

1: Livestock Guardian Dogs: Dog Breed Expert

This is one of the best-known livestock guard dogs. According to the AKC, their popularity has been decreasing the past few years, but they still are purchased as companion dogs and are one of the most popular guard dog breeds.

Using a living animal to guard your stock is not only a responsibility but also it requires you to gain some knowledge. Acquiring this knowledge and doing some prior preparation before your guardian arrives will make the use of a livestock guardian more successful, as well. If you are not sure which livestock guardian would make the best fit for you and your situation, here is a truly honest look at the pros and cons of each potential guardian - dogs, donkeys, and llamas. This first post will look at livestock guard dogs LGDs

The pros: Guarding poultry presents a different set of challenges than other stock, but it can be done successfully with attention to some training and the choice of a dog. Equines can likewise be problematical since the horse or donkey can have a natural flight or fight response to canines; but again, it has been done successfully. LGDs can also provide protection outside and around buildings or enclosures that house other animals, such as poultry or rabbits. LGDs can work in groups together. Owners who face serious threats by large predators often employ two or more LGDs together in a field. In some truly serious situations, owners have used as many as four or five LGDs together. They will actively patrol and mark their territory, especially at night. The dogs begin with barking, which becomes more frenzied if the predator does not back off, followed by posturing or charging. LGDs attack only if the predator is not driven away. Owners often learn to interpret the barking so that they know when backup assistance may be needed. Your customers often appreciate this approach if you sell products. LGDs also provide this alert about threats to family and farm, not just their stock. Predators often become used to or habituated against lights, sirens, and other visual or auditory methods of frightening predators away. This also reduces human labor needed to bring flocks into a barn or protective paddock every night. LGDs are usually more active at night than during the day. One summer we used a pasture with a den of coyotes right outside the fence. It was a summer of much barking and howling, but we did not lose even one tiny Shetland lamb to those coyotes. And now the cons: They are also slow to grow and mature if purchased as a pup, as long as two years. Young dogs need time and your guidance to become good guardians. You may be tempted to re-home dogs that have failed elsewhere or are offered cheaply. You might consider buying dogs from unproven bloodlines or breeders who do not do routine health checks, in an effort to save money. A good breeder will be a good mentor to you and is invaluable. Dogs from good breeders, who select for working traits, greatly increase your chances of success. I will go into more about selecting a good LGD pup in a later blog post. LGD breeds were developed on unfenced and often migratory grazing and they worked in the company of shepherds day and night. Their idea of their territory may be much larger than your pasture or even your farm. LGDs can jump, dig, climb and slither through amazingly tight spaces for their size. If they are allowed to wander, they are likely to be injured or lost. If your fencing is poor, you will either need to reinforce it or add electricity " or choose another livestock guardian. On the plus side, good fences also protect your stock. You should provide appropriate shelter for them, which may reduce this need to dig their own. But it may not. This is how they work because this is when predators are most active. Remember that they hear and see better than you. You can help teach your dog about appropriate barking, but if barking will seriously bother you or your neighbors, you need a different livestock guardian. Their food needs to be provided for them in a protected way from weather and other animals. LGDs need regular veterinary care; preventative medications for rabies, heartworm, parasites and other diseases; and a certain amount of grooming, such as clipping claws or tending to long coats. You need to be able to leash your dog, medicate it or tend to injuries, and confine it or transport it, if necessary. They are truly not like herding, sporting or other working dog breeds you might be familiar with. This can be a liability and may impact your property insurance. It is a reason for good fences, educating your neighbors, socializing your dog, and posted signs that say Livestock Guard Dog at Work. They may need to be confined when veterinarians, sheep shearers, or others are working on their stock. They may not tolerate herding or other farm dogs. Although LGDs usually provide non-lethal predator control, owners do, at times, find the remains of smaller predators in their pastures

and barns. Next post â€™ pros and cons about guard llamas. She has over 30 years of experience with livestock guard dogs and wrote this book to help all owners and potential owners of livestock guardians to achieve greater success. I had a rescue terrier mix who wandered, and I finally put a collar on her, set to the lightest setting. When she would get to a point I had in my mind of the limit of where she could go, I buzzed her. I think it took two or three days of watching her carefully and correcting her when she got to a set point and she got it and never took off again. A friend tried this on his border collie who was a neighborhood nuisance and he said it took only two or three corrections and she would walk at heel, come when called, and became a wonderful dog. And he is a softy and hated the idea of one of these collars till he tried it. My dog was very happy in her territory once she understood what it was, and once she started to believe in God. He was a chronic wanderer and was going to end up being shot. We took him and have him with our horses but he continues to wander- and we have been warned by neighbor that he would end up shot if he continues to cause trouble. Any ideas of how to cure this?

2: Farm Dogs: Guarding, Herding and Helping - Sustainable Farming - MOTHER EARTH NEWS

The Anatolian Shepherd Dog Rescue League, Inc has an excellent booklet available on The Ins and Outs of Livestock Guardians. This is a compilation of articles by actual users of Livestock Guardian dogs and is a "must-read" for anyone considering using any breed of LGD.

