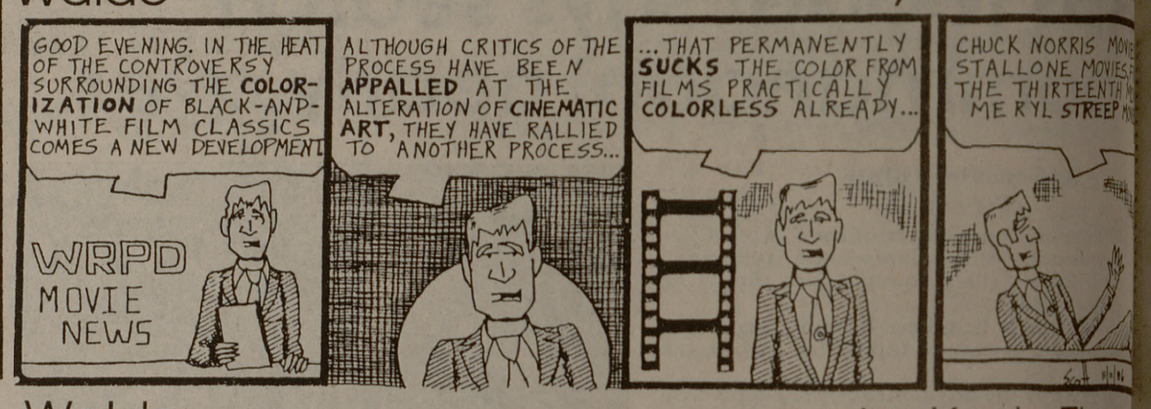
Waldo by Kevin Thom



Waldo by Kevin Thom

Computer-designed goat may benefit African farmer

By John Jarvis
Reporter

Breeding goats may not be unusual, but breeding goats by computer is.

A Texas A&M research scientist, Dr. Thomas Cartwright, has been working on such a project since 1978.

The result: a healthier, heartier, more productive goat that is proving beneficial to Third World farmers.

Cartwright, who has been a professor at A&M since 1958, says four breeds of goats are used to produce this "computer-designed" goat — two breeds from the United States and two from Africa. The breeds were selected for specific characteristics found in each, he says.

He says the goats are designed to survive in the African equatorial country of Kenya.

Computers are eliminating the guesswork from breeding a goat for a particular region because the machines can anticipate the characteristics of a mixed breed, Cartwright says. He also says the breeding of five, 10, 15 or 25 years can be simulated by computer almost overnight.

The two American breeds — the Toggenburg and the Anglo-Nubian — each were selected because they are popular for milk production, Cartwright says, and the Anglo-Nubian is also large-sized, which makes it a good food source for Third World farmers.

The African goats — the African Galla and the East African — were used in the project because of their heartiness in the equatorial conditions of Kenya.

"The goat we have developed tends to stay healthier and thrives better under harsh conditions."
— Dr. Thomas Cartwright, A&M research scientist

"The goat we have developed tends to stay healthier and thrives better under harsh conditions, which makes it more productive," Cartwright says.

He adds that one of the reasons for the goats' heartiness is the result of "hybrid vigor."

Cartwright says hybrid vigor, or heterosis, increases the durability of a crossbreed, and also that using four breeds enhances heterosis retention.

"The greater number of breeds you have, the better heterosis you have," he says.

Cartwright says this "computer-designed" goat mainly will be used to benefit poor small-farm families of the Third World.

Most of these small-farm families have an average of five to eight people, he said, and these families usually have six goats in their herds.

The goats, he says, will be used as sources of meat and milk for these families, supplementing the usual diet of corn and cornmeal.

Cartwright says one of the objectives of the research is survival of the goats in a hot mate.

"They (will) have to su tropical conditions, with ja and diseases, and with minim icines," he says.

But, he adds, diseases, p and the weather are not th problems the scientists have in raising the goats.

He says predators also p big problem.

"Panthers are the main pr he says. "They love goats."

Cartwright adds that lions part of the predator probl that they are not as serious a

Although research for th goat began in this country, right says that the new breed can't be brought into the States.

The problem, he says, health regulations in the States won't allow the goats country because some disea found in the United States ar in Kenya.

But he adds that new tech such as embryonic transfer a ficial insemination could mak ble the breed's entry into the States.

Cartwright is quick to po that the United States is no mary target for this new re The research is targeted fo Third World countries such nya, he says.

Soviets examine monitoring equipment

DALLAS (AP) — Soviet scientists who have reached a private agreement with American colleagues to monitor nuclear testing took a look Wednesday at equipment that will be used in the task.

Five representatives of the Soviet Academy of Sciences met with members of the National Resources Defense Council at Dallas-based Refraction Technology to examine seismological equipment that would be used to help monitor underground nuclear tests.

Members of the academy and the council agreed in May to set jointly operated nuclear test monitoring stations in their respective countries.

One of the goals of the project was to prove to the Reagan administration that the technology does exist to verify a comprehensive test ban, said Thomas Cochran, chief scientist with the NRDC.

Soviet scientist Evgeni Sulotov said, "In the future, we hope that our enterprise to (achieve) a test moratorium in USSR and Nevada must be successful."

The Soviets today plan to Garland company that ma tures blast-detecting equipme fraction Technology makes ment that condenses the mon data.

Refraction Technology pre Paul Passmor said his comp treating the order as routine.

Cochran said the agreeme tween the two groups of scien for one year, although it pr will be extended.