

Goats to Trim the Grass

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A major international airport like Chicago's O'Hare needs a large staff to take care of everything from security to maintenance, and now the major aviation hub is looking to hire some four-legged helpers to lend a hoof with landscaping.

The Chicago Department of Aviation recently put out a bid for someone to supply goats – or sheep – to trim the grass at O'Hare International Airport. The bid also calls for a goat herder.

Amy Malick is the department's point person for sustainability, and she says the city is looking at a pilot program of 30 goats to munch on grass and weeds in one hard-to-mow area measuring 100 acres east of Mannheim Road.



Hoofed lawnmowers: Chicago put out a bid for someone to supply goats to eat grass at a hard-to-reach area at O'Hare International Airport.

She told [MyFox Chicago](#) that the would-be grazing spot is outside the security fence, so there is no danger of the farm animals straying onto the runways.

Malick added that the department is also concerned about pollution produced by mechanical mowers, so they are turning to the barnyard variety.



Grazing spot: The goats will be chomping on grass and weeds in an area measuring 100 acres east of Mannheim Road

Atlanta started a similar effort this week at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, where a herd of 100 goats and sheep have been brought in to eat invasive plants, and San Francisco has been using goats as lawnmowers for years.



Herd mentality: Atlanta started a similar effort this week, bringing in 100 goats and sheep to eat invasive plants



Bidding war: Five farmers have already expressed interest in supplying the airport with goats

At one point, Seattle also jumped on the goat bandwagon, but quickly scrapped the program. Chicago officials told the [Chicago Sun-Times](#) that they have already been approached by five goat farmers who are interested in the bid, which is capped at \$100,000. Candidates must apply by September 24.

Passengers at O'Hare were split on the idea of bringing farm animals to the airport, with some expressing concerns over the possibility of the goats running amok at the busy transportation hub.

If the three-week pilot program is successful, the goat grazing could be expanded to other parts of the airport.