We began with Merema-Great Pyrenees crosses and have had many generations of guardians, mostly Great Pyrenees some rescues and two Anatolian Shepherds. We usually have a team of permanent dogs at any given time, spread among our various goat and poultry pens. We often have puppies of various ages and stages of training as well. We feel LGDs are our best protection for our goats and poultry. We have used a llama to work in a remote roadside pasture with our sheep where we do not feel a dog would be well suited, due to its proximity to the road and neighbors, without our supervision. We breed for temperament gentle disposition, strong bonds to their charges, even level of physical activity , intelligence, moderate size, healthy sound conformation, and longevity. They are all our friends, family members, and beloved pets. We began breeding AKC registered Purebred Great Pyrenees in and have also bred our Anatolian bitch to our Great Pyrenees stud resulting in several litters per year. We expect that at least half will work as LGDs. We offer puppies with both unrestricted and restricted AKC registrations as well as crossbred for the positive traits they bring from both parental breeds. We receive regular positive reports from their owners as far away as Oregon and the US Virgin Islands. We sell a number as house pets as well one went to a show breeder and their owners also keep us up to date as to their activities. A good friend participates in dog carting with her Pyr. Two working together is much more than twice the protection of two single dogs. They support one another in work and in play they will preferentially seek each other for rough-and-tumble over chasing your livestock. Our experience is that training two pups is MUCH easier than training one alone. We do offer a discount for multiple purchases from the same litter. They are a very social dog who was bred to be a livestock guardian and thus bonded to their charges mine are. They hate to be alone; a lonely Pyr is a miserable Pyr and will make you a miserable Pyr owner. Such a dog will get into mischeif and have a barking problem. If you are home with the dog most of the time it should be very happy and you can train it not to bark much though all dogs do bark. It is especially important to do basic obedience training with Pyrs for several reasons: Our Great Pyrenees are AKC registered and all breeding animals are cleared for hip and other genetic issues. We ship everywhere and can ship two pups in a crate.

3: Five Best Livestock Guard Dogs | PetHelpful

You may decide that you want a livestock guardian dog if you live on a large amount of acreage. They are great for protecting a large variety of livestock. So if you raise goats, sheep, cattle, or even chickens, an LGD will protect them for you.

This imprinting is thought to be largely olfactory and occurs between 3 and 16 weeks of age. An LGD raised with sheep will generally not be an effective guardian of cattle or goats and one raised with cattle will not be an effective guardian of goats or sheep. The imprinting is critical because LGDs tend to behave in a non-predatory and protective way only with animal species they have been raised with. Proper socialization and instinct, not training, are key to rearing an effective LGD. Bonding LGDs to cattle is more difficult than bonding them to the smaller livestock species. However, the practice of bonding guarding dogs to cows is becoming more common, especially in places such as the American West where the reintroduction of predators has conflicted with cattle herds in areas where predation had been rare. There are even trials underway to protect penguins. In Namibia in Southwest Africa, Anatolians are used to guard goat herds from cheetahs, and are typically imprinted between seven and eight weeks of age. Impoverished Namibian farmers often came into conflict with predatory cheetahs; now, Anatolians usually are able to drive off cheetahs with their barking and displays of aggressions. Nonetheless, despite their size, they can be gentle, make good companion dogs, and are often protective towards children. If introduced to a family as a pup, most LGDs are as protective of their family as a working guard dog is of its flock. In fact, in some communities where LGDs are a tradition, the runt of a litter would often be kept or given as a household pet or simply kept as a village dog without a single owner. Anywhere from one to five dogs may be placed with a flock or herd depending on its size, the type of predators, their number, and the intensity of predation. If predators are scarce, one dog may be adequate though range operations usually require two dogs. Both male and female LGDs have proved to be equally effective in protecting of livestock. However, in regions where dogs were used in annual transhumance migrations, males were often used exclusively as LGDs since pregnant females and newborn pups would likely perish on the long journeys. The three qualities most sought after in LGDs are trustworthiness, attentiveness and protectiveness—trustworthy in that they do not roam off and are not aggressive with the livestock, attentive in that they are situationally aware of threats by predators, and protective in that they will attempt to drive off predators. Dogs, being social creatures with differing personalities, will take on different roles with the herd and among themselves: These differing roles are often complementary in terms of protecting livestock, and experienced ranchers and shepherds sometimes encourage these differences by adjustments in socialization technique so as to increase the effectiveness of their group of dogs in meeting specific predator threats. LGDs that follow the livestock closest assure that a guard dog is on hand if a predator attacks, while LGDs that patrol at the edges of a flock or herd are in a position to keep would-be attackers at a safe distance from livestock. Those dogs that are more attentive tend to alert those that are more passive but perhaps also more trustworthy or less aggressive with the livestock. While LGDs have been known to fight to the death with predators, in most cases predator attacks are prevented by a display of aggressiveness. LGDs are known to drive off predators that physically they would be no match for, such as bears and even lions. With the reintroduction of predators into natural habitats in Europe and North America, environmentalists have come to appreciate LGDs because they allow sheep and cattle farming to coexist with predators in the same or nearby habitats. Unlike trapping and poisoning, LGDs seldom kill predators; instead, their aggressive behaviors tend to condition predators to seek unguarded thus, non-farm animal prey.

