

ABSTRACTS
*** Author Presenting Paper**

59 Historical perspectives of using goats for vegetation management around the world. H. A. Glimp* and H. S. Hussein, *University of Nevada, Reno.*

The dietary preferences of foraging goats have been well documented by research at Texas A & M University and at other institutions in the U. S., India and in several African nations. Goats, with their prehensile lips, are capable of more aggressively foraging on shrubs and trees that may not be available to other species due to thorns, shrub density, and other aversive characteristics of the shrubs. Angora and other higher quality fiber goat breeds such as cashmere goats are usually managed in mixed shrub-grass plant communities, because the mohair and cashmere may become entangled in denser shrub communities. The Spanish goat type in the U. S. and Central and South America has historically been managed in shrub dominant plant communities for both vegetation management purposes and for meat production. In the developing world, numerous breeds of goats are kept for meat and milk production, and are considered salvage or by-product foragers as well as brush foragers. Prior to the last 10 years, the market value of Spanish goats was relatively low in comparison to other meat producing species, and these goats were kept primarily for brush control to enhance grass and forb production for cattle and sheep grazing. In more recent times, we have learned how to take advantage of the selective grazing habits of the goat to achieve specific vegetation management objectives. Goats have been used to control invasive plant species such as Kudzu in the southeast U. S., leafy spurge and other invasive weeds in the western U. S., brush control at the wildlands/urban interface in California, and to control understory vegetation in tree plantations and national forests. In many situations, producers are being paid for vegetation management services.

Key Words: Goats, Vegetation Management, Grazing