

Farm Kid or City Kid?

Do you have goats? I do, except I don't live by them. You see, my grandparents have the goats on their farm in Minnesota and me, my mom, my aunt, and my cousins all help care for them, but I live two hours away, and it can be a challenge sometimes to get there. My grandpa usually does fine taking care of them by himself and my aunt and cousins are only an hour away, but he's getting older. It's also getting harder to be at the farm as much as I want to be because I have school and we can only go on the weekends.

The summers are usually a little easier because we have more free time, but we also have a lot to do beyond just taking care of the goats because it is also show season. The hardest time of the year is the spring, when I still have school and it's also kidding season. It is stressful because we worry about the goats and their babies, and we have to feed the kids all the time. But, there are good things about kidding season too. I love playing with the new babies, and I get especially excited when my goats freshen.

I help out around the farm whenever I can. My grandpa and my mom usually milk the goats and I feed them and fill their water buckets. We feed the goats grain and hay, and sometimes we give them alfalfa. We also have other animals such as peacocks, chickens, 3 cats, and 2 dogs. So, it's a lot of animals to manage and it's tough to live far away from them. During the summer, I do get to spend a lot more time with my grandparents, my cousins, and my goats. My cousin Zoe and I are especially close, and we love playing with the goat kids together, climbing fences, and having fun showing goats together.

My goats' names are Xuna and Arabika. They are French Alpines. Xuna is 2 years old and was born as a single doe kid, and so she is somewhat demanding, but very sweet. Arabika was born in the spring of 2023. She is very friendly, although she is not a good showmanship goat. I think that they both have a bright future in our herd.

It is really hard to be away from them because I can't milk them, or feed them, or fill their water buckets, or really just be with them, and sometimes I feel like I'm not contributing to the family enough. Also, we have friends, so sometimes my mom just goes to the farm and I stay here with my dad and hang out with him. Like this weekend at our state fair, we only get to see our non-goat friends once a year, and we're only going to the fair for a day. I guess I make up for not being at the fair every day of the show because I help out a lot before and after the fair. But I still feel guilty for not being there on show day. I want to help out more. But slowly as time moves forward, I am starting to find a balance between being a farm kid and just being a kid.