

Easy Dairy Goat Conformation

An introduction for those with little to no experience with the
ADGA Scorecard

Dairy Goat Shapes with Melanie!

What does Conformation matter anyway?

ADGA Scorecard:

“The goal of the Unified Scorecard is to aid in the selection of the type of dairy goat that can function efficiently over a long productive lifetime.”

Sr Does:

Mammary System -- 35 pts

Dairy Strength -- 20 pts

General Appearance -- 35 pts

Body Capacity -- 10 pts

This introductory presentation focuses on several easy-to-identify basics of the ADGA scorecard mostly focusing on Senior (milking) does.

General Appearance

“An attractive framework with femininity (masculinity in bucks), strength, upstandingness, length, and smoothness of blending throughout that create an impressive style and graceful walk.”

Senior Does 35 Points



2 Points
Stature

“slightly taller at withers than at hips with long bone pattern throughout.”



The ideal is slightly taller at the withers than at the hips which gives her a natural “uphill” style



The opposite is a doe who is taller at the hips than the withers, giving her a “down hill” appearance

Front End Assembly 5 Pts

Brisket and Fore Legs

“deep and wide into chest floor with moderate strength of brisket. Front Legs squarely placed (below withers)”



The ideal has a brisket nearly parallel to the ground. Her fore legs are placed squarely below the withers



This doe has a brisket tilted up and her fore legs are placed too far forward from her withers.

8 Points

Back and Rump

“Back and Rump—strong and straight with well defined vertebrae throughout and slightly uphill to withers; level chine with full crops into a straight, wide loin; wide hips smoothly set and level with back; strong rump which is uniformly wide and nearly level from hips to pinbones and thurl to thurl; thurls set two-thirds of the distance from hips to pinbones; well defined and wide pinbones set slightly lower than the hips; tailhead slightly above and smoothly set between pinbones; tail symmetrical to body and free from coarseness; vulva should be normal in size and shape in females (normal sheath and testes in males).”

Withers and Chine

“slightly uphill to withers; level chine with full crops into a straight, wide loin”



The ideal is slightly uphill at the withers with a smooth and nearly straight chine with a seamless transition to the loin.



This doe has a “dip” between her withers and loin that create a wavy look to her topline

Loin

“straight, wide loin”



The ideal loin is straight and slightly uphill and smoothly attaches the chine and the hips



Although the loin is longer on this buck, his loin roaches up and is higher than his chine.

Rump Angle

“wide hips smoothly set and level with back; strong rump which is uniformly wide and nearly level from hips to pinbones and thurl to thurl”



The Ideal is NEARLY level (not entirely flat) from hips to the pin bones at the base of the tail



This doe is incredibly steep from her hips down to her pin bones.

Rump Width

The rump needs to be wide enough to comfortably accommodate the udder beneath it and allow the doe to easily walk around her mammary system.



The ideal comfortably fits her udder beneath the rump with her rear legs straight down from her thurls



The width of this doe's rump does not comfortably accommodate the incredible capacity of her udder and her legs angle out as a result

Feet and Legs 15 Points

Rear Leg Angulation

well angulated in side profile
through the stifle to cleanly
molded hocks, nearly
perpendicular from hock to
strong, yet flexible pastern

Notice how the ideal rear leg has a significant “bow”
of the rear leg in comparison to the doe with
the “posty” or straight rear leg?

