

Using Cool Sheep for Weed Control and Holistic Soil Management



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Babydoll Southdown



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Woodrow Wilson had sheep “mow” the White House lawn



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- **Break up crusted soil surface with tiny hooves**
- **Reduce pest presence**
- **Add free manure**
- **Easily managed with solar Electronet fencing**
- **Great draw for winery visitors**

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Natural grazers
24 inches at the shoulder
Short legs



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PASTURE IMPROVEMENT

- Sheep manure, urine
- Regular “clipping” of forage
- Soil test to determine pH and mineral levels
- Add lime, clovers
- Timing: grazing heavily a bit early will favor the legumes, later favors the grasses
- Too early and roots won't establish



- **Help vineyards and orchards convert to organic or sustainable practices at lower cost**
- **About one-third the cost of mechanical weed management**
- **Graze cover crops, grass and weeds to 1 inch**
- **Fit neatly under cordon**
- **Can be used to sucker and hedge/prune vines**
- **Reduce frost damage by allowing air to circulate**

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HOW MUCH PASTURE DO YOU NEED?

Depends on

- Rainfall
- Forage quality
- Other pasture access for rotation
- Inputs
- Length of grazing season
- Alternate feeding





MULTI-SPECIES GRAZING

- Different grazing and browsing patterns increase pasture productivity and health
- Horses and cattle mostly eat grasses, and only occasionally eat forbs or browse brush and trees.
- Goats eat mostly browse, with a much smaller intake of grass and forbs.
- Sheep eat younger grasses, forbs, and browse.



SHEEP HEALTH ON PASTURE

- Too many legumes can cause bloat
- Balance rich legumes with hay
- Introducing new feed may cause upset stomach
- Monitor for poisonous plants
- Monitor for worming
- Watch for foxtails
- Access to clean water and sheep salt



FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

LEASING

- 3-4 sheep per acre
- Fencing
- Water trough
- Sheep lease: negotiable



OWNING SHEEP

- 3-4 sheep per acre
- Fencing
- Water trough
- Separate pasture for rams
- Shelter for lambing
- Off season pasture/hay
- Livestock guardian dog
- Shearing
- Sheep salt
- Sheep purchase: \$350-600 per lamb, or \$2850 for a starter flock



YEAR-ROUND GRAZING

- Electric wire under fruiting wire
- One wire on hillside vineyard, two for a flat one
- \$500-\$800 per acre, plus \$300 for energizer (powers 5-10 acres)
- Sucker, hedge vines
- Move onto summer pasture when grasses are eaten down and brown
- Completely eliminates mowing in the tractor rows and under vines

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.canvasranch.com

info@canvasranch.com

Premier1supplies.com

HOLISTIC MANAGEMENT by Alan Savory

THANK YOU!

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