4: Dog Owner's Guide: Livestock guard dogs

A livestock guardian dog (LGD) is a type of pastoral dog bred for the purpose of protecting livestock from predators.. Livestock guardian dogs stay with the group of animals they protect as a full-time member of the flock or herd.

What are the best security dogs for poultry protection at night? Well, I advice you read on to find out. If you own a flock of sheep, a herd of cattle or poultry, then you will need to protect your animals from predators, thieves and other unwanted elements. If you use poisons or traps, your animals may end up being casualties. So, you should consider safer alternatives and one of such alternative is a guard dog. Having a livestock guardian dog around your farm is a good and safe way to protect your animals. Such a dog would always stay with your flock; watch out for predators and other intruders, and fight fiercely to protect your animals. Please note that not all guard dogs are good for protecting livestock. A dog breed meant for home protection may attack your animals if you try to modify it for livestock protection. So without wasting your time, here are the top ten best security dog breeds for protecting livestock. This dog has a natural guarding instinct and it is very aggressive with any predator that may want to attack its flock. In addition, the Great Pyrenees can be trusted with young, small, and helpless animals, which are most prone to predation. Another upside of the Great Pyrenees is its nocturnal nature; it stays awake at night to protect your animals. So, predators cannot even take advantage of the darkness at night. The Maremma Sheepdog A livestock protection breed of Italian origin, the Maremma sheepdog has a solid, muscular build and a thick white coat, which forms a thicker collar around the neck. Despite its huge size, the Maremma sheepdog is very friendly towards animals and particularly gentle with lambs. It loves adequate open space and is very calm and intelligent. This dog can protect free-range animals from both terrestrial predators such as coyotes, wolves, foxes and stray dogs as well as aerial predators such as hawks, eagles, and owls. The Akbash This dog, of Turkish origin, is a large dog which can weigh up to pounds and can reach a height of 35 inches. It has long legs, a curled tail, and a white double coat. While on duty, the Akbash is neither shy nor aggressive. But it has keen senses that quickly detect unusual sounds and changes in its environment. It is not hostile except when challenged, and it can think and act independently. Though very powerful against predators, the Akbash is very gentle with lambs, goat kids, and chicks. The Kuvasz Of Hungarian origin, this dog is perfect both as a livestock guard and as a home security guard. It is a large dog with a dense, white, odorless coat that can be wavy or straight in texture. The Kuvasz is very intelligent and clownish. If you want a dog that would make you burst into fits of laughter sometimes, this dog is your ideal choice. This dog is very loyal, and it can think and act on its own without instruction. It protects livestock by scanning and evaluating the environment for potential threats and taking deterrent or protective action as needed. However, keep in mind that this dog is somewhat noisy and tends towards independence. The Pyrenean Mastiff This is a large breed, which usually has a heavy white coat with darker spots. It is strong, rustic, calm, and self-reliant. It can function as both a livestock guard and a home security guard. The Pyrenean Mastiff is gentle with its flock, and it tolerates other dogs and pets as well as people it knows. This dog does not require regular exercise. However, it must be trained with a strong hand, as it is an independent-minded dog that may not respect a passive owner. Socializing the Pyrenean Mastiff from puppyhood is a must. The Komondor This dog is also of Hungarian origin and a cousin of the Kuvasz. It has a white coat that easily blends with that of the flock. The Komondor is one of the largest common dog breeds, with a height of over 30 inches and a heavy, muscular, and robust body covered with a heavy coat that sometimes resembles dreadlocks. It has long legs and a short back. The Komondor can act independently and fight fearlessly to defend its flock. When things are normal, it remains its calm, steady self. This dog is overprotective; it may attack innocent strangers or passers-by. The Polish Tatra Sheepdog As its name implies, this dog is fantastic for herding and protecting sheep. However, this is not the only task that it is good at; it is also very good for personal protection and for military purposes. The dog has a massive, pure white double coat and a huge frame. It is a very loyal and protective territorial breed. The Anatolian Shepherd A muscular breed with a thick neck and sturdy body, this dog is large, rugged, and very strong. It has keen senses of sight and hearing, allowing it to protect livestock. In addition, it has great speed and agility, and it can catch up with

any predator. But it is not a good breed for home security, as it is very temperamental. Although, it is very easy to train due to its high intelligence, it could be stubborn sometimes and may decide not to obey instructions. Rather, it prefers working independently. The Kangal Though not a herding dog, the Kangal is a good flock guardian, which lives with flock of sheep or other livestock and protects them against bears, wolves, and jackals. The Kangal is also very good for home security because of its protectiveness, loyalty, and gentleness with small children and other pets. The Tibetan Mastiff Even though not a true mastiff, this dog was named as such because of its large size. This breed is very hardy and primitive, so it can survive very harsh environmental conditions. As a flock guardian dog, the Tibetan Mastiff has a tenacious ability to confront predators of all sizes. In addition, it remains very active during the night. However, this dog is very stubborn and extensive obedience training is needed to bring it under control. In conclusion, I hope the list above will be of help to you. However, it is important you bear in mind that the performance of your dog is highly dependent on the quality of training you give it. So please, invest time and resources to train your dog and it will serve you diligently and excellently.