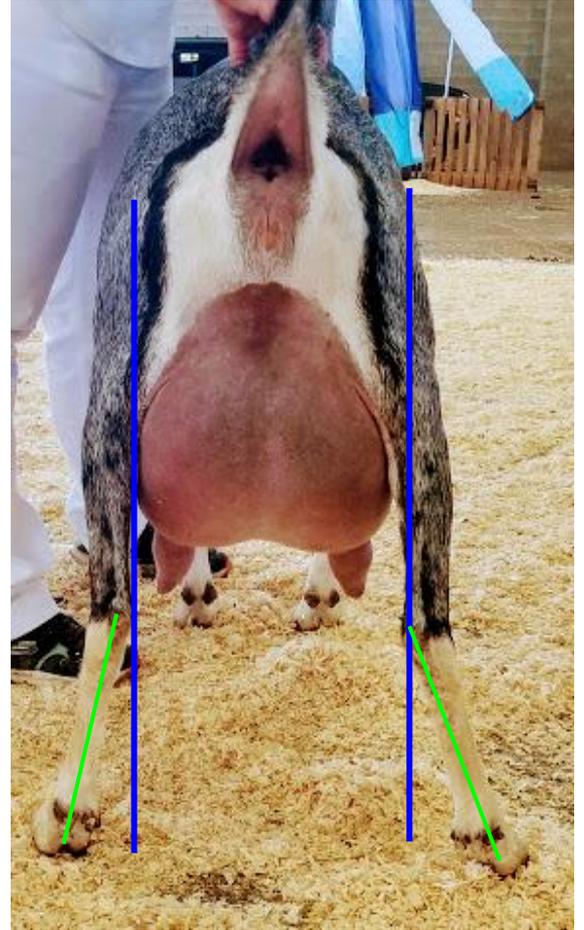


Rear Leg Set

“rear legs wide apart and straight from the rear”

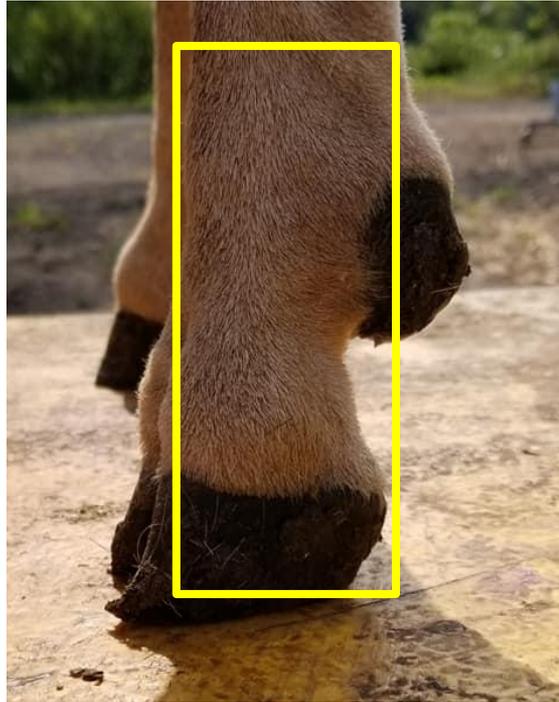
The Ideal doe's legs come straight down, equal distance from hock to hock, and hoof to hoof.

The legs of the doe on the far right turn out at the hock. The distance from hoof to hoof is much greater than from hock to hock. This is often referred to as “hocky”.



Pasterns and Feet

strong, yet flexible pastern of medium length; strong feet with tight toes, pointed directly forward; deep heels with sole nearly uniform in depth from toe to heel.



Ideal pastern length with a nearly square hoof below it



This weak pastern has too much flex back and the hoof is shallow in the heel and pointy in the toe

5 Points

Head and Breed Character

“clean-cut and balanced in length, width, and depth; broad muzzle with full nostrils; well-sculpted, alert eyes; strong jaw with angular lean junction to throat; appropriate size, color, ears, and nose to meet breed standard”

Defects to be aware of:

- Under or Overshot Jaw
- Crooked Face
- Total Blindness



Mammary System

Strongly attached, elastic, well-balanced with adequate capacity, quality, ease of milking, and indicating heavy milk production over a long period of usefulness.

Sr Does: 35 Points



5 Points

Fore Udder Extension and Capacity

wide and full to the side and extending moderately forward without excess nonlactating tissue and indicating capacity, desirable shape, and productivity.



