

IMPACT

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Livestock symposium: Integrating the needs of animals, rangelands and people

AT A GLANCE

Continuing education for livestock producers is vital for best management practices to be learned and shared among all stakeholders to address production and resource concerns.

The Situation

Approximately eighty percent of Idaho's rangelands are public lands. Livestock producers, government agency land managers, conservation groups and others all have an interest in the health of the land, wildlife and livestock. It is imperative that these interested parties develop positive working relationships for the benefit of the land, the animals, the ranching families and the rural economies that rely heavily on revenue generated from the natural resource use. Ongoing communication and education is vital to fostering these positive relationships.

Our Response

The Idaho Range Livestock Symposium (IRLS) was designed to provide a valuable educational opportunity for participants to develop and enhance their understanding of the sustainable management of rangelands and the efficient production of beef from these lands. Specific educational objectives of this endeavor include: 1) create a forum for innovative researchers, land managers and beef producers to present novel approaches to rangeland based beef production, 2) provide Idaho beef producers and rangeland managers with "real world" examples of successful management strategies, 3) strengthen partnerships between University of Idaho Extension and industry participants, 4) develop alliances among professionals and ranchers in the range livestock



Low-stress livestock handling demonstration.

industry and 5) identify future opportunities to integrate the disciplines of rangeland ecology and animal science into comprehensive research, teaching and Extension programs.

The planning team consisted of University of Idaho Extension faculty and individuals from the Idaho State Department of Agriculture, the Idaho Rangeland Resource Commission, Idaho Department of Lands, Idaho Cattle Association, University of Idaho Rangeland Center and allied industry representatives.

The IRLS was offered in a traveling format with symposia held in SW Idaho (Marsing), the Magic Valley (Twin Falls/Burley) and Eastern/Central Idaho (Idaho Falls/Challis). The IRLS was funded by allied industry support and offered to participants free of charge.

Program Outcomes

Participants rated the symposia highly across all locations.

- 97 percent stated that the knowledge gained would benefit them economically or help them in their work.
- 50 percent of evaluation respondents indicated improved awareness of conservation easements with 35 percent indicating knowledge gained would be applied toward management decisions in the future.
- 52 percent of evaluation respondents indicated they had learned something new regarding cooperative rangeland monitoring. Thirty-five percent indicated they would apply that knowledge in their operation.
- Targeted grazing to reduce fire risk was highly rated with nearly 100 percent of respondents indicating improved awareness and new knowledge on the subject.
- The low-stress livestock handling demonstration was very highly rated. Sixty-nine percent of respondents indicated they would apply something they learned in their operation.

Of the producers attending the Idaho Range Livestock Symposium, 89 percent indicated that they would adopt one or more of the practices discussed with 88 percent indicating that it would help improve the management of their operation.

The information presented at the Idaho Range Livestock Symposium will have a much farther reaching effect. Eighty-eight percent of respondents indicated that they would share information presented with others over the next 12 months. Several indicated that they would be sharing information with 20 or more individuals.

The Future

In 2017, the Idaho Range Livestock Symposium will be held January 10-12 in Salmon, Twin Falls and Marsing. Committee members have sought input from livestock producers and land managers to identify relevant topics in range livestock production.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

University of Idaho Extension
University of Idaho Rangeland Center
University of Idaho Department of Animal and Veterinary Science
Idaho State Department of Agriculture
Idaho Rangeland Resource Commission
Idaho State Department of Lands
Idaho Cattle Association

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