5: Great Pyrenees Breeding, Livestock Dog Breeder | Larue, TX

Livestock guard dogs are an attractive choice for predator control on the farm. Jan Dohner gives us an honest look at the pros and cons of choosing a Livestock guard dog versus a guard donkey or.

Mark is a veterinarian. He has been working with dogs for more than 40 years. A Great Pyrenees at work. Source Anyone not in the business of raising sheep and goats cannot understand how hard it is to lose a new lamb or kid. Even small farms with only a few livestock will benefit from keeping a livestock guard dog who can prevent the occasional loss. These five breeds are the most popular livestock guard dogs and each of them has several great characteristics. See if one or more if you have more than one dog they are more effective in guarding your livestock is right for you. A Great Pyrenees puppy. Source Great Pyrenees This is one of the best-known livestock guard dogs. According to the AKC, their popularity has been decreasing the past few years, but they still are purchased as companion dogs and are one of the most popular guard dog breeds. They look fantastic, which is why so many families buy one as a companion dog. They are mostly white, with a thick double coat, a thick mane to keep the wolves off, and black eyes and a button of a nose. They also have double dew claws on their hind legs, an unusual feature. The Great Pyrenees are originally from the Pyrenees mountain region of northern Spain, like their names suggests, and have been guarding sheep in that region for hundreds of years. They bark a lot at night when doing their job, can be difficult to train, and even their fanciers admit that they are not good with strangers. Like most livestock dogs, this breed is said to be good with kids, however. Despite their size males get to be over 50 kilos and stand about 70 centimeters they are not tough enough to handle bears or wolves. Breeders and fanciers usually say that the Great Pyrenees is healthy, but he can develop hip dysplasia or bloat like any large breed, and some are prone to patellar luxation a trick knee. Source Akbash These white Turkish dogs are still mostly livestock guard dogs and are not kept much as pets. They are even larger than the Great Pyrenees males may be over 60 kilograms and stand 85 centimeters and usually have the same dark eyes and nose. Their legs are usually longer and their tail is a little larger. If you do purchase one of these dogs just as a companion he may develop behavioral problems like excessive digging or escaping They will get along with most other species if introduced early, and are usually satisfied when lying in a field watching their charges, whether sheep or goats. Akbash fanciers appreciate that the dog has low energy and does well spending its day quietly. They report that the dog is athletic when it needs to be, but is not hostile and able to think independently. Akbash are hardy, like all livestock guard dogs, and do not have a lot of health problems. They can have big dog issues but normally live problem free to about 10 or 11 years old. Source Anatolian Shepherd Like the names suggests, this dog was originally developed in Anatolia. They are a strong mountain dog bred in an area of Asia where dogs were expected to protect sheep from wolves, jackals, and bears. They will be able to handle foxes, coyotes, and feral dogs easily. The Anatolian shepherd looks different than most of the other livestock guard dogs. It is not pure white, sometimes has a black mask, and has a thicker neck and broader head than some dogs. They are big, up to about 70 kilograms, and look even bigger because of their thick mane. Like the Akbash, this dog is not recommended as only a companion dog. They are bred to work, will probably escape and roam if kept without a flock or herd, and unless socialized will be unlikely to accept strangers. Even if they are kept as a pet they will probably not want to fetch. They can be obedience trained but it may be difficult to work with them at times. Health problems are few but they have been reported to have hip dysplasia, like most big dogs, eyelid problems entropion, where the eyelid rolls in and the lashes rub against the eyeball, and a few other unusual problems. They live about 10 or 11 years. Source Komondor The Komondor has a thick corded coat that looks different than most dogs, so even people that are not familiar with livestock guard dogs have seen these dogs in shows or photos. Few are aware of his personality, however. The thick coat is supposed to protect the dog from wolves when he is guarding his sheep. He is white, like most livestock guard dogs, taller than most about 80 centimeters at the withers and heavy kilograms, but not as heavy as some breeds. This may have been due to lack of socialization and training. They are said to be good with family and children but like all the livestock guard dogs, he will be happier with a job to do. Confining these dogs to a life in the city or a suburb