The ideal fore udder with evident capacity and productivity



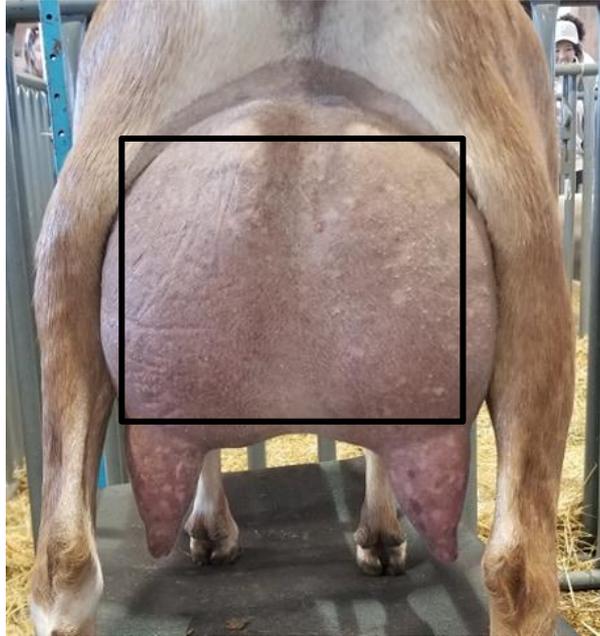
This fore udder cuts up without forward extension and has no evidence of productivity

7 Points

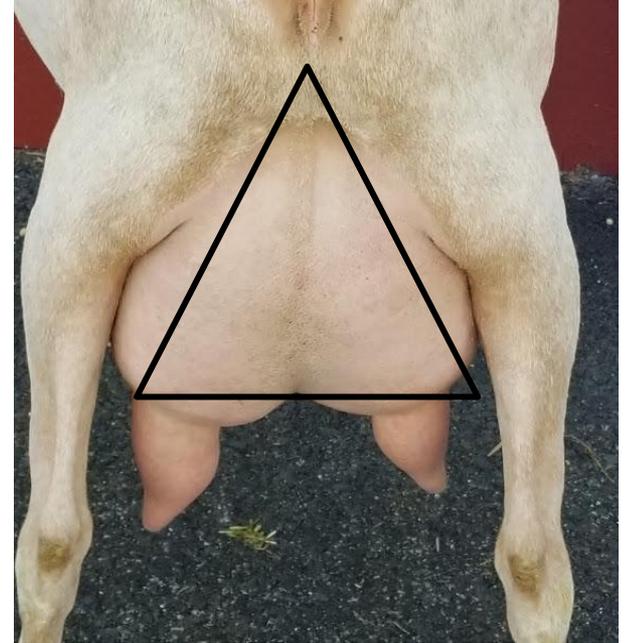
Rear Udder

“capacious, high, wide, and arched into the escutcheon; uniformly wide and deep to the floor”

Although we strive for a globular udder, we want an udder that is equally as wide at the top, where the udder attaches to the body, and the base above the teats.



