



## Potential use of *Cistus ladanifer* shrub as fodder for ruminant animals

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*Cistus ladanifer* L. (CL), an evergreen spontaneous forage shrub, well adapted to semi-arid conditions, poor and acidic soils, and abundant in marginal fields in most Mediterranean countries. It can compete with cork oak trees under severe drought conditions and increases fire propagation risk. In the Alentejo region, a semiarid region, it is an extremely abundant endogenous resource, one of the first plants to colonize soils after a wild fire, it can dominate the understory.

CL nutritional value as a fodder is usually considered to be low, typically due to its high content on antinutritional compounds, such as condensed tannins. However recent studies have shown that CL may have beneficial effects on ruminants, increasing digestive utilization of dietary protein, acting as anthelmintic and as antioxidants and helping to prevent bloat. CL can also be used as silage additives to reduce proteolysis of high protein forages during ensiling. CL can also be used as an alternative forage source in a lamb's diet, improving the fatty acid composition of meat lipids. This usage provides an additional source of fodder and contributes to the control of the species and reduces fire risk, in these silvopastoral areas.

The Cistus Rumen project is aimed at promoting the "Sustainable use of Rockrose (*Cistus ladanifer* L.) in small ruminants - Increase of the competitiveness and reduction of the environmental impact".

References and links:

<http://cistusrumen.pt/>



Figure 1. *Cistus ladanifer* flower. Credits: Cistus rumen project

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