

VOICES

Grazing Goat Generalizations

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My first exposure to the diet habits of goats were through the children books read as a child. These books often portray goats standing on top of the barn, chewing on tin cans. Goats might have the reputation for always getting out, climbing on things and eating anything they can find. This stigma might come with good reason, but goat producers aren't in the business of feeding tin cans. So, what is it that goats consume, particularly in a grazing setting? Let's dive in and take a look today.

Goats offer an alternative to utilizing vegetation which is otherwise "wasted", while producing milk, meat and fiber products in demand by a growing segment of the US population. Goats offer the potential for biological control of unwanted vegetation in pastures and forests, which can reduce dependence on chemical control methods, due to defoliation. Goats will consume grasses, legumes and woody browse plants, but are generally considered to be browsers first. Browse plants include brambles, shrubs, trees, and vines with woody stems. The quality of feed will depend on many things, but it is usually most directly related to the age or stage of growth at the time of grazing.

Goats are very active foragers, able to cover a wide area. Their small mouths and

split upper lips enable them to pick small leaves, flowers, fruits and other plant parts, thus choosing only the most nutritiously available feed. The ability to utilize browse species, which often have thorns and small leaves tucked among woody stems and an upright growth habit, is a unique characteristic of the goat among ruminants. Goats can stand on their hind legs and stretch up to browse tree leaves or throw their bodies against saplings to bring the tops within reach.

Goats select grasses when the protein content and digestibility are high, but gravitate to browse when nutritive value may be higher. A few other observations about the grazing goat include; preference for foraging on rough/steep terrain versus level ground, grazing in groups along fence lines versus open middle areas of pastures and eating the top canopy uniformly before grazing down to the soil level. Because of their inquisitive nature and tolerance of "bitter" or high tannin material goats may eat unpalatable weeds and wild shrubs that may be poisonous. Caution should be used around potentially toxic plant species.

The goat is not able to digest the cell walls of plants as well as larger ruminants because feed stays in the rumen for a shorter time period. Trees and shrubs, which represent poor quality roughage sources for cattle, because of their highly lignified stems



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and bitter taste, may be adequate in quality for goats. Mainly because goats avoid eating the stems, don't mind the taste and benefit from the relatively high levels of protein in the leaves. Goats must consume a more concentrated diet because their digestive tract size is smaller relative to maintenance energy needs. When the density of high-quality forage is low and low stocking rates, goats will still perform well because of selecting grazing behavior.

High quality forage and/or browse should be available to does during the last month of gestation and to lactating does, to developing/breeding bucks, and to weanlings and yearlings. Female kids need-

ed for reproduction should be grazed with their mothers during as much of the milk feeding period as possible and not weaned early. When the quantity of available forage and/or browse is limited or is of low quality, a concentrate supplement may be considered to maintain desired body condition. Mature bucks and non-lactating does can be maintained on medium to low quality forage sources. Oklahoma State University has an excellent resource for all things meat goat called "Oklahoma Meat Goat Manual". Chapter four served as reference for discussion today. Check it out online to learn more about Goat production.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS City of Garnett, Kansas, Comprehensive Plan

The City of Garnett requests proposals from qualified consultants or firms to review city comprehensive plan and develop comprehensive plan for the City. The new, updated plan will provide vision, goals, objectives, and policies to guide the City's development and redevelopment for the next 20 to 25 years. The plan will guide the City Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission, staff, developers, property owners, and residents on the appropriate growth and redevelopment for the City. The updated plan will integrate all aspects of urban development, including demographics, land use, public facilities and infrastructure, transportation, environmental, and economic growth recommendations. A critical component of the plan will be setting a vision for the City's development and redevelopment, including areas in the City and possible annexation land. The vision component will need to analyze existing and future infrastructure needs and how technology will play a role in community outreach and City operations.

The qualified consultant will need to take a creative and innovative approach to reviewing the needs of the community, while obtaining public input about the plan. The planning process shall develop a comprehensive vision for the City, business opportunities, amenities and programs, as well as complement the recently-completed parks plan.

SUBMITTAL DEADLINE

One (1) electronic copy in PDF format, in accordance with this RFP, will be accepted **no later than 3:00 PM CST on May 30, 2025** and shall be submitted via the following email address: dwilson@garnettks.net

Full document and information are available at www.simplygarnett.com.



SOYBEAN SEEDLING DISEASE SCOUTING



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DAVID HALLAUER

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After nice planting conditions for much of April, the last couple of weeks have provided a bit of a challenge for some of our newly emerging crops. The variable temperature and moisture conditions can be a disease challenge for newly emerging soybeans in particular.

The most common pathogens causing seedling diseases in Kansas are Phytophthora, Pythium, Fusarium, and Rhizoctonia. While the conditions causing each disease may differ (often favoring cool soils with poor drainage), the result is often the same resulting in post-emergence damping off. A closer look at the base of the plant and root system often reveals everything from discoloration and lesions to collapsed stems and poorly developed root systems.

Seed treatments are effective against each of these diseases (variety selection, crop rotation and proper drainage are other management tools), so long as your seed treatment includes an active ingredient with activity against a specific pathogen. For example, if Phytophthora and Pythium

are the issue, products with the active ingredients mefenoxam, metalaxyl, or ethoxam are necessary, while sedaxane has shown excellent efficacy for Rhizoctonia. Azoxystrobin, trifloxystrobin, or pyraclostrobin are effective against other fungal pathogens. Keep in mind: even with the right active ingredients, seed applied fungicide protection does have a limited protection period slowly emerging crops can exceed.

It's important to scout and appropriately identify seedling diseases because they aren't the only stand establishment issues. Herbicide damage, soil compaction, high residue, flooding, cold stress, drought, planting depth, and seed quality can be problematic as well. For assistance with proper identification, consider submitting plant samples to the KSU Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab (any of our District Extension Offices can help). Another great resource is Soybean Seedling Diseases, available upon request from any District Office or the Crop Protection Network website: <https://crop-protection-network.s3.amazonaws.com/publications/cpn-1008-soybean-seedling-diseases.pdf>.

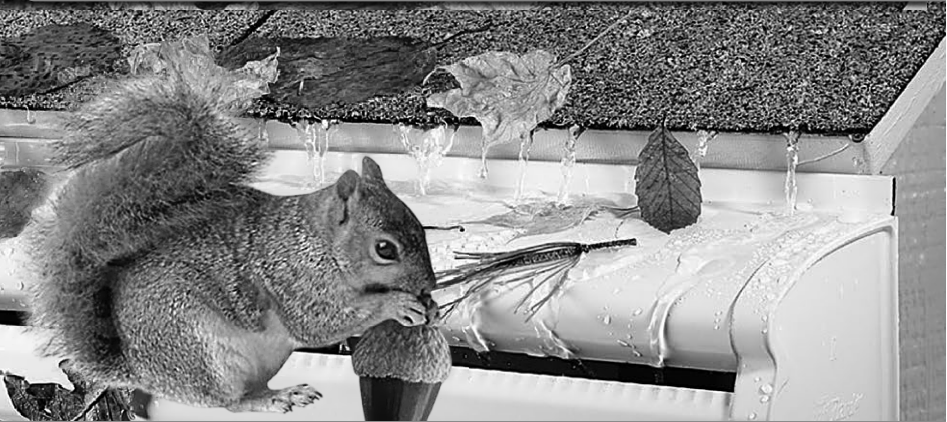
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