This ideal rear udder is uniformly wide at the top and base of her udder



This udder is narrow at the attachment of the rear udder into the escutcheon

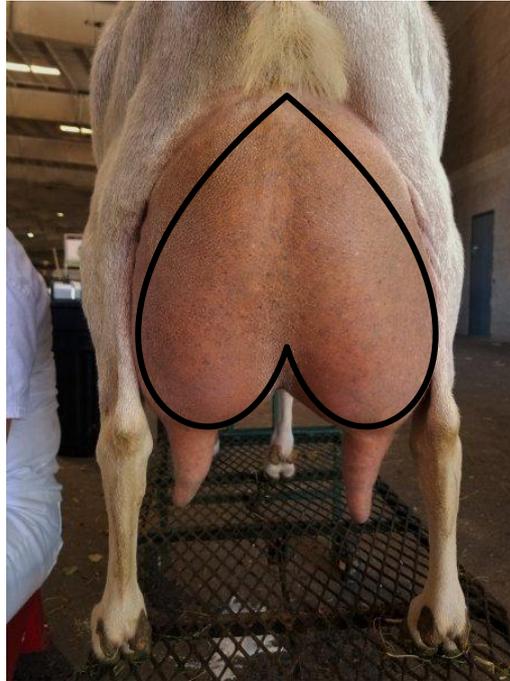
Udder Support 13 Points

Medial Suspensory Ligament

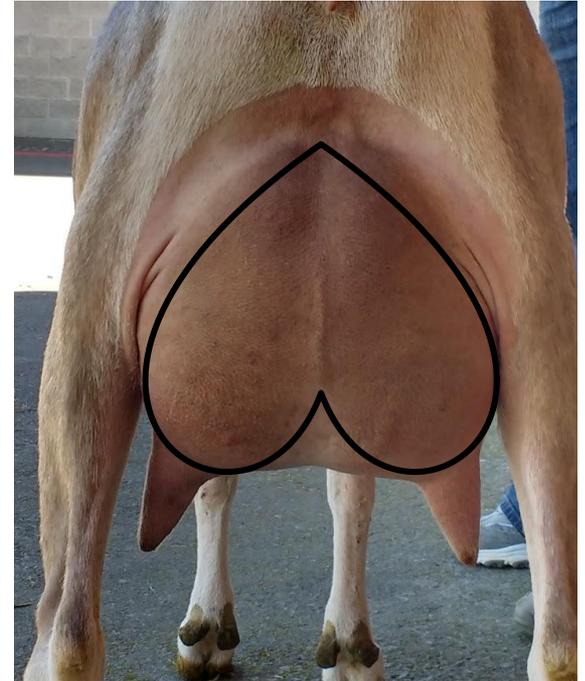
“strong medial suspensory ligament that clearly defines the udder halves”

Think of an upside down heart for the ideal udder floor.
(Ignore the point at the top)

Equal halves held up in the middle by a moderately Strong
Medial



Notice how the udder floor and medial are nearly identical to the upside down heart showing evidence of a strong MSL



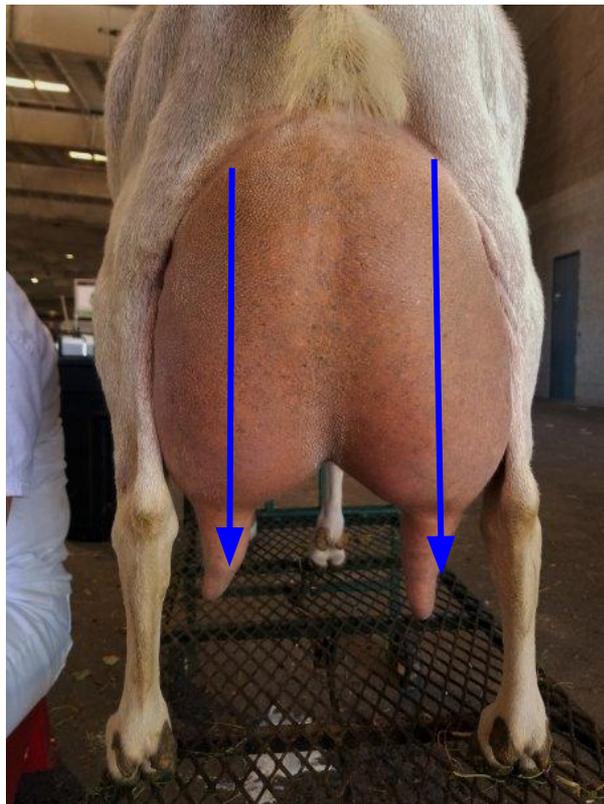
The udder floor is nearly flat and shows no indication of a MSL separating the halves

