

# CONTROLLING VEGETATION

Livestock have manipulated vegetation since the beginning of livestock, sometimes in a positive way, sometimes in a negative way (e.g., overgrazing). Nowadays, it is becoming increasingly common to use livestock, especially sheep/goats to control unwanted vegetation for ecological benefits. For sheep/goat producers, targeted or prescribed grazing is a relatively new income opportunity.



No animal is better at managing the vegetation under solar panels than sheep. Solar grazing is an important part of the growing agrivoltaics industry which combines agriculture with renewable energy production.



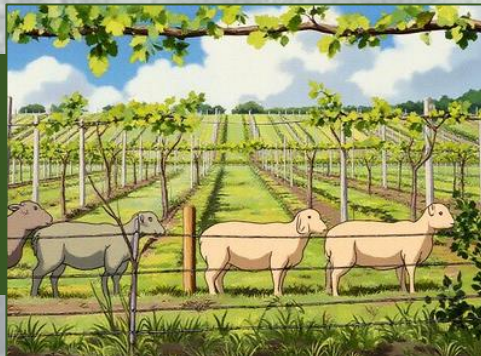
No animal is better at suppressing invasive plants, such as knapweed, kudzu, and multiflora rose than goats. Sheep/goats can also be used to clear land of plants toxic to cattle.



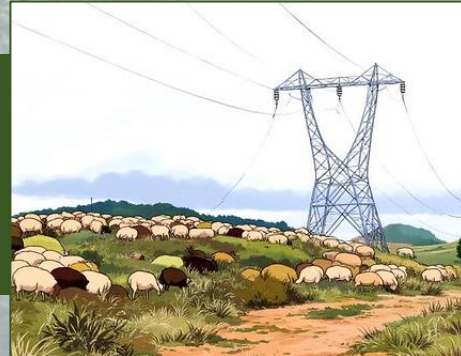
Sheep/goats have a very important role to play in wildfire mitigation. They can help prevent wildfires by consuming dry, flammable vegetation and creating natural “fuel breaks” that reduce the amount of fuel for a fire.



In an orchard, sheep can graze on the cover crops and suppress weeds, reducing the need for mechanical mowing and labor, while providing natural fertilizer. Goats need to be managed more carefully in an orchard setting.



Sheep are usually the best option for grazing vineyards. There are many potential environmental benefits to grazing. Breeds with small stature are often promoted for this purpose. Goats require more careful management.



Sheep/goats are an eco-friendly choice to manage the vegetation under power or utility lines. Grazing eliminates the need for mechanical control or herbicides. It prevents brush and trees from interfering with powerlines.

Success requires determining the goals and desired outcomes for each management area, identifying the plant species of concern, and tailoring the livestock species composition and stocking density to meet those goals. Goats are best at controlling shrubs and woody plants; sheep, grasses and forbs.