



Sociedade Agrícola Vargas Madeira- family farm



JOÃO MADEIRA



950 hectares



improvement of
grassland management

ADOPTION OF ROTATIONAL GRAZING AS A MEASURE TO MITIGATE DROUGHT AND IMPROVE GRASSLAND USE

Sociedade Agrícola Vargas Madeira is located in Mértola and manages an area of around 950 hectares within the Guadiana Valley Natural Park. Of this area, 85% is permanent grassland, including some Montado agroforestry system, which is in decline. The remaining 15% of the area is used to produce forages for animal feed. It has two thousand sheep of the Campaniça breed and a small nucleus of cows of the Alentejo breed. One of the major problems on the farm, and in the region in general, is the increase in drought periods, which has reduced the availability of forage for animal feed.

The adoption of rotational grazing began five years ago as a labour management practice, but there has been an improvement and an increase in grassland productivity. In practice, they reduced the size of the parks from 25-30 hectares to 5-7 hectares and divided the herd into groups of 600 or 750 animals. In this way, they were able to achieve, on the one hand, greater grazing pressure, and better use of the grassland, and on the other, greater reproductive control of the herd.

Farmer Interview

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zA6smqEI2o>

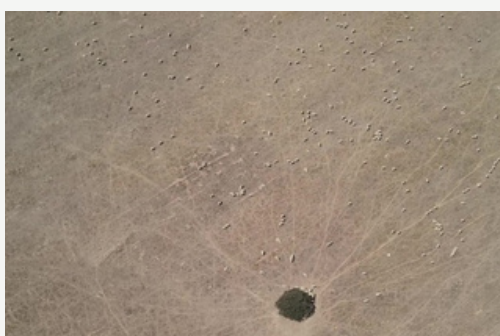


Photo credit: photos generated from farmer interview - CONSULAI