

This column features questions from readers submitted via the website. To submit a question to Small Acre Sam, visit **BarnyardsandBackyards.com**. If your question is featured, you will receive a free one-year subscription to *Barnyards & Backyards*!



ask Sam

question

Dear Sam,

I really love fresh goat milk and am thinking of starting a small, dairy goat herd. I would also like to sell some of the milk. Is that allowed in Wyoming? – *Donna, Cheyenne*

Dear Donna,

Fresh milk is wonderful, and a couple of dairy goats will produce enough fresh milk for your family with some left over to make cheese, yogurt, or kefir. Only Grade A dairies can sell fluid milk, so you want to talk to Consumer Health Services at the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (307-777-7211) before you build your facilities. Also, check out the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance at <http://bit.ly/gradeAmilk>. Grade A dairies need to meet standards in construction, cleaning, sanitation, milk handling, and storage along with personnel and animal health to ensure high-quality milk. They are regularly inspected, and milk samples are tested for bacterial contamination, antibiotics, and brucellosis. There are 11 registered cow dairies in Wyoming, and a goat dairy would be great! Selling raw milk in Wyoming is illegal, but pasteurized milk is fine.

To pasteurize milk, heat it to 165 F for 15 seconds then cool it down quickly. For home use, this can be done in a double boiler on a stovetop or buy a home pasteurizer (about \$375) from dairy supply catalogues.

Pasteurization was considered a huge step forward in food safety by slowing down microbial growth and unwanted fermentation in milk.

You can increase demand for your goat milk by creating herd shares, part ownership of an animal. Owners may give raw milk (or raw milk products) only to family members or non-paying guests (as opposed

to paying guests such as at a bed and breakfast). Herd shares are not inspected in any way, so the quality and safety of milk will vary depending on management. Federal regulations prohibit the transportation of raw milk products between states. The regulation on herdshares is in Chapter 3, Section 8, of the Wyoming Food Safety Rule found here <http://bit.ly/herdshares>

Good luck on your dairy goat venture!
– *Sam*

answer



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