Teats 4 Points

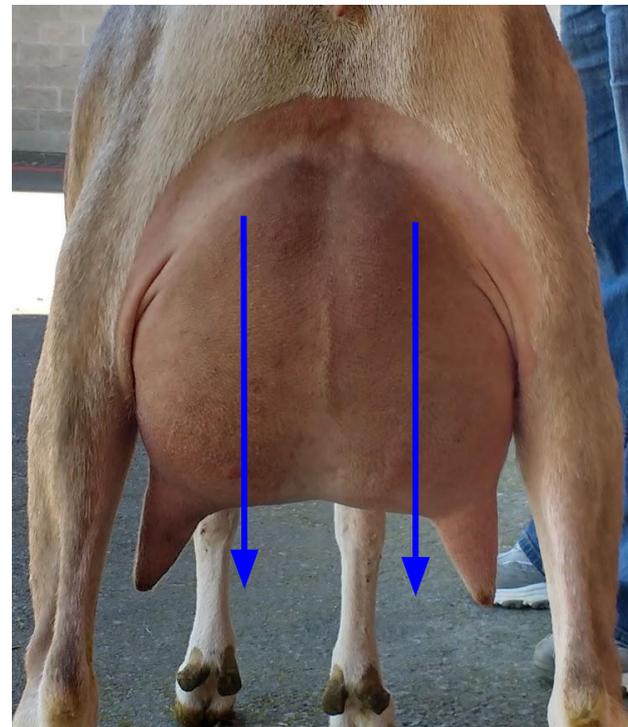
Teat Placement

pointed nearly straight down or slightly forward, and situated two-thirds of the distance from the medial suspensory ligament on the floor of each udder-half to the side, indicating ease of milking.

Beautifully placed teats pointing directly down from udder



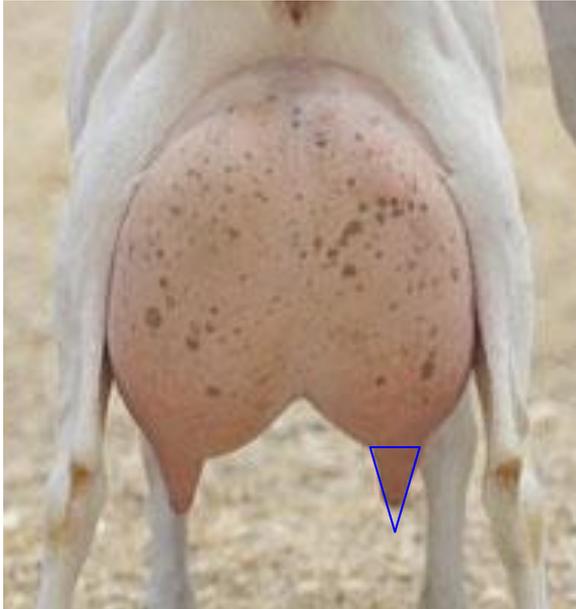
Teats are placed too far out from medial, pointing toward leg instead of straight down



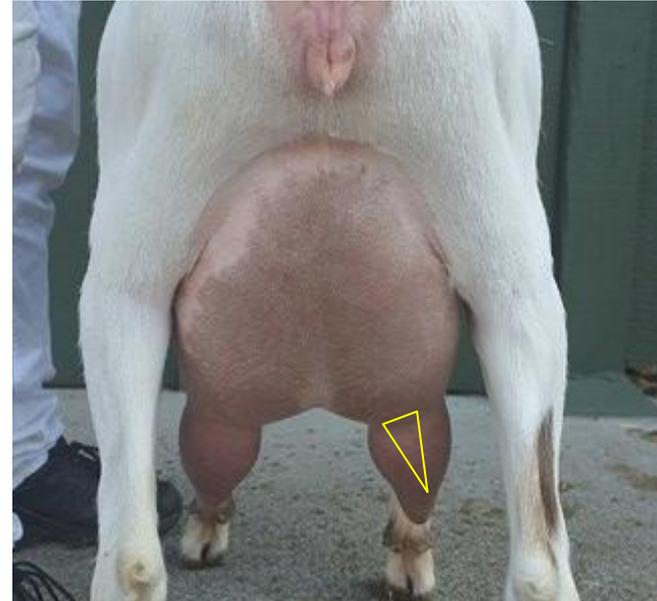
Teats 4 Points

Teat Size and Shape

“uniform size and of medium length and diameter in proportion to capacity of udder, cylindrical in shape”



