Body condition scoring: What is it?

- Refers to the fleshiness of an animal
Why do body condition scoring?

- To monitor nutrition program
- To "head off" parasite or other health problem in the herd
- To prepare goats for the breeding season
NCSU does spend the dry period (June-September) grazing a mix of fescue, orchardgrass, bermudagrass, crabgrass, broadleaf weeds, forage sorghum, etc. and have NO access to grain. With a few exceptions due to some health issues, mostly intestinal parasites, they are in excellent body condition for rebreeding and most of them, with the exception of primiparous does, usually carry twins or triplets.
Severe case of animal welfare due to inadequate management. This does was heavily parasitized by gastrointestinal nematodes and coccidia. BCS ~ 1-2

Not a NCSU goat
Body condition scoring

• Areas to be monitored

✓ Backbone
✓ Edge of loin
✓ Ribs
✓ Rib cage
✓ Shoulder
✓ Tail head
✓ Sternum
Adapted from Langston University
Body condition scores

- Visual evaluation not adequate
- Touch, feel animal

- ✓ Thin  1 - 3
- ✓ Moderate  4 - 6
- ✓ Fat  7 - 9
Recommendations

- Start of breeding season 5 to 6
- End of pregnancy 5 to 6
- Animals should never have a BCS of 1 to 3
- Pregnant does should not have a BCS of 7 or above toward the end of pregnancy because of the risk of pregnancy toxemia (ketosis) and dystocia
- A BCS of 5 to 6 at kidding should not drop off too quickly during lactation
Scale: 1 to 9

BCS 7.0 Fat/muscle cover

BCS 5.5 Fat/muscle cover

BCS 3.5 Fat/muscle cover

Spinous process

Transverse process

Adapted from Langston University
Goat in good body condition - BCS 5 - 6

Fat thickness
- 0.05 to 0.08 in over loin
- 0.03 to 0.05 in over spinous process
Scale: 1 to 5

BCS 4 Fat/muscle cover
BCS 3 Fat/muscle cover
BCS 2 Fat/muscle cover
Transverse process

Spinous process

Adapted from Langston University
Web Resources

- **Body Condition Scoring – Langston University video**
  - [http://www.luresext.edu/goats/research/bcshowto.html](http://www.luresext.edu/goats/research/bcshowto.html)

- **Body Condition Scoring – Langston University interactive**
  - [http://www.luresext.edu/goats/research/bcs.html](http://www.luresext.edu/goats/research/bcs.html)