is not acceptable. Komondors are susceptible to the health problems of big breeds, hip dysplasia and bloat. External parasites like fleas and ticks are also more of a concern when the dog has that thick corded coat. Source Kuvasz This white or light-colored livestock guard dog is also originally from Hungary, like the Komondor. The dog breed may even have been around before coming to that country, though, and some fanciers think it is one of the oldest dog breeds in existence. The Kuvasz looks similar to the other livestock guard dogs. The eyes are black, he weighs about kilograms, but he is not as heavy as some of the livestock guard dog breeds. The main difference is in his personality. If this dog is to be kept as a companion animal he should have early socialization and good obedience training. They might be more playful than other livestock guard dogs but are also serious about their work and quite independent. The Kuvasz is known to be good with kids, good around other animals, and protective of his family and owner. They are not known for performing tricks or obeying commands off leash. Kuvasz are usually healthy but hip dysplasia can be a problem in any big dog. If fed correctly to avoid excessive calories and rapid growth the dogs can live about 12 years. If you are interested in this breed of dog there is a HubPages author, Suhail, that keeps one and is knowledgeable on the Kuvasz and other livestock guard dogs. Click on his name and the link will take you to a great article about his experience with the breed. A Fila brasileiro at work. Source I am a big fan of the Fila Brasileiro since they are good guard dogs and also a great livestock guard dog for cattle. The UK has already foolishly put them on their Dangerous Dogs List and they are also banned in some other countries. Which One Is Best? The other part of this list that is a little different than other lists is its lack of any small dogs. Corgis have been suggested as a livestock guard dog but are not one of the most popular because they are small and unable to handle the larger predators. Corgis are, however, one of the few livestock guard dogs great with geese. When my geese were small, my Pit Bull cross guarded them effectively. Now that they are larger, a fox or average sized dog would not mess with them. A large dog could still attack them, however, and a Corgi would do little to stop that. They might be classed more as livestock herding dogs, since they have more of a tendency to move their charges around the yard. But which one of the five most popular livestock guard dogs is best? It really depends on what you need the dog for. If your predator problem is mainly with small animals like foxes, a Great Pyrenees is most likely to be available and will do a great job. If you live in northern Minnesota or other areas in which wolves are a problem, an Anatolian Shepherd would be a better choice. If you have livestock they should be protected. Most of them need to get out and work and will not be happy as companion animals, but the five most common livestock guard dogs will do the job and keep your herd safe. Does she look like she needs a Corgi to protect her?

6: Livestock guarding dogs: New to maremmas

There are so many livestock guardian dog breeds that it can be daunting to pick the right one for your small farm, hobby farm, or homestead. First, make sure to bone up on the basics of having a livestock guardian dog, ensuring that the choice to have one at all is the right one for your farm. In.

A 9-week-old Border Collie working ducks. All herding behavior is modified predatory behavior. Some breeds, such as the Australian Cattle Dog, typically nip at the heels of animals for this reason they are called heelers and the Cardigan Welsh Corgi and the Pembroke Welsh Corgi were historically used in a similar fashion in the cattle droves that moved cattle from Wales to the Smithfield Meat Market in London but are rarely used for herding today. Other breeds, notably the Border Collie, get in front of the animals and use what is called strong eye to stare down the animals; [3] they are known as headers. The headers or fetching dogs keep livestock in a group. The heelers or driving dogs keep pushing the animals forward. Typically, they stay behind the herd. The Australian Kelpie and Australian Koolie use both these methods and also run along the backs of sheep so are said to head, heel, and back. The New Zealand Huntaway uses its loud, deep bark to muster mobs of sheep. Herding instincts and trainability can be measured when introducing a dog to livestock or at noncompetitive herding tests. Individuals exhibiting basic herding instincts can be trained to compete in herding trials. Commonly mustered animals include cattle, sheep, goats and reindeer, [6] although it is not unusual for poultry to be handled by dogs. Although herding dogs may guard flocks their primary purpose is to move them; both herding dogs and livestock guardian dogs may be called "sheep dogs". In general terms when categorizing dog breeds, herding dogs are considered a subcategory of working dogs, but for conformation shows they usually form a separate group. Highland games dog herding The competitive dog sport in which herding dogs move animals around a field, fences, gates, or enclosures as directed by their handlers is called a sheepdog trial, herding test or stockdog trial depending on the area. Come-by or just bye - go to the left of the stock, or clockwise around them. Stand - stop, although when said gently may also mean just to slow down. Wait, lie down or sit or stay - stop, but remain with that contact on the stock Steady or take time - slow down. Cast - gather the stock into a group. Good working dogs will cast over a large area. This is not a command but an attribute. Find - search for stock. A good dog will hold the stock until the shepherd arrives. Some will bark when the stock have been located. Get out or back - move away from the stock. Used when the dog is working too close to the stock, potentially causing the stock stress. Occasionally used as a reprimand. Keep Away or Keep - Used by some handlers as a direction and a distance from the sheep. Hold - keep stock where they are. Bark or speak up - bark at stock. Useful when more force is needed, and usually not essential for working cattle and sheep. Look back - return for a missed animal. Also used after a shed is completed and rejoined the flock or packet of sheep. In here or here - go through a gap in the flock. Used when separating stock. Walk up, walk on or just walk - move in closer to the stock. These commands may be indicated by a hand movement, whistle or voice. There are many other commands that are also used when working stock and in general use away from stock. Herding dog commands are generally taught using livestock as the modus operandi. Urban owners without access to livestock are able to teach basic commands through herding games. When whistles are used, each individual dog usually has a different set of commands to avoid confusion when several dogs are being worked at one time. Herding dogs as pets[edit] Herding dogs are often chosen as family pets. They make good family dogs and are at their best when they have a job to do.

7: Livestock Guardian Dogs

Also known as the Pyrenean Mountain Dog, the Great Pyrenees is a dog breed that has been used as a livestock guard for centuries. This dog has a natural guarding instinct and it is very aggressive with any predator that may want to attack its flock.