Ideal size and shape of teat in respect to udder size



Teat is too large, especially when considering the size of udder, bulbous shape being wider in the middle of teat than at the base

6 Points

Balance and Symmetry

in side profile, one-third of the capacity visible in front of the leg, one-third under the leg, and one-third behind the leg;



Too much udder in front of leg and not enough in back of leg



Ideal with an equal amount of udder seen in front and in back of leg



Too much udder in back of the leg with no udder in front of leg

Dairy Strength

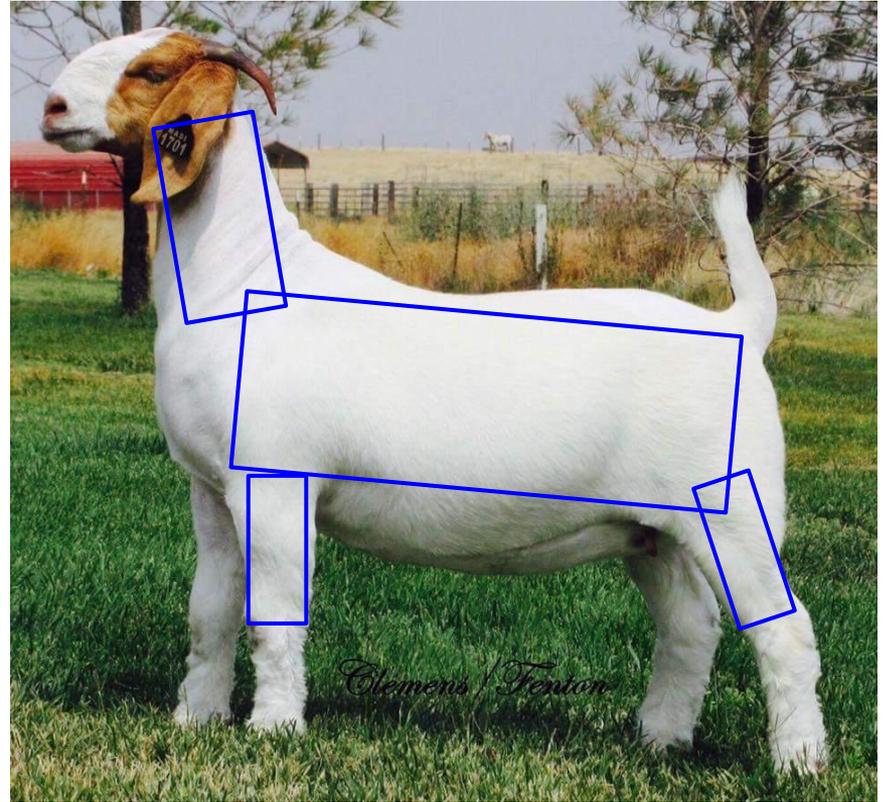
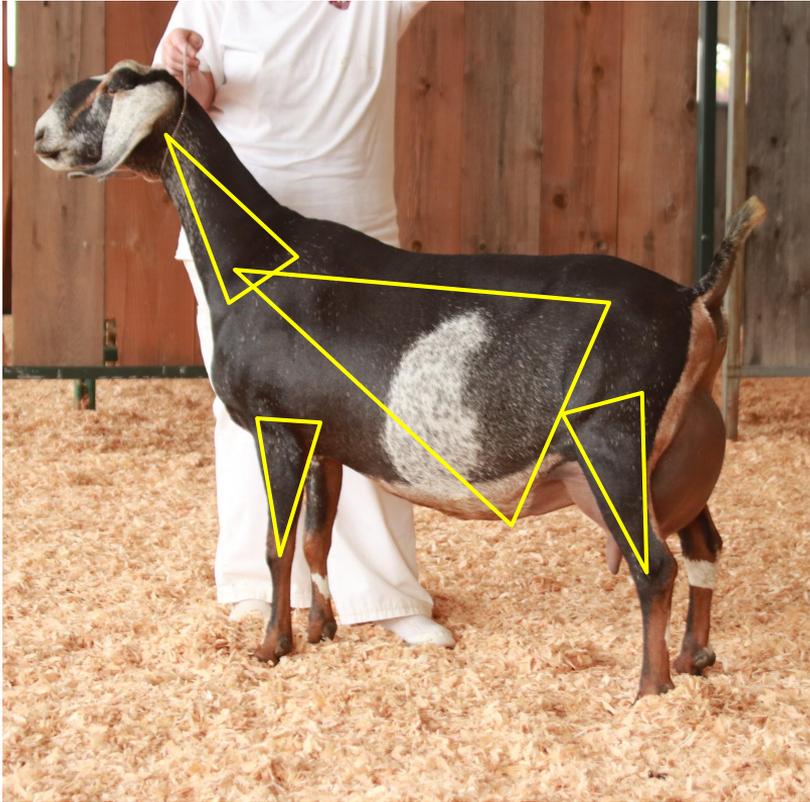
“Angularity and openness with strong yet refined and clean bone structure, showing enough substance, but with freedom from coarseness and with evidence of milking ability giving due regard to stage of lactation (of breeding season in bucks)”

