

Barbed wires above the net should be either close together (spaced less than 2" apart) or far apart (at least 8" apart) to avoid catching the leg of a jumping deer. Electric fencing is suitable for internal partition fences but is not recommended as a perimeter fence.

Meat Goats: Goats are an excellent option for the small acreage landowner. Their small size makes them better suited to small acreage than cattle. Goats prefer browse (woody plants), therefore they are the species of choice for managing or sculpting woody plants. Unfortunately, plants like juniper and mesquite are very low on a goat's list of preferred plants. Consequently, the "undesirable" plants are the least grazed and the least affected by grazing. Do not expect goat browsing to kill juniper or mesquite.

A breeding herd of 8-10 does and a buck can be purchased for less than \$1000. The gestation period for goats is 150 days. Two kid crops a year are possible. 3 kid crops in a 24 month period are quite likely with a continuous mating system (buck is with does continuously). Kids (young goats) can be marketed through commission companies (located in Fredericksburg, Junction, Goldthwaite, Seguin or Uvalde), flea markets, road-side vendors or sold direct to the consumer.

Predators pose the single largest deterrent to goat or sheep production in Central Texas. As development of the rural areas continues, the threat from bobcats and fox will likely fade. However, the problems associated with coyotes and feral or unconfined dogs will continue to increase.

Barbed wire is not suitable for goat or sheep production in Central Texas. Perimeter fencing should be 39-48" net wire with smooth or barbed wire above the net. Fences in handling or working pens should be at least 48" tall.

Hair Sheep: Most of the sheep in Texas grow wool and must be shorn at least once a year. Securing an experienced shearing crew and marketing small quantities of wool are difficult chores for the small producer. Sheep prefer forbs (weeds) and grass and therefore may be the most suitable animal to serve as a "Biological Weed Eater". Some weeds are not palatable (ex. ragweed, nightshades, doveweed) and consequently are not controlled by grazing. In addition, some weeds are toxic and if

Animal Unit Equivalency Table:

Cow (1,000-lb) with calf.....	1.0 A/U
Dry Cow.....	0.77
Bull (1,500-lb).....	1.5
Horse (1,100-lb, 3-yr&older.)	1.65
Ewe (130-lb).....	0.18
Goat - Nanny (70-lb).....	0.11
Whitetail Deer.....	0.17

consumed in significant quantity can cause illness or death of the grazing animal.

Horses are a true symbol of rural life.

They too will over graze land and can destroy desirable vegetation. If there is not enough forage to support a horse (usually 15 to 35 acres), they should be penned up and turned out to exercise and graze on occasion only.

Miniature horses, donkeys, cattle, llamas, dogs, cats, chickens and other farm animals can be enjoyable projects. All animal caretakers must act responsibly for the health and well being of these animals.

While huge profits are not likely, some animal husbandry skills are needed to make the farm animals enjoyable and rewarding.

Animal health is of paramount importance to any livestock operation. There are a number of diseases that livestock need to be vaccinated for to build immunity. Also there are internal and external parasites that need to be treated as well . Herd health guides are