

IDAHO RANGE LIVESTOCK SYMPOSIUM

Integrating the Needs of Animals, Rangelands, and People

January 2018

*A one-day traveling
symposium and network-
ing event—packed with
information on industry
relevant topics for
producers and
rangeland managers*

Idaho Locations:

January 9: American Legion Hall, Marsing

January 10: CSI Herrett Center, Twin Falls

January 11: Red Lion, Pocatello

January 12: BYU Idaho Ag Science Center, Rexburg



Photo: PixelLight Creative Group, Rock Creek Ranch

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 - **Dr. Karen Launchbaugh**, University of Idaho, Professor and Rangeland Center Director
 - **Dr. Roger Blew**, Sage Consulting, Inc.

Symposium Recognition

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IDAHO RANGE LIVESTOCK SYMPOSIUM

January 2018

AGENDA

- 9:00am Registration
- 9:30am Burke Teichert—Managing Ranch Resources to their Fullest—Continuous Improvement of the Key Resources—Land, Livestock, and People.
- 10:30am Break
- 10:50am Jesse Fulton—Learning from the 2016 National Beef Quality Audit
- 11:35am Rex Hoagland—Q&As about the New CS Beef Packers Processing Plant in Kuna
- 12:05pm Lunch
- 12:45pm Dr. Karen Launchbaugh—Grouse & Grazing Study: Effects of Spring Grazing on Sage-grouse Nesting
- 1:45pm Roger Blew—Engaging in the Process—Writing Effective Public Comments
- 2:15pm Burke Teichert—Matching Cow Size and Calving Season to Available Resources
- 3:00pm Adjourn



Notes

Burke Teichert

Burke was born and raised on a family ranch in western Wyoming. He received a Bachelors in Ag Business from Brigham Young University and a Masters in Ag Economics from the University of Wyoming.

Burke was a faculty member at the University of Wyoming and BYU, a Beef Cattle Specialist in AI industry, a General Manager and Vice President for AgReserves, Inc., or better known as Deseret Ranches where he was involved in seven major ranch acquisitions in the US, and the management of a number of farms and ranches in the US, Canada, and Argentina.

Burke is currently a consultant and speaker. He also writes a monthly column in *BEEF* magazine.



Managing Ranch Resources to their Fullest—Continuous Improvement of the Key Resources—Land, Livestock, and People

Let's review some basic principles of ranch management.

Four Areas to Manage:

- Production
- Economics/Finance
- Marketing
- People

Three Ways to Improve Profit:

- **Increase Turnover.** This is simply producing more and having more units to sell. This can be accomplished by increasing your size, making your existing land more productive or by stacking enterprises.
- **Decrease Overheads.** This is usually the low hanging fruit. Overheads are people and their tools along with land and the structures attached to it.
- **Improve Gross Margin.** Gross margin is total enterprise returns minus associated direct costs. It is improved by better enterprise selection, fitting livestock to the environment, improved marketing and managing direct costs better.

So, reduce overheads as much as possible, market well, increase turnover, improve gross margin and then recognize that three key ratios drive a lot of the economics:

- Acres per cow
- Cows per person
- Fed feed vs. grazed feed

Five Essentials for Successful Ranch Management:

- **Your Approach to Management Should be Both Integrative and Holistic.** This is sometimes characterized as a systems approach enabled by integration. Integration is the acquisition of information, ideas, tools, etc. to use in improving your business. Then decisions are made with a holistic approach where you anticipate as many of the consequences (both intended and unintended) as your integration and understanding will allow.
- **Strive for Continuous Improvement of the Key Resources—Land, Livestock and People.** These key resources can and should all appreciate in value and can then generate more income. Planned, time-controlled, adaptive grazing is my preferred method for improving the land. Selecting cattle that fit your toughest time of the year and culling the right cows and selecting the right bulls are my preferred ways for improving livestock. Providing people with opportunities to become lifelong learners and accomplishers is the way to improve people.
- **Acquire and Use Good Analysis and Decision Making Tools.** A good computer can do almost everything you need. I don't believe in keeping an endless number of records, but a few are essential for analysis and making continually better decisions.

You want good itemization of costs and a clean separation of overhead and direct costs.

