

CANADIAN  
MEAT GOAT  
Association

CANADIENNE  
de la CHEVRE  
de BOUCHERIE

# Fences and Goats

One of the questions often asked is what kind of fencing is needed for goats. Goats tend to be very social and are herd-oriented. Because they like to stay in a group, it seems that fencing goats in should be easy. This is not true!

If you want to keep your goats on your property, or more accurately, off other people's property, you will have to build goat-proof fences – good, strong, sturdy fences!

What is the best type of fencing for goats? Eight foot high chain link fencing with one foot buried underground! That is the best; now let's get practical!

## Barbed Wire

Barbed wire is not recommended for goats as they can injure themselves on the barbs. Goats will try to crawl underneath barbed wire fences or go between strands.

Udders of milking does can be easily torn or damaged by barbed wire.

## Field or Wire Mesh

This is one of the most common types of fencing used for goats. Field fencing comes in rolls of four

and five foot heights, with graduated spacing between the horizontal wires (closer together at the bottom, wider apart at the top). Wire mesh fencing usually has standard spacing and when used along with an electric fence, is very goat-proof! Hopefully!

## Rail or Board

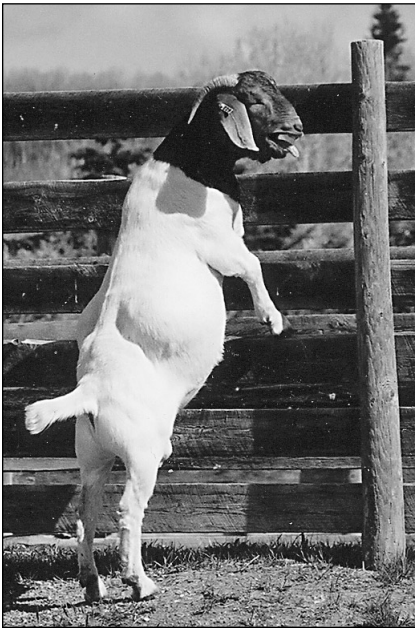
Rail or board fences work well, but can become expensive if you have a large area to fence. The rails or boards must be at least five feet tall, and be spaced close together, right down to the ground. Goats can crawl under or through a very small space. You must always keep in mind what size of goats you are trying to contain.

## Electric

Used alone, electric fencing can be difficult, but used in combination with another type of fencing, it can be the most effective method for containing goats. Rail, board, field or wire mesh fences work well as solid barriers, and the electric wires keep the goats away from the fence. Goats will learn very quickly to respect electric wires. Electric fencing also helps to keep predators out.

Whatever type of fencing you use, make sure it is strong. Your fence is only as good as its weakest point. Any problem areas will be the first areas the goats will find. A fence that works for adult goats may be useless for kids. Goat kids are very adventurous and will try to get through the smallest spaces. Make sure the fence goes right down to

**Your  
fence is  
only as  
good as  
its  
weakest  
point.**



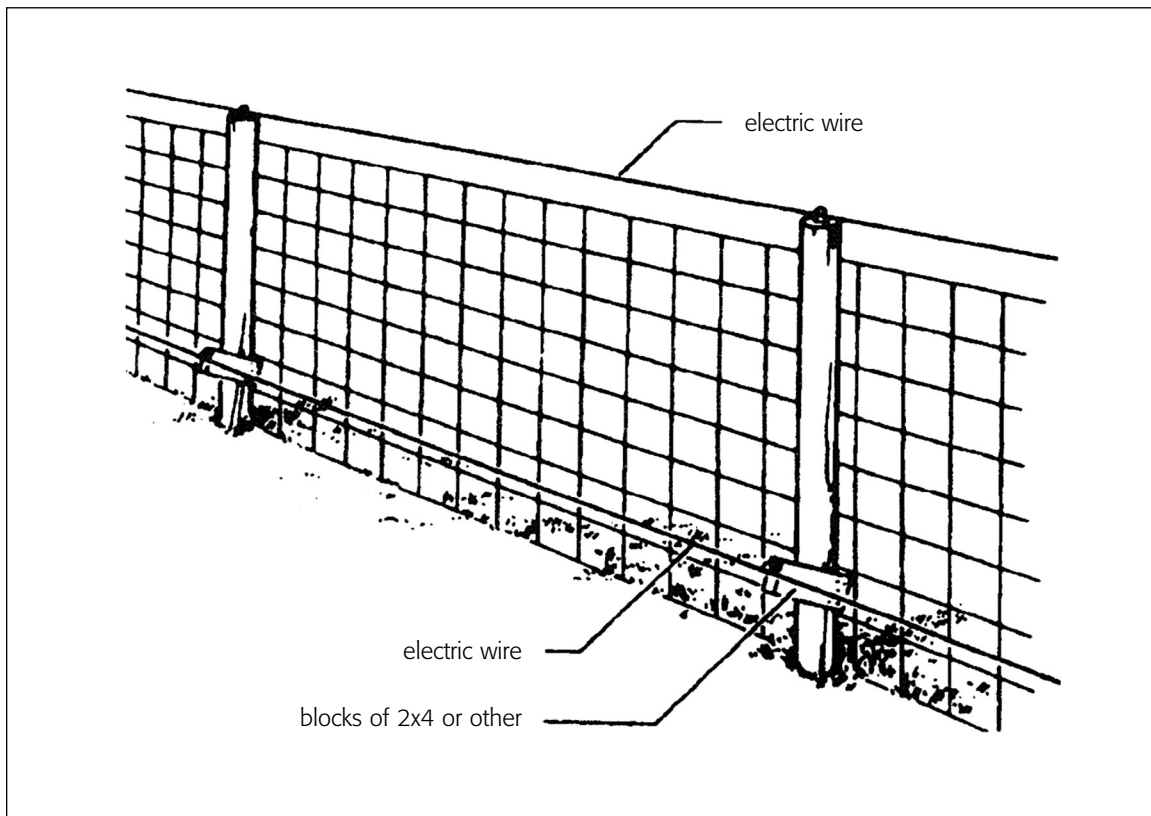
Bucks require especially strong fencing.

the ground. Bucks need a very strong fence to keep them contained during breeding season. The last thing you want to see is your bucks out indiscriminately breeding your does!

Another thing to consider is whether or not your goats are horned. Goats with horns can easily put their heads through a fence but usually need human assistance to get their horned heads back through. This is where

electric wires work well with wire mesh fencing. The combination of these two types seems to be the best fencing for goats. The goats respect the electric fence and the wire mesh makes a fairly solid barrier.

However you fence in your goats, remember to always provide adequate shelter for them. Goats do not like rain, and at the first hint of it, may stampede to the nearest shelter!



Agriculture and  
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et  
Agroalimentaire Canada

Canada

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) is pleased to participate in the production of this publication. AAFC is committed to working with our industry partners to increase public awareness of the importance of the agriculture and agri-food industry to Canada. Opinions expressed in this document are those of the Canadian Meat Goat Association and not necessarily AAFC's. / C'est avec plaisir qu'Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada (AAC) participe à la production de cette publication. Avec nos partenaires du secteur nous nous engageons à sensibiliser davantage les Canadiens et Canadiennes à l'importance de l'agriculture et l'industrie agroalimentaire au pays. Les opinions exprimées dans cette publication sont celles de l'association canadienne de la chèvre de boucherie et non pas nécessairement celles d'AAFC.