Treatment: Regular hoof trimming.

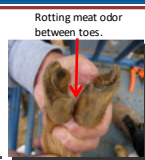


## Common Hoof Problems

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### Foot Scald:

- Caused by *Fusobacterium necrophorum* (intestinal) and *Bacteroides nodosus* (soil). When excess dirt and feces accumulate between the hooves, this causes the bacteria to colonize tender, irritated tissue between the toes.
- Symptoms:
  - mild to severe swelling, lameness, reduced weight gain, decreased milk production.
- Treatment:
  - Thorough trimming (removal of necrotic tissue), use of foot baths or disinfectants (10% copper sulfate solution), drying.



## Before you Start

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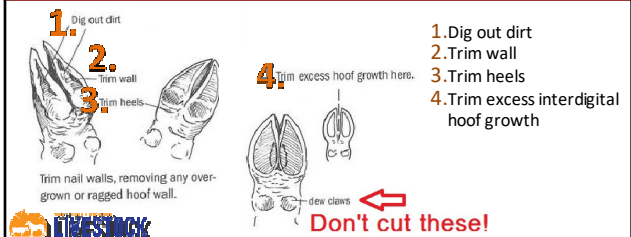
### Tools

- Hoof trimming shears
- Hoof rasp
- Hoof pick
- Trimming knife
- File
- Stanchion
- Baling twine
- Mineral oil



## Basic Trimming Procedure

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## Trimming Tips

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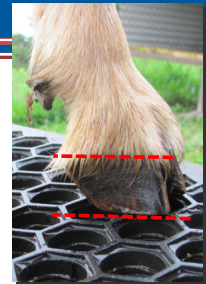
1. Start by cleaning the toes.
  - a) Trim the shortest toe first.
    - Front feet: Outer toes
    - Back feet: Inside toes
  - b) Trim the front of the toes first.
2. After trimming the hoof wall, even the sole with a rasp.



## Trimming Tips

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3. Expose wounds, cracks or crevices to air by clipping the horn around it.
  - a) Stop when you see pink, soft skin.
  - b) Hoof should be even with hairline.
  - c) Dry and hardened hooves can be softened with mineral oil.



## Points of balance

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## Make it easy for you and the animal

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- Invest in a goat stanchion if possible.

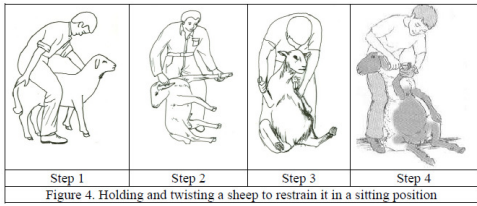




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## Make it easy for you and the animal

One-man job



Step 1: The handler approaches the sheep from the side, reaching for its hindquarters.

Step 2: The handler twists the sheep's hindquarters to bring its rear end forward.

Step 3: The sheep is now in a sitting position, with its hindquarters facing the handler.

Step 4: The handler holds the sheep's hindquarters to keep it restrained.


Figure 4. Holding and twisting a sheep to restrain it in a sitting position

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## Make it easy for you and the animal

- Other ways to trim small ruminants:
  - Two-person trim
  - Tilt table (\$\$\$)
  - Casting



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## Make it easy for you and the animal

- “Casting”
  - Using a rope to immobilize the animal.



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## Managing our way out of Foot Problems

- Nutrition**
  - High caloric diets can produce hoof irregular growth.
  - Low protein diets can interrupt normal hoof growth.
- Genetics**
  - Hoof problems can be inherited from parents.
  - Cull animals that recur into hoof problems.
- Regular trimming**
  - Monitor on a regular basis. Trim as needed.

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## The Basis of Trimming



**Objective:**

- Relieve animal stress by providing the animal with sound, well-balance footing.

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## Florida Goat:



Thought bubble 1: Mamma said: Aim for the sky, but I don't think she meant like this.

Thought bubble 2: And some people say sheep are stupid.

Thought bubble 3: Larry, the next time you say "hold my beer" I will remind you of this!

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## Conclusion

- Foot problems can be avoided by detecting them early.
- Culling is always an option.
- Contact your veterinarian for information on treating common problems.



**Hoof Health Impacts  
Animal Longevity**

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UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

UF/IFAS Extension Hardy County  
Agriculture Agent  
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The poster features a background image of several white cattle in a field. The title "Hoof Health Impacts Animal Longevity" is prominently displayed in a blue box with white text. The UF/IFAS Extension logo is in the bottom left, and the contact information for the Hardy County Agriculture Agent is in the bottom right. A small "CENTRAL FLORIDA LIVESTOCK AGENTS" logo is in the top right corner.