

Scrapie and Goats

Goats can become infected with Scrapie and there have been 44 cases of Scrapie in goats reported in the United States since 2002. Most cases of Scrapie in goats involve exposure to sheep or exposure to an environment where sheep have previously resided. In these cases, it appears that the sheep flock was infected with Scrapie, the goats were exposed to Scrapie from the sheep, and the goats became infected.



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Most of the signs and modes of transmission of Scrapie are the same in goats as in sheep. Genetic resistance to Scrapie in goats has been studied extensively and in the last few years researchers have found that there is at least partial genetic resistance to Scrapie in goats but it is at different codons than sheep.

The bottom line is:
GOATS ARE SUSCEPTIBLE TO SCRAPIE AND THERE APPEARS TO BE AT LEAST PARTIAL GENETIC RESISTANCE IN GOATS.

Main points in genetic resistance of Goats to Scrapie

- **May not be life-long resistance to Scrapie as it seems to be in sheep**
- **The resistant factors are an S allele at Codon 146 or a K allele at Codon 222**
- **A single S allele at Codon 146 or a single K allele at Codon 222 delays Scrapie beyond a goat normal lifetime in a herd**
- **Research: Goats having a single S allele at Codon146 or a single K allele at Codon 222**
 - **Orally inoculated at birth with Scrapie**
 - **At 7.5 years for S146 and 6.7 years for K222- No clinical signs- no Prion Protein in Rectal biopsies**

At this time, if a goat herd is found to be infected with Scrapie, the USDA will consider using a Genetics-Based Flock Plan similar to sheep. Similarly, in infected sheep flocks with goats on site a Genetics-Based Flock Plan will be used on all sexually intact sheep and goats on site.