Sr Doe 20 Points



Dairy Strength

In dairy animals, you should see triangles, compared to a boer (for meat) you should see rectangles



Body Capacity

Large in proportion to size, age, and period of lactation of animal (of breeding season for bucks), providing ample capacity, strength, and vigor

Sr Does 10 Points



6 Points

Barrel

“strongly supported, long, deep, and wide; depth and spring of rib increasing into a deep yet refined flank”

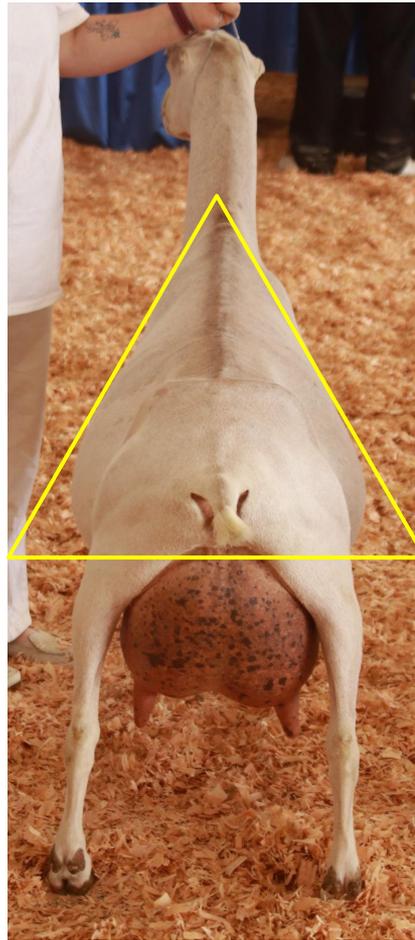
Breeder's Insight

Barrel = Maturity + Management/Diet

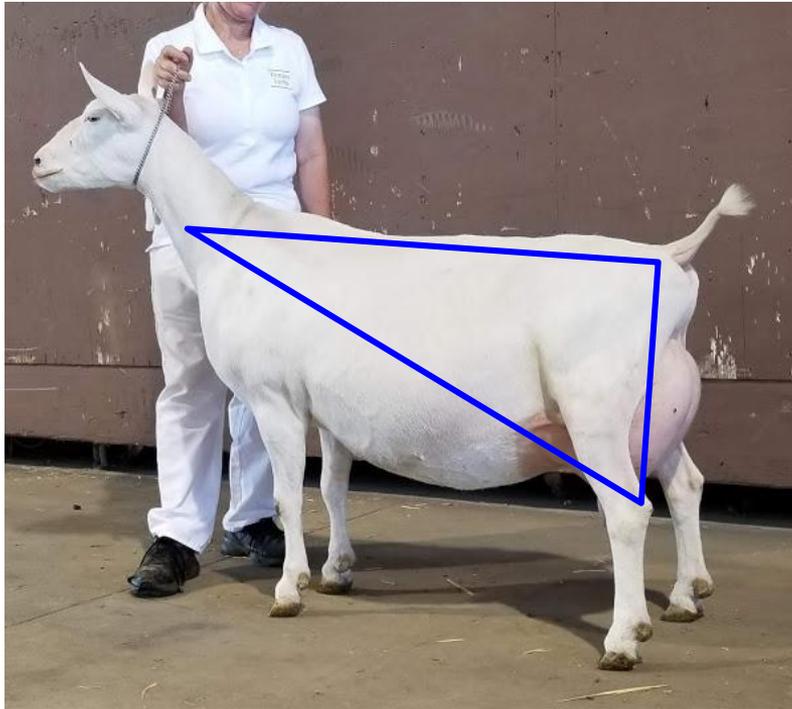
Spring of Rib = Genetics

Ideal starts with tight sharp shoulders, and flares out dramatically into a wide deep barrel to the back of the doe resembling a Triangle

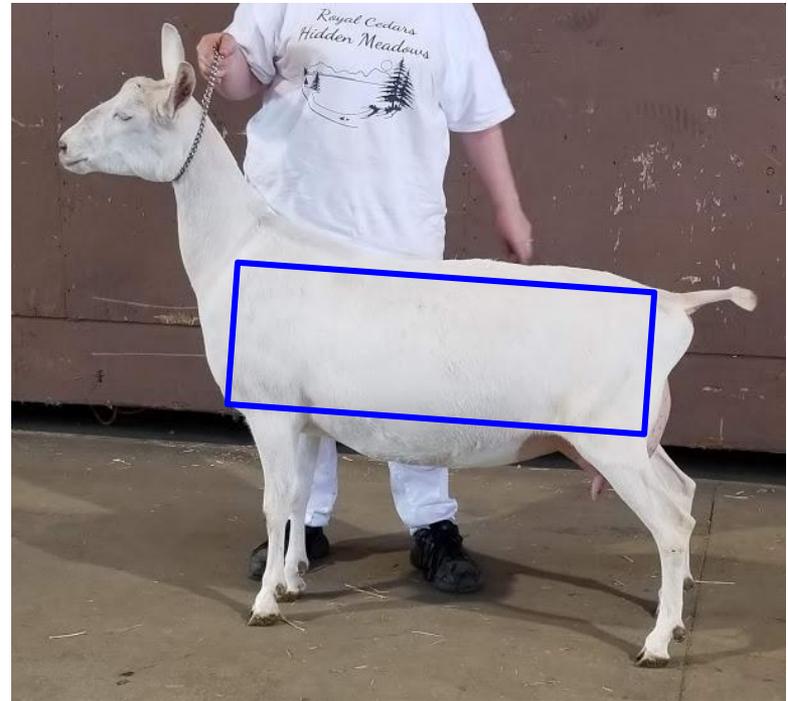
The other doe starts a little less sharp, and never really flares or widens to the back of the doe, lacking the spring of rib the ideal and more closely resembles a rectangle



Increasing Depth of Body



The ideal starts smaller at the front of the doe and increases in depth all the way to the rear barrel



This doe is the same depth at the front and back of the doe and never increases.

Final Thoughts

- Comparing your does to these rudimentary shapes is a quick and easy way to evaluate the doe based on the scorecard
- Breed for what YOU want in a goat.
 - Your goat, your money, your preference.
 - Important things like temperament, or production/taste of milk, etc is not on the scorecard but can be very important to some breeders.
- No goat will ever be perfect.
- Goats can and WILL change with age.
 - Recognizing these qualities in young does is crucial to successful culling.
- Participate in Performance Programs
 - Programs like Linear Appraisal are great tools for impartially evaluating your does