Guarding, Herding and Helping Learn how to train and care for farm dogs to help with herding and guarding. These dogs are integral members of every farm, regardless of their shape and size, because they all have a purpose: There are two broad categories of working farm dogs that are differentiated on the basis of their interactions with livestock. The herding dogs were bred to assist with the movement of livestock, and livestock guardian dogs were developed to protect domestic animals from predators. These two groups of dogs were developed through centuries of selective breeding, which modifies instinctive canine behavior. As pups, wolves and coyotes display sequences of mixed social, submissive, play and investigative patterns. As the pups mature to adults, they gain predatory patterns which include the stalking and lethal crush-bite-kill patterns of the true predator. With the development of working farm dogs, these two characteristics – the social and predator behavior patterns – have been channeled into a working relationship between dog and livestock. Obviously, herding and guarding dogs need special training and care.

Herding Dogs The specific purpose of herding dogs is to move large numbers of livestock effectively and efficiently at the command of the owner or livestock producer. There are breeds that are better with sheep, others better with cattle, and some work many species of herd animals. Some examples of gathering dogs include the collie, border collie and Australian shepherd. The cattle dogs include the Welsh corgi, bouviers of Flanders, and the Queensland blue heeler or Australian heeler. Through centuries of breeding, herding dogs have been developed by selection of particular behavioral characteristics. Herding dogs are selected to show hunting characteristics that include eye staring at livestock, stalk, and grip or heel chase. The herding dogs have been selected to display the eye, stalk and chase, but to mature before the deadly crush-bite-kill patterns of the predator develop. Gathering dogs, such as the border collie, circle the livestock and work the flight zone of the animal, moving the lead animals with their presence and eye. The dog will instinctively position itself directly opposite the handler on the other side of the livestock. When the handler moves to the left, the dog will move to the right and vice-versa. This gathering instinct is part of the predatory pattern, but the dog can be taught to go out, circle the livestock, and bring the animals towards the handler. These are not done when herding but under other conditions. These characteristics are desirable and are selected for when breeding. Acoustic signals are used to command the herding dogs, usually in the form of whistles, which can be heard over the distances involved when gathering large flocks of sheep in a vast pasture. The physical characteristics and behavior of herding dogs differ from those of guarding dogs. Herding dogs are within the 10 to 20 kilogram weight range 22 to 42 pounds with ears that are often pricked. Donkeys and llamas are very effective guard animals, but when predator pressure is intense, they become prey as well. The guarding dogs include such breeds as the great Pyrenees, komondor, kuvasz and maremma. The guard dogs are large dogs, standing 25 inches or more at the shoulder, weighing 30 to 55 kilograms, with ears that hang down. The color of these breeds is usually white or gray, but some of the breeds are brown with darker markings. For centuries, guard dogs have provided many benefits to livestock producers world-wide sheep producers have benefitted most. The presence of the guard dog reduces sheep losses to predators and reduces labor by lessening the need for night corralling. The guard dog will bark when predators approach and alert owners to disturbances in the flock, thereby protecting the family and ranch property. These dogs also allow for more efficient use of pastures and possible expansion of the flock because of decreased labor and space requirements. The behavior characteristics of the guarding dogs differ radically from those of the herding dogs, the result of centuries of breeding for selective traits that make for a successful guard dog. Guarding dogs are selected to show more of the puppy-like or juvenile behavior of their wild ancestor, the wolf. The development of the guard dog progresses to include the social, submissive and investigative behaviors, and the dogs mature at that stage. The crush-bite-kill behavior pattern does not express itself. Thus, the guard dog is a full-time member of the flock, unlike the herding dog. Some breeds are

better with livestock than others, so consider the breed and find a respectable breeder. These breeds have been developed to work independently of humans, and they function best when socialized with livestock from a young age. This exposure ensures a complete bond of the dog with the livestock in its care. The guard dog lives full-time with the flock and accepts the livestock as family. It will investigate and aggressively confront intruders, but will be attentive to the sheep and never harm them. A guard dog can take up to two years to mature into its role as flock guardian, an important fact when considering this as a predator-control option.

Bonding Dogs with Livestock The primary goal when raising a guard dog is to ensure complete socialization and bonding with the animals that will, in the near future, be in its care. Early and continued association with the sheep or other livestock to be guarded will cause the natural instincts of the dog to develop into a complete bond between the mature dog and livestock. If this bond is not formed, the dog may wander away, leaving the animals unprotected. Bring the puppy to the farm between 7 and 8 weeks of age. Separate it from all other dogs, including littermates. The lone pup will seek companionship from the sheep. Body contact between pup and sheep enhances the formation of a strong bond. The ideal place to rear a pup is in a small pen or corral that is escape-proof. A puppy fresh from human contact and fellow pups will be inclined to leave the lambs in search of more familiar companionship, so the pen needs to prevent escape. The pen should be about square feet, increasing in size as the pup grows. Since puppies are small and easily intimidated, 3 to 6 sheep in the pen is ideal, with orphan lambs the best choice. Socialize the guard pups with animals that are non-aggressive. This provides a bit of personal space and should also be the area where the pup finds food and shelter. Place the water in a common area where the sheep and pup are forced to mingle, allowing further bonding. For the first few days, check the pup several times, to make sure that no animals are too aggressive towards it, and that the young dog is aware of the food, water and shelter sources. If any animal continues to be overly aggressive, remove that animal from the enclosure and replace it with another. After the first few days, the frequency of checks can be reduced, but check the pup at least once daily, and minimize human contact during these daily checks. The initial socialization period should last at least 16 weeks. After this period of time, place the sheep and pup in a larger area or pasture with the rest of the sheep. This period of training demands more time commitment. It is imperative to observe the sheep and ensure the safety of the pup from those animals that are not already socialized to its presence. It should return to the sheep and pasture after a short time. If it does not, encourage it to stay near the sheep. If the early socialization process is done right, the pup will prefer to stay with the sheep rather than wander away. If the dog insists upon wandering away from the sheep towards the house and children, keep it in a small escape-proof enclosure during the night and attempt to return the dog with the flock the next day. Once the dog has a strong bond with the flock, it may include peripheral areas in its scouting patrols, but on the whole, it will routinely remain with the sheep.

