

'By chewing up brush' Goats prove allies in preventing forest fires

United Press International
SAN DIEGO — The federal government has found that goats are useful and economical allies in the war against forest fires.

The Forest Service said goats were used in a two-year experiment to keep wildland firebreaks clear by chewing up brush and the program was a success.

And now, a herd of 800 Spanish goats in the Cleveland National Forest 50 miles east of San Diego will be increased to 2,500 beginning today.

Economics is what makes the

proposition attractive. Not only is the use of goats cheaper than manpower or machinery, but the federal government does not have to pay for the animals or the herders who watch them.

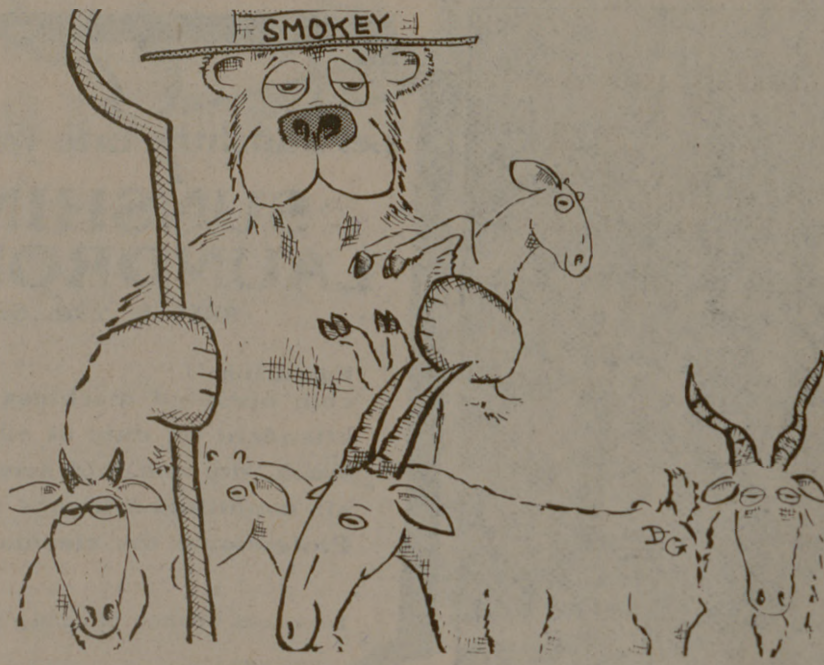
Beene Bros., a private ranching firm, entered into a five-year agreement with the Forest Service in 1976 to herd the goats in the 400-acre Morena Goat Enclosure. In return, Rocky and Tommy Beene are allowed to graze the goats on federal land — firebreaks — free of charge.

The brothers sell the adult animals to "jobbers" who, in turn,

market them for meat in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

The government's investment in the program so far has been about \$30,000, most of which went for manpower and fencing materials, according to Dave Jones, the Forest Service's recreation resources staff officer, who came up with the idea.

Future plans call for 35,000 Spanish goats to be kept in the Morena Goat Enclosure to maintain the 60 separate firebreaks — some as wide as a mile — Jones said.



Scientist finds way to alter plants to suit environment

United Press International
FORT COLLINS, Colo. — A Colorado State University scientist Monday said experiments he has conducted with tobacco plant cells could lead to the development of plants which can survive a much higher level of salt.

Murray W. Nabors, an associate professor of botany and plant pathology, said he has developed tobacco plant cells that are as high as 12 times as tolerant of salt as their parent cells.

He said the same process probably could be done with wheat, oats and other food plants.

"Salt is a problem in most irrigated areas around the world," Nabors said. "All arid and semiarid countries, including the Arab countries, Pakistan and parts of India, have salinity problems that mean economic losses in agriculture."

Nabors said through cycle after cycle of irrigation, the salt level gradually builds until it reaches intolerable amounts for plant life.

"That's already the case in California, while in a state like Colorado, where the headwaters begin, the buildup is not as extensive," he said.

In 1972 the headwaters of the Colorado River contained salt at about 50 parts per million. Downstream, in the Imperial Valley of California, the river contained 800 to 900 parts salt per million.

"These amounts are undoubtedly greater today," Nabors said.

Nabors said he is trying to speed up the process through tissue culture, cloning, mutant selection and regeneration. He places some cells from a plant in a nutrient solution where they grow, divide and produce new cells by the millions.

