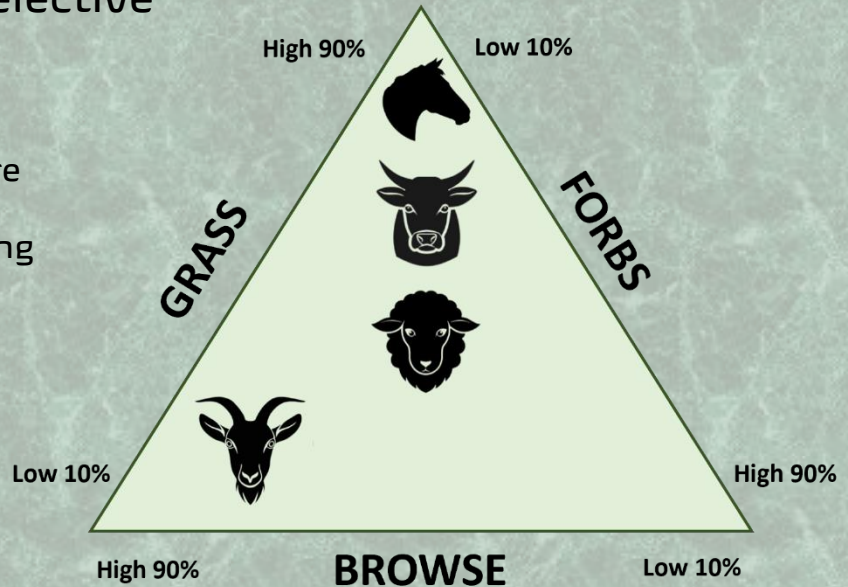


GRAZING PREFERENCES

of sheep, goats, and other livestock

Grazing preferences vary by livestock species. Horses eat almost all grass. Cows eat mostly grass. Goats are primarily browsers, preferring to eat woody plants, shrubs, trees, and vines. Sheep are somewhat intermediate, preferring a diet of grass and forbs (broadleaf plants). Sheep and goats both exhibit selective grazing behavior, but goats are more selective than sheep.

Complementary grazing of cattle, sheep, and goats can significantly benefit pasture health and productivity. Each species has its own unique grazing preferences, leading to more uniform pasture utilization and reduced competition for resources. Sheep/goats eat certain noxious weeds that are poisonous to cattle or that cattle avoid. Adding sheep and/or goats to a cattle operation at a one-to-one ratio is a recommended practice. Pasture fencing needs to be suitable for the different sized ruminants.



Grazing different species of livestock together or in sequence can also interrupt the life cycles of parasites that are specific to individual livestock types. However, sheep/goats share the same parasites, and there is some cross-infection with cattle. Horses have completely different parasites than sheep and goats.

Sheep and goats are both used for vegetation control, due to their selective grazing and small size. Goats are preferred for clearing brush and eating weeds, whereas sheep are better suited to trimming grass and targeting specific plants. Sheep are the ideal species for grazing under solar panels.