Training Farm Dogs The guardian behavior of these dogs is largely instinctive, and influences on the pup only encourage the natural instincts to mature into effective work behavior. If a pup plays too much or is too aggressive, you must take corrective measures before this play behavior progresses towards rougher behavior. Like children, pups learn easily and quickly at an early age. Shake the pup briefly by the scruff of the neck and use the command "NO". A brief period of isolation, where the pup is separated from the sheep but can still see them, will reinforce efforts to teach the pup appropriate behavior. Owners should also use the command "NO" when the dog behaves inappropriately – chasing sheep or jumping on people. Your guard dog must come on command. If you expect the dog to consistently respond to the command, be sure that the dog has a pleasant experience when it arrives. The dog should be trained to walk on a leash, since at times it is necessary to lead the dog or tie it temporarily. The basic nature of the guard dog is independence, so additional training may be excessive. Eventually, the guard dog will work without human supervision. When the dog reaches a certain level of maturity, it will begin to display protective and territorial behaviors towards predators, that threaten the flock. There is no standard age at which a guard dog matures. Several signs indicate that a dog is ready to assume the guarding role: These behavioral characteristics can be useful to gauge maturity, but the guard dog must be large enough to defend itself if confronted by indigenous predators.

Farm Dog Health and Welfare Even though the guard dog spends the majority of its time with the flock, it still needs human care. You must provide the guard dog with food, water, and, during inclement weather, shelter. The guard dog lifestyle is

active, so it is necessary to have high quality food easily accessible. If the dog is required to search for food, that is less time spent patrolling and protecting the flock. Many people use self-feeders for guard dogs, with a barrier constructed around the food source to prevent the sheep from eating it. Puppies should receive the vaccination series to protect against distemper virus, parvovirus and rabies. These vaccinations should be boosted annually to protect against viruses carried by other dogs and wildlife. Since the dog is in a pasture environment and therefore more likely to be carrying a worm burden, regular deworming should be done. Another important consideration is heartworm. Discuss with your veterinarian the incidence of heartworm where you live to decide if control is necessary. It is impossible to treat the environment for fleas, but at least treat the dog. It is best to consult your veterinarian on an appropriate maintenance vaccination and deworming plan for your guard dog. Routinely examine your guard dog for cuts, abscesses and changes in behavior or weight. Your observations can be the fast clue that your guard dog may require further attention from a professional.

8: Herding dog - Wikipedia

A livestock guardian dog thrives on clear expectations and consistency, with proper introductions to new situations, visitors, livestock, and equipment entering the dog's domain. Livestock guardian dogs know what is normal and typical on the farm and will be suspicious of anything unusual or out of place.

Many also work as family and home guardians, and several are assistance dogs to their disabled owners, as they are sturdy enough to provide physical support. With the right socialization, training and physical environment, LGDs can be successful family pets and home protectors. They are generally aloof toward strangers and their size alone is rather intimidating. Though strong, independent-minded and protective, they are normally gentle with children and livestock alike. Please visit our Library for interesting and useful articles on breeding, behavior, livestock guardians, and medical information. This is a compilation of articles by actual users of Livestock Guardian dogs and is a "must-read" for anyone considering using any breed of LGD. Click on the link above for directions for ordering. A range of temperaments can be found within the breeds. Some are better suited as remote pasture guardians where a daily routine is very constant, while some are good in situations where there is a high degree of variety. They may work well on a small farm, in a rural home, or as a city pet. Some may be found in the middle of New York City, others on the sprawling rangelands of Montana. There are enough variations between the breeds, and within members of a single breed, to provide a suitable dog for most situations. They need daily exercise and the daily discipline of a job to do. This can be provided on an open range, protecting livestock or in a suburban back yard, protecting a family. During that time, they need training, supervision and a human who is capable of assuming the "alpha" role in their pack. This site was developed in hopes of providing accurate information to both prospective and current LGD owners on the purchase, care and training of pet and working LGDs. We hope that the insight into the working aspects of these dogs can help both pet and working dog owners better understand the breeds. For good information and lively discussion about Livestock Guardian Dog breeds as pets and farm workers, join the LGD-L discussion list. The sites to which they link were chosen for their accuracy and for the amount of information they present. Links to other clubs and representatives of those breeds can be found on the Library page. Born in June , Capella and Calisto were a pair of Kuvasz bitches that would win the heart and try the soul of the most devoted LGD fancier. However, he holds the copyright on all posts and none can be reproduced without his permission. For further information about him and his farm, see his website All material on this site copyrighted by the authors.