Most of these cells are identical or clones of the original cells, although nature occasionally provides a few cells that are different. Nabors looks for the mutant cells with more salt tolerance, which occur at a rate of about one in a million.

Once he has isolated the mutant cell, he then uses that to produce new cells with even greater salt tolerance levels. These cells can then be regenerated into whole plants with roots, stems and leaves.

Nabors said he believes it may be cheaper, more economical and smarter to try to modify the plant to suit the environment than it would be to modify the environment to suit the plant.

Sadat reaches crucial stage

United Press International
CAMP DAVID, Md. — The Camp David summit on the Middle East reached a decisive stage today, and sources said Egyptian President Anwar Sadat has now assumed a pivotal position in determining the outcome.

Sadat joined President Carter at 10:30 a.m. EDT for the latest round of crucial talks which began Tuesday and were expected to run to mid-week. Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin was not present when the morning session began.

Conference sources said the success or failure of the summit is now in Sadat's hands, because it is up to him to decide whether he, as a representative of the Arab world, can accept the proposals put forth in the six and a half hours of meetings between the three world leaders.

These sources said, to date, the negotiations have focused on the fu-

ture of the occupied West Bank territories and the Gaza strip. The future of the Palestinian sources said the future of the peninsula — also occupied by Israelis — has been broadly was not a major theme in the 19 hours of talks involving respective delegations.

If the Israeli proposals — American modifications — acceptable to Sadat, it would continuation of negotiations by the foreign minister.

U.S. officials are hoping a stage of talks can get started as late this month, during the General Assembly session.

The weekend lull for negotiations — including a two-day nearby Gettysburg, Pa., — gave way to substantive day. On Sunday afternoon, Begin and their top advisers met for 65 minutes. There was no what was discussed or the

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HEW to send notices to loan defaulters

United Press International
LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — The Department of Health, Education and Welfare is cracking down on students who have not repaid loans they used for college or vocational training.

Notices will be sent soon to loan defaulters in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas saying the students have 48 hours to call the agency and arrange for repayment.

The Guaranteed Students Loans program is administered by the Student Financial Assistance office, a part of HEW. It is one of five programs to assist students who

would not otherwise be able to attend college or get special training.

About 40,000 students in the five-state region have defaulted their loans, according to a report from HEW in Dallas, at a rate of about 12 percent.

The office has lent \$500 million in the region, however, most have repaid the loans on schedule, said Edwin Fagan, employee in the regional office.

The staff of Student Financial Assistance offices have been working with collection agents and in Dallas has doubled in the weeks in anticipation of a crackdown.

Advanced medical help offered to pets

United Press International
PLANO — Schultz, a 10-year-old dachshund, is an example of the medical help available for pets nowadays if the master is willing to pay the price.

An integral member of the Joe Campagna family, Schultz takes an insulin shot each day, follows a diet and exercises properly. He also is allowed in the house a lot.

Schultz was taken to a veterinarian when he began to lose weight and wet the carpet, something he had not done since he was a pup.

"The first vet told us there was nothing wrong with Schultz except he needed a special body-building dog food," Campagna said. "We knew our pet better than that, and a couple days later we took him to another doctor."

Gary Brantley of the Richardson Veterinary Clinic said he knew immediately there was something wrong with the dog. He ran laboratory tests — including detailed blood work — and kept the pet in the clinic.

"When the blood tests came back, my first fears were confirmed," Brantley said. "While studying at Texas A&M they sent unusual animal diseases to us on referrals from

vets all across the state — just could get a look at them when we were studying. One case was diabetes."

He said the blood sugar level the average human and dog is 85 to 120. But in both human and diabetic, it is much higher. When Schultz' blood was tested sugar level was over 400.

After confirming the diagnosis Brantley kept Schultz about in order to get him regulated like a physician does for humans. He wanted to set the diet and insulin dosage.

"Many people don't know just about everything that can be done for humans can now be done for animals," he said. "The factor is cost. Most people want to pay what it costs for animals."

Brantley said during the past years he had discovered diabetic dogs on the average of about one case a year. Of those, he was able to regulate the animal daily insulin shots and a special diet without complications about a year.

"We diagnose the disease about the same as in humans," he said. "And, we treat it about the same."

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