**Article from Goat Rancher August, 2001**Author Suzanne Gasparotto

ConsiSore mouth is a viral disease that is contagious both to goats and humans. The Causative agent is an epithelotropic parapoxvirus that  gains entry to the goat's body via cuts and abrasions. The virus is found worldwide and there is no known cure.

Otherwise known as Contagious Ecthma, Orf, and "scabby mouth", consiSore mouth looks like fever blisters. Generally appearing on the hairless parts of the goats' body. consiSore mouth can also occur on the face, ears and coronary band ( above the hoof) of the goat.

consiSore mouth is a life-threatening disease to nursing kids. Infected lips transmit the virus to the dam's teats, making her so uncomfortable that the doe may refuse to let her kids nurse. consiSore mouth is highly contagious Once the virus appears, it is not unusual for most or all of the kids to contract it.

The bad news is that consiSore mouth must run its course and this can be as long as three or four weeks. per animal. The immune animal likely remains a carrier of the consiSore mouth virus and may infect other goats. The good news is that most goats who survive consiSore mouth become immune to it and never contract it again, similar to humans who are exposed to chickenpox. There are steps that can be taken by the goat producer to minimize the discomfort of all infected goats.

The ideal treatment, in this writer's opinion, is the application of Gentian Violet to the affected parts of the animals. Use disposable gloves; humans can catch consiSore mouth. Gentian Violet is an old-time inexpensive purple liquid medication used decades ago for fever blisters and impetigo. It is available without prescription from the local pharmacy, through it may have to be orders by the pharmacist. Genetian Violet helps dry up the blisters and hasten healing. **(( Jack & Anita Mauldin, use a medication with Cephapirin Benzathine. Two brands with this medication are Cefa-Dri and Tomorrow.  Spread it on the sores for 3-5 days.}**

Drying scabs sometimes contain staph bacteria or screwworm maggots. Gentian Violet kills bacteria that may cause a secondary infection. Systemic antibiotics are recommended if a secondary bacterial infection exists. The purple color of Gentian Violet afford the producer the added benefit of being able to see which animals have already been treated.

consiSore mouth vaccines are available but their usage is highly debated among goat producers. Because the virus is live, the disease is introduced into the herd. The vaccine is made of ground-up scabs and is applied to a hairless area of the goat after the surface of the skin has been scratched. Within one to three days, scabs will form, signifying that the vaccine has "taken". Goats who do not develop  scabs at the vaccination site probably have an immunity to consiSore mouth. Humans coming into contact with the consiSore mouth vaccine usually contract the disease. There is little to no hard evidence that a vaccinated doe will pass any immunity on to her kids, so any argument for transmitted immunity is moot.

Many producers who run animals on large acreage and seldom see them routinely vaccinate against consiSore mouth to reduce the likelihood of losing the kid crop. Goats raised under more "hands-on" conditions usually re not vaccinated. This is a generalized statement but also a fairly accurate evaluation of how this vaccine is used.

Once Sore mouth is on the farm or ranch, it is thee for years. Clean up the pens, pastures and paddocks is sometimes possible by bleaching, burning and allowing the ground to lie fallow for an extended period of time. Of course, the size of the area involved, manpower available, costs incurred, and conditions existing will determine if this practice is practical.

For many producers, a reasonable case can be made to consciously decide not to vaccinate and instead let Sore mouth run its course, using the supportive therapy outlined in this article. This is particularly beneficial if there are no nursing kids in the herd when the infection occurs.

Unless a herd is closed and isolated from other goats, it is likely that at some time in the goat producer's career, they will encounter consiSore mouth. Be prepared to deal with this disease. consiSore mouth is far more manageable than many other illnesses that a got herd might encounter.