ABSTRACTS
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60 Recent perspectives in using goats for vegetation management in the USA. Part I. S. P. Hart*, *E (Kika) de la Garza Institute for Goat Research, Langston University, Langston, OK.*

Although an ever-increasing body of research data has documented the usefulness of goats for controlling brushy and weedy species such as shinnery oak, blackjack and post oak, leafy spurge, sericea lespedeza and many others, this technology remains sorely underutilized. Environmental concerns and the increased costs of chemical and mechanical control methods provide greater opportunities to utilize biological control methods for brush and weeds that include goats. Goats have an advantage over other biological control methods in that they can profitably convert brush and weeds into a saleable product and they can be grazed concurrently with cattle. In addition, goats release the plant nutrients, especially N and P, that are tied up in brush and weeds to enable reestablishment of grassy species. The foremost limitation to using goats for brush and weed control is the social stigma cattlemen attach to goats. However, extreme economic pressures from invasive brush and weeds provide an incentive to overcome this prejudice. Extensiondemonstrations that provide visual proof of efficacy of control by goats are also valuable. The lack of an infrastructure (animal markets, source of large numbers of adapted animals, producer experience and knowledge base) to support goat enterprises is a serious constraint which is gradually being overcome by goat industry expansion. Suitable goat production systems need to be developed for specific environments. This involves the modification of existing knowledge, especially in regard to kidding date, parasite and predator control, electric fencing and marketing strategy. The lack of economic data and enterprise budgets is also a constraint. Further research is needed to collect economic data, and to develop stocking rate criteria and production systems to support the use of goats for biological brush and weed control.

Key Words: Goats, Weed and brush, Technology Transfer