

KGBA Youth Profile

Congratulations, you have been chosen to have a profile article published about you in an upcoming Kinder Goat Breeders Association newsletter. Please answer the following questions and submit to John James at fallfirefarm@gmail.com. You should also include a picture of you with one of your goats. If you have questions, please call me at 330-446-0137. Thanks for your participation.

1. Name: Shealee Swisher
2. Age: 16
3. Hometown: Campbell Hill IL

4. What fairs and shows do you participate in?

So far, I have been to the Missouri State Fair Kinder Goat Show with my Kinders in person. This year I was able to enter the first two doelings born on the farm in the online show! Along with showing the two doelings online I was also able to enter their dams in the local 4-H show. They were entered in the dairy class because our 4-H program does not have classes for individual breeds.

5. How long have you owned Kinder Goats?

I have owned Kinders since the summer of 2019, so while it hasn't been a long time, it has been a wonderful experience!

6. How did you get started in Kinder Goats?

When I was younger, I had wanted goats and so as a family we began researching goats, uses, programs, how to make money, etc. We eventually let it go for a few years, but when someone called us to ask if we would take in a baby goat whose mom had died from a coyote attack, we couldn't say no. So, we had a mixed goat who lived as an inside goat at night and outside during the day. However, she was an only goat and because goats are supposed to be with other goats, I asked my parents if we could get more. My dad didn't like the idea of having anymore pets than what we already do and told me I had to come up with a way to pay for themselves. Which is how my business, Loving the Farm, began. At the time I was thinking about getting Nigerians, but someone at a soccer practice told my mom about someone she knew who had Kinders. Our interest was spiked and eventually we were able to get in contact with Kelsee Gibbs and Lisa LaRose who we got our first Kinder Goats from! I have to say that I love the breed and the idea of the dual purpose goats (even if I would rather not eat them) and have loved all my goats that we have!

7. How many Kinder Goats do you own?

Currently we have 2 Kinder does, 1 doeling, and 1 wether.

8. What's your most exciting memory of working with your goats? This could be showing, kidding, community service or anything else that you have a great memory of.

Oh my, I have so many good memories with my goats so far, from the first kids on the ground to making someone's day with a surprise goat gram. Although I think that my favorite so far would probably have to be between the first show or Anna's and also my first kidding. We weren't sure if Anna was going to make it to her kidding date because she came down with listeriosis a few weeks prior to her due date. Luckily Lisa and Kelsee were able to help me get what I needed in time and we were able to pull her through! She still wasn't due for about 9 more days when she delivered, so we weren't really expecting it. As a matter of fact, I was actually getting ready to take pictures for the 4-H show and when Anna didn't come greet me at the gate, I went in to find her just as her 'water' broke and she had a contraction!! I ran down to the house and told mom that Anna was in labor and ran back up to the shed to grab some towels. I made it back up there just in time for the first kid to come out, and then the next. Both were delivered so quickly and with ease! Anna was also a great first-time mom and she started cleaning them right away. All 3 of those goats are so sweet and they all love attention!

9. Who has been your Kinder mentor?

My Kinder mentors have been Lisa LaRose and Keslee Gibbs. They have helped me out so much the past year and I really don't know that I would still have goats if they were not my mentors! Lisa and Kelsee are amazing people and are so helpful and supportive with the goats. I have learned so much through them and can only hope that one day I am half as good a mentor to someone else as they have been to me!

10. What's your favorite thing about Kinder Goats?

So far my favorite thing about my Kinder Goats has been their personality and fairly docile nature. We have kids visit them all the time as part of our business Loving the Farm, and they do great! We even let kids take them on hikes with us at times! While they are pretty affectionate, they haven't nibbled too much, which I am sure has to do with their upbringing as well. I also love that they can come in any color! It makes for some fun guessing and surprises when we are waiting on kids to arrive!

11. How would you like to improve your herd?

I am thinking that one of the first things that we can work on to improve our herd is the meatiness of our does while keeping up their milk production. I was pretty happy with the amount of milk that I was getting from our does for their first freshening and my first-time milking. I do think though that my girls are just a bit on the lighter side for a kinder which is why I would like them to be a little heavier.

12. Meat or milk?

So far I have found the milk aspect of the kinder what I rather get than the meat. However, that is simply because our family does not eat goat meat, although my brothers like to tease me and say they want to try it. I am not sure if goat meat is something I will ever bring myself to eat, so for that reason meat for the family is out, but I am not against the idea. I know that people eat goat and will do my best to keep dual purpose Kinders. As for milk, I have been using the milk from my kinder does first freshening's to make goat milk soap, which is a bit more difficult than I had anticipated, but seems to be worth it in the end. We don't drink goat milk just yet, although I am a very big milk drinker, so maybe one day I will get brave enough to try it again.

13. Do you think you will continue to own Kinder Goats as an adult?

I can't be sure what the Lord has in store for me in the future, but if I am able too, I would love to continue owning Kinder goats as an adult! I think that this breed is amazing along with all the people I have met who are working to continue developing the breed.

14. What advice would you give to another youth thinking about raising Kinder Goats?

If you are thinking about getting into Kinders or raising goats of any breed, great!! I highly recommend doing your research beforehand and just as importantly, if not more importantly, find an amazing mentor who is reputable. Finding a good mentor will save you a lot of hard learned lessons and heartache in the long run I do believe. It's also important to have a good mentor or two that you can trust and have a lot of experience, because the web will always give you many mixed answers based on people's ideas and views on things. So, finding someone who is raising their goats similar to how you are wanting to is a must. When you do find them don't be afraid to pick their brains and ask lots of questions. The relationship you have with your mentor will likely largely depend on you, how much you care, and whether or not you want to keep those connections.

As for getting Kinders specifically, look for a reputable breeder with a clean herd, visit them if it's possible. See how they raise their goats, what their herd looks like, etc. If you get good goats with good personalities, I am not sure how you can go wrong! I absolutely love my kinder girls, especially my doe Anna who is just a big baby! I wish everyone the best of luck with there adventures with their goats!



Pictured above is my Kinder Doe Anna (Kinder Korner SheaAnna) and I. I wish everyone has a Merry Christmas, happy holidays, and a Happy New Year!