

"Turning passion into a profitable profession"

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Our Partners

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DSRMP HOSTED FIRST ANNUAL PRODUCTION SYMPOSIUM – OCTOBER 6 & 7

Burke Teichert ~
*"Calving Season – When
is Optimal for Your
Ranch"*



Burke Teichert is a former BYU professor of Agriculture Economics and former General Manager with AgReserves Inc. (commonly known as Deseret Ranches).

Event made possible by the following sponsors:



DSRMP ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR CLASS OF 2024 – OCTOBER 18TH – NOV 1ST

The Dan Scott Ranch Management Program is now accepting applications for the third cohort of students. Admission is limited to 10 students per year to maximize the educational experience of each student and maintain the high standards of the program. Students have to submit a detailed application package which is reviewed by a committee, undergo an interview, and meet the GPA and scholarly requirements to obtain admission.

To learn more about the application process for the Ranching Systems degree, visit:
http://animalrange.montana.edu/ranchsystems_admissions.html

Managerial Accounting for Ranch Management

My bi-partite internship at the Padlock Ranch Company wrapped up this past August. The second portion of the program's internship focused on financial planning and analysis. I was tasked with developing a spreadsheet to compare three scenarios of heifer development and to analyze financial metrics such as cost to wean a calf, fixed cost per calf, and cow depreciation within each scenario. This was an important process in allowing me to begin comprehending the intricacies of ranch accounting.

After I gained understanding of some of the financial data, I began extracting variable costs from accounting data to predict the costs which would be incurred under the differing heifer development scenarios. These variable costs were line items such as 'added supplement', 'fall feed and yardage', and 'added trucking.' Some of the cow herd inputs capable of adjustment are factors like weaning rate and heifer pregnancy rate. When these inputs are adjusted, each of the scenarios and its financial data adjusts to reflect that effect.

The heifer development scenarios compared the profitability of backgrounding retained heifer calves on range feed compared to the Padlock Ranch status quo of feedyard development. In order to maintain a constant stocking rate, this would require additional feeding of running-age cows, or destocking the total cow herd. One of the more challenging aspects of developing the model was developing a list of functioning inputs which could be altered to effect each development scenario.

Dr. Patterson and I worked together to perform sensitivity analysis on the model by using hay costs. The developed model allowed for hay costs to be entered, and the subsequent financial impacts were estimated. Without destocking the cowherd, for the Padlock Ranch, when hay production costs were greater than \$121/T it was less expensive to develop heifers in the feedyard than on range. However, if the cow herd was destocked so that heifers could be fully developed on range without the additional feeding of hay to either class of females, this scenario would lead to the lowest cost per calf at January 1st. This, however adds the systems-level implication of operating the feedyard at a lower capacity increasing the fixed feedyard costs all retained calves must carry.

Overall, my internship experiences at Padlock Ranch have helped me develop a more proficient understanding of financial relationships in ranch accounting and how these relationships alter when managers change system-level variables. I never envisioned myself as the type of person to build a dynamic spreadsheet, but my interest in cowherd economics kept me interested and my mentors at the Padlock Ranch coached me in the right direction. I hope this tool can prove itself beneficial to the ranch's managers as an accurate decisions support system in the future.

~ Tristan Bess



Experience is the Best Teacher

I interned for the Hamilton Ranch in Twin Bridges, MT this summer under the general manager Jaime Wood with the Dan Scott Ranch Management program. The ranch was founded in 1871 by the Seidensticker family. Five generations of this family-owned and operated ranch until January 30th, 1990 when it was sold to Allan Hamilton. This ushered in the age of the Hamilton ranch as it is named today. Allan Hamilton owned the ranch for the better