9: Livestock Guardian Dogs | Rosasharn Farm

Guardian dogs are usually trained on the rancher's property with the livestock they will be guarding. Training these dogs is not difficult and is even easier.

By Cat Urbigkit, The Shepherd Magazine Many livestock producers have learned the value of adding livestock guardian dogs to their farms. Key factors to raising successful livestock guardian dogs include acquiring dogs from working lineages; bonding of pups to the species to be protected at an early age; and managing the dogs in a working partnership with the shepherd. Allowing pups to explore gentle adult sheep results in tight social bonds between the animals. Photo by Cat Urbigkit. Purchase pups from working parents, preferably parents that are used with the same species you want your pup to protect. Your preference may be for purebred dogs, or for crosses between two guardian breeds, but never purchase a pup resulting from a cross with a non-guardian breed. Set the pup up for success. The primary period to bond pups to the species to be guarded is between the ages of eight and 16 weeks. A recently weaned guardian pup seeks the company of a group of lambs. Young animals raised in close association develop lifelong bonds. Bonding pens work well to get pups off to a great start. Place a few calm and gentle ewes, goats or cows into a pen, with a protected area for the pup where he can see the livestock, but can escape to safety. Present the pup to the livestock under your supervision, but give the pup some quiet time where it can watch its new friends. The pup will get to know its livestock first through watching and sniffing noses, but will soon venture out for some gentle exploration. Visit often to supervise, but let the pup spend the majority of its time with its livestock. Sibling fourth-month old pups demonstrate they are well on their way to becoming effective guardians as they stick close to the side of a resting ewe. A gradual process of adding animals and range allows for the pup to become accustomed to its larger flock and landscape, and develop more self-confidence in its guardian duties as its body grows. Producers must be able to call and handle their guardians for care, so reinforce the human-dog connection, ensuring your dog is comfortable and content as your working partner. Be clear in teaching the pup what you expect from it, including staying within its territory. If the pup strays from the flock, or follows you to the house, return it to the livestock. Give the dog the benefit of training and experience. Train the pup to a few commands, to wear a collar, walk on a leash, be tethered on a cable, and be held in a crate or kennel. Walk the pup into buildings and stock trailers, take it for rides in the farm truck, and let the pup learn what it feels like to be examined, brushed, and restrained. Introduce the pup to other farm animals including other species of livestock, herding dogs, chickens, etc. An attentive adult livestock guardian shows affection to a friendly ewe. Expose the pup to a variety of experiences it will be expected to understand later in life. From learning the dangers of vehicles and farm equipment, to encounters with people riding bicycles and motorcycles, early exposure to new experiences will aide the dog in its future success. Provide human supervision, correcting bad behaviors early on so they are not repeated. A good scolding goes a long way, but repeated correction may be needed to reinforce learning. Feeding routines are important. Feed the pup near the livestock not at your house preferably at the same time every day. A livestock guardian dog serves as a calming presence for its flock during the stressful shearing process. Make overall care a routine. Provide good dog food to your pup, but be careful not to overfeed or underfeed. Until your pup has proven his reliability, use caution during the livestock-birthing season. When your dog reaches the point it lounges nearby without interfering, you can sleep easier at night knowing the pup is well on its way to being an effective herd protector. Cat Urbigkit lives on a working sheep ranch in western Wyoming with her family and her livestock guardian animals, including guardian dogs and burros. Urbigkit is the co-owner and editor of The Shepherd magazine , and enjoys traveling the world learning about pastoral cultures. Her photographs of ranch life and wildlife appear in numerous books and magazines, and her daily Facebook posts are popular.

Hints to book agents The modesty of God Wakefield Revisited German POWs in South Carolina
Deuteronomy: Becoming Holy People D desperado, John Wesley Hardin/ At the Park (Little Red Readers.
Level 3) The growing fear. Boston (Access Guides) The Aztec by Andrew Santella. Nothing but the truth
story Haskell programming from first principles The third wheel diary Prague 20th Century Architecture Why
Madison is important. Unemployment benefits Surface Transportation Board Reauthorization Act of 2003
Frameworks: Introduction Use of the MMPI-2 in neuropsychological assessment Carlton S. Gass A mystery
of heroism by stephen crane The arms race kills even without war An Introduction to the Profession of
Counseling Ideas and Forms of Tragedy from Aristotle to the Middle Ages Animal farm lesson plans The
Americanization of Steinweg Shipping packing list template Alfred Hitchcocks a choice of evils
Correspondence 29 : how can I be sure its all true Introduction to nonlinear fluid-plasma waves The great
bicycle caper The interplanetary toy book Vancouver, Burnaby, Richmond, Delta, New Westminster, North
West Vancouver: Expanded Coverage Now Include An Authors Guide to Childrens Book Promotion
Transfers, capital and consumption over the demographic transition Andrew Mason and Ronald Lee Snoopy,
Spike and the Cat Next Door (World of Snoopy) 11. Implementation: The DMAIC Tools Joseph and the
wonderful tree. What do i need for nookcolor or Proof Theory and Automated Deduction (Applied Logic
Series) Select or modify instructional resources for lessons to ensure full alignment with system objectives and