The following production records can be very helpful:

- a. Weaned calf crop percentage
 - b. Pregnancy percentage
 - c. Total lbs. weaned.
 - d. Total yearling gain.
 - e. Death loss percentages by age and class of cattle.
- **War on Cost.** Because of competition, we must wage war on cost. People don't need to eat meat; and, if they do, it doesn't have to be beef. We must put our products in the marketplace at a price that is both profitable to us and attractive to our customers. Being a low cost producer is your best insurance against the ravages of markets and nature.
 - **Emphasis on Marketing.** It is easy to neglect the "marketing" of small groups or "odds and ends." We should strive to sell everything to its highest and best use.

Notes

Learning from the 2016 National Beef Quality Audit

Jesse Fulton



Jesse Fulton is originally from the Northeastern corner of the bluegrass state along the Ohio river in Lewis County, KY. His interest in agriculture began on his grandparent's dairy operation and from there grew by lending a helping hand on neighboring cow/calf operations.

After completing his Bachelor's in Animal Science at Morehead State University, Jesse went on to pursue his Master's focusing in meat science at South Dakota State University under the advisement of Dr. Amanda Blair.

Some of Jesse's research included the effect of copper and zinc source on pre-weaning performance of cows, health and performance of suckling calves, and post-weaning feedlot performance, carcass composition and meat quality of calves.

He is now the Associate Director of Producer Education with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association in Denver, CO. His duties include, managing Cattlemen's College, overseeing the 2016 National Beef Quality Audit and leading the development of the Beef Quality Assurance online training modules.

Dr. Deborah VanOverbeke



VanOverbeke has a B.S. in Animal Science from University of Nebraska and a M.S. and Ph.D. in Animal Science from Colorado State University. Deb joined the Department of Animal Science at Oklahoma State University in 2005. She is responsible for teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in Animal Science and currently serves as the Assistant Dean for Academic Programs for the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. Her research focuses on quality/sensory attributes related to beef cattle management and includes many National Beef Quality Audits.

National Beef Quality Audit—2016¹

Deb VanOverbeke, Keith Belk, and Jeff Savell

Since 1991, the beef checkoff-funded National Beef Quality Audit (NBQA) has delivered a set of guideposts and measurements for cattle producers and others to help determine quality conformance of the U.S. beef supply. The first NBQA a quarter century ago focused on fed steers and heifers and the physical attributes of beef and beef by-products – marbling, external fat, carcass weight and carcass blemishes. The beef industry conducted its first market cow and bull audit in 1994 to complement the NBQA for fed steers/heifers. As the foundation of cattle herds, cows and bulls are also sources of beef that are significant and worth understanding. In fact, it's estimated that sales of cull breeding animals contribute up to 20 percent of operational gross revenue for both beef and dairy operations. Cattle industry concerns over the years have evolved to include food safety, sustainability, animal well-being and the growing disconnect between producers and consumers. As a result, over the past 25 years NBQA researchers have made significant changes to their research, leading to increasingly meaningful sets of results.

There were several major elements to the 2016 Steer and Heifer and Market Cow and Bull National Beef Quality Audits: Face-to-Face Interviews provided understanding of what quality means to the various industry sectors, and the value of the quality attributes. This research will help the industry make modifications necessary to increase the value of its products. In plant assessments included evaluation of fed steers and heifers as well as cows and bulls in holding pens, on the kill floor and in the cooler for characteristics related to transportation, mobility, bruises, condemnations and quality and yield grade characteristics, and many other traits. In the Strategy Session industry representatives met to review results of the research and discuss industry implications for both the steer and heifer and cow and bull NBQAs. Outcomes from that meeting provide quality guidance to the industry for the next five years. Lastly, lost opportunities are calculated for each audit to give perspective to the value of the quality defects identified during in-plant assessments.

¹The National Beef Quality Audit is funded by the Beef Checkoff program and managed by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, a contractor for the Beef Checkoff. Authors Van-Overbeke, Belk, and Savell are the principal investigators for the project and would like to thank the other institutions and subcontractors that helped collect data for Phase II of the project.

Notes



Rex Hoagland

Rex was born and raised on the Snake River in Owyhee County. His father, Jim Hoagland, instilled the love of raising cattle in him as a young boy. He introduced him to the auction and buying cattle in the early 70's. Rex then went on to sort and pen cattle at the OK Livestock Auction.

Rex worked in the packing industry with HH Keim Company in the feedlot in the beginning of his career. He then started buying, lotting, and sorting cattle in 1983 for Armour Meat Packing. He has 36 years of experience in the cattle industry which has included: Head of procurement, managing inventory and cost, managing buyers, and building relationships with farmers, ranchers and dairymen throughout the United States. While working in this industry, Rex has had the opportunity to live in many states (Idaho, Alabama, Nebraska, Arizona and Wisconsin).

Rex is excited to be a part of CS Beef Packers here in his home state of Idaho, and is looking forward to the future of the beef industry in the northwest.

Rex married his wife Karen in 1981 and they have 3 children, 1 son and 2 daughters. They have been blessed with 10 grandchildren, 5 boys and 5 girls.

Notes

Q&As about the New CS Beef Packers Processing Plant in Kuna

Who is CS Beef Packers?

CS Beef Packers is a Partnership between Caviness Beef Packers located in Herford TX and Simplot Company located in ID.

CS Beef Packers Goals:

1. To harvest 1700 cattle per day with the majority of this being a cow and bull facility. CS Beef Packers harvests all classes of mature cows and bulls, and plans to expand to fat cattle in the future.
2. To help ranchers and dairymen maximize the value of their cull cattle in the west. CS Beef Packers strives to teach people about the industry and has a brand new facility that is open for producers to visit in order to learn more about how the industry works.

Economics of a Packer in the West: The presence of CS Beef Packers has improved the cull cattle market and has increased producer's bottom line. With CS Beef Packers located in Kuna, producers have saved freight costs and significantly reduced stress on cattle.

Invitation to CS Beef Packers: We invite all producers who would like to tour the facility to do so. It is a full line harvest facility including hides and rendering.

Explanation of Grades of Cattle: Cutter is approx. 90% lean, Lean Boner is approx. 86% Lean, Boner is approx. 84% lean, and a Breaker is approx. 80% and under lean.

Questions and Answer

Notes

Dr. Karen Launchbaugh

Dr. Karen Launchbaugh is a professor of rangeland ecology at the University of Idaho who specializes in topics related to grazing behavior and targeted grazing. Karen's research and teaching focuses on applied grazing to manage invasive plants, wildland fuels, and livestock-wildlife interactions. She grew up on a sheep and cattle ranch in western North Dakota and has a Ph.D. in rangeland science from Utah State University.

Karen is Director of the Rangeland Center at the University of Idaho; an organization of researchers and educators who work closely with land managers to foster understanding for the management of rangelands.



Grouse & Grazing Study: Effects of Spring Grazing on Sage-grouse Nesting

Project Planning Team includes: Courtney Conway, Karen Launchbaugh, and Andrew Meyers (University of Idaho), Paul Makela (Bureau of Land Management), Shane Roberts and Dave Musil (Idaho Department of Fish and Game), Wendy Pratt and Richard Ward (Idaho Ranchers), and John Robison (Idaho Conservation League).

Notes

Greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) were once widespread within sagebrush-grassland ecosystems of western North America, but populations have declined since the mid-1960s. The major threat to sage-grouse is habitat loss and fragmentation. Livestock grazing is the most extensive land use within sage-grouse habitat and the potential effects of livestock grazing on sage-grouse are of concern to land managers, ranchers, and conservationists. Reliable information about the effects of livestock grazing on sagebrush ecosystems and sage-grouse reproduction and survival are needed to make wise land management decisions. Spring, when sage-grouse are nesting and raising broods, is considered a crucial period for sage-grouse survival. Some people view livestock as a significant threat to nesting sage-grouse because grazing can reduce cover provided by perennial grasses and create disturbance to nesting grouse. Others argue that spring livestock grazing may have beneficial effects on sage-grouse because spring grazing may reduce fuel loads and increase forbs and insects which provide food for hens and chicks.

Despite many studies of sage-grouse habitat requirements, we know surprisingly little about the effects of livestock grazing on sage-grouse populations and habitat characteristics. As a result, unsubstantiated claims are often made about the presumed effects of livestock grazing on sage-grouse, and litigation over this issue is common. A recent review of the effects of grazing on sage-grouse outlined the direct and indirect effects grazing can have on sage-grouse (Boyd et al. 2014) and notes that a clear understanding of grazing effects on sage-grouse are needed to reduce conflicts and focus management efforts. Past and current studies evaluating the relationship between cattle grazing and sage-grouse have used a correlative rather than an experimental approach and have included little replication and variation in plot sizes. To address this priority information need, a series of replicated field experiments were implemented in 2014 to rigorously evaluate the effects of spring cattle grazing on demographic traits and habitat characteristics of sage-grouse. Though the experimental results from this research are not yet available. Preliminary and correlative results indicate that livestock grazing influences sage-grouse habitat and nest success in ways that may be both beneficial and detrimental. It is not yet clear how livestock grazing influences sage-grouse populations. But, an overview of possible effects will be shared along with preliminary results. Thus, the debate over grazing and grouse continues.

- Boyd, C. S., Beck, J. L., & Tanaka, J. A. (2014). Livestock grazing and sage-grouse habitat: Impacts and opportunities. *Journal of Rangeland Applications*, 1, 58-77.
- Idaho Grouse and Grazing Research Project:
<http://idahogrousegrazing.wordpress.com/>

Notes

Dr. Roger Blew

Roger Blew has more than 30 years of experience in conservation, ecological research, natural resources management, and environmental regulatory compliance. He has extensive experience in supporting and leading NEPA analyses and has participated in environmental document preparation as a technical contributor, document manager, administrative record custodian, and as a public commenter. He has been involved in all levels of NEPA document preparation.

Dr. Blew has been active in the Society for Range Management and served as the Chair of the Advisory Council as well as President of the Idaho Section.



Engaging in the Process—Writing Effective Public Comments

With passage of the National Environmental Policy Act in 1970, all major actions by federal agencies or using federal funding require an analysis that demonstrates the agency considered potential impacts to the environment. To do that, the NEPA process includes a substantial effort to gather input from potentially affected stakeholders. All federal planning and permitting processes now include a procedure for complying with NEPA, including soliciting input from stakeholders. **Being knowledgeable about NEPA, and the opportunities to participate in it, has become increasingly important for anyone who has an interest in the outcome of a federal decision.**

Generally, agencies solicit public input in two phases: the public scoping phase and the draft document (EA/EIS) phase.

The goal of the scoping phase is to ask the public to suggest issues and potential impacts that the agency should consider in its analysis. Public comments for scoping should focus on providing the agency with unique information about the location or the resources that might be affected by the proposed action. Scoping comments might also focus on providing information on unique kinds of impacts that might not otherwise be included in the analysis. If there is something you want the agency to consider in their analysis, this is the time to let them know.

The goal of the draft document public comment phase is to provide input on whether or not the agency has: 1) adequately described the proposed action, 2) considered the full range of reasonable alternatives, and 3) adequately analyzed the potential impacts. The agency is required by NEPA to consider every public comment that is “substantive.” Comments are substantive if they use a reasonable basis to question either the accuracy of the information provided in the document or the adequacy of the methods or assumptions used in the analysis. The most important thing to understand about providing input is that comments must have a factual basis. Opinions alone are unlikely to be considered substantive.

For your comments to be most effective, they should be concise, clear, relevant, and targeted.

Targeted means that you should link each comment to a specific page, paragraph, line, table, or figure so that the agency personnel can clearly link your comment to specific content in the document. That will help them understand the relevance of your comment. Making your comments targeted will also help you keep each comment clear and concise.

Writing effective comments takes time, so don't wait until the public comment period is nearing a close before starting work.

Study the entire document so that you fully understand the proposed action as it relates to your concerns, the relevant laws and regulations, and the analysis of potential impacts. Finally, organize your comment letter using bullets or headers to identify and separate each specific topic. This makes it easier for the agency personnel to consider your comments and respond appropriately. Remember that the easier you make it for them, the more likely your comments will make a difference.

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Thank You

**for attending the
Idaho Range Livestock
Symposium**

**If you have
questions or
comments,
please contact us.**

Scott Jensen

UI Extension
208-896-4104
scottj@uidaho.edu

UI Rangeland Center

208-885-6536
range@uidaho.edu



University of Idaho
Extension