

History and potential of silvopasture in the Southeastern U.S. (A08-bannister153327-Poster)

Authors:

- I.Ezenwa - *University of Florida*
- M.E.Bannister - *University of Florida*
- J.Nowak - *University of Florida*
- R.S.Kalmbacher - *University of Florida*

Abstract:

In silvopasture trees, forage crops, and livestock are integrated and managed to produce wood, forage, and livestock products. Forest grazing, where cattle grazed native vegetation under naturally occurring pines was a common practice in the southeastern U.S. after the Spanish brought cattle into Florida. In the 1940's, better breeds of cattle needed better forages. Fertilizer and introduced forages proved more economical than protein supplementation of native forage. Between 1950 and 1963, many southern landowners planted grass with pines under government programs. The earliest studies on combining planted pines and cattle on improved pastures started in the mid 1950's and intensified in the 1960's. While silvopasture in the southeast has generally meant combining pines, pastures, and cattle, the need for new designs to satisfy new objectives is increasing as land use changes. Wildlife conservation and revenues from hunting leases are now important. Silvopastoral systems may be more profitable than either cattle or forest operations alone in certain cases, and silvopasture management is consistent with societal and environmental objectives.

Corresponding Author Information:

Michael Bannister
University of Florida
University of Florida, SFRC, P.O. Box
110831
Gainesville, FL 32611-0831

phone: 352 846-0146
fax: 352 846-2094
e-mail:
mikebann@ufl.edu

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