



SHEEP SHEET

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SUMMARY:

We recognized the problem of using rangelands continuously during the year as a major constraint to sheep and goat production. There is little opportunity for plants to reach their growth potential if animals must depend on them during the growing season as well as the remainder of the year. The basic problem is that the land supports disproportionately fewer animals when they must graze it yearlong. Arrangements were made to take sheep and goats (Angora and Spanish Meat-Type) with llama guard animals from Navajo cooperator flocks, the Utah State University Navajo Sheep Project and research flocks, to higher elevation (summer) range areas at the Colorado State University, San Juan Basin Research Center near Hesperus, Colorado. This would demonstrate two things;

1) the benefits of allowing traditional yearlong grazing areas a chance to grow forage by not being grazed during the summer growing season, and

2) the benefits of sheep and goat grazing/browsing on oakbrush dominated areas traditionally grazed by beef cattle.

Our demonstration showed that production on traditional yearlong grazing areas was increased by deferring them from grazing during the summer, and that sheep and goats can be effective in reducing woody plant dominance biologically. Our data show that goats, Angora and Spanish, selected $\pm 80\%$ and $\pm 90\%$ of their diet from

Small-ruminant dietary grazing preferences on summer range following beef cattle utilization

Conducted at the
Colorado State University,
San Juan Basin Research Center,
Hesperus, Colorado,
Summer 1995*

R. Banner¹, L.G. McNeal², and D. Schafer³

Sheepdex G-4

oakbrush and associated shrubs, respectively. Navajo-Churro and Western White-Face sheep selected $\pm 40\%$ and $\pm 24\%$ of their diet from oakbrush and associated shrubs, respectively, while Suffolks selected $\pm 20\%$ of their diet from oakbrush and associated shrubs. Llamas selected $\pm 63\%$ of their diet from oakbrush and associated shrubs. In addition, guard llamas selected thistles for $\pm 14\%$ of their diet.

* Supported by USDA-SARE Western Region, "Four-Corners Navajo Nation Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Project and Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station.

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For more information write The Navajo Sheep Project, Inc. PO Box 4454, Logan, UT 84323-4454. The Navajo Sheep Project is a registered non-profit Utah corporation.

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**Small-Ruminant Dietary Grazing Preferences on Summer Range
Following Beef Cattle Utilization at the Colorado State University,**

San Juan Basin Research Center,

Hesperus, Colorado, Summer 1995*

R. Banner ¹, L.G. McNeal ², and D. Schafer ³

| Animals | | Thistles (%) | Oak (%) | Grass (%) | Forbs (%) | Other Shrubs (%) | Idle (%) | Travel (%) |
|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Goats | Angora | 2 | 64 | 4 | 2 | 16 | 2 | 10 |
| | Spanish | 2 | 80 | 0 | 2 | 10 | 0 | 6 |
| | Total Goats | 2 | 72 | 2 | 2 | 13 | 2 | 8 |
| Sheep | Rambouillet | 0 | 22 | 50 | 14 | 2 | 8 | 4 |
| | Navajo-Churro | 0 | 28 | 38 | 6 | 12 | 10 | 6 |
| | Suffolk | 0 | 12 | 42 | 2 | 8 | 8 | 30 |
| | Total Sheep | 0 | 21 | 43 | 7 | 7 | 9 | 13 |
| Llama | | 14 | 36 | 1 | 5 | 27 | 0 | 1 |
| Total of all Species | | 2 | 41 | 25 | 5 | 11 | 5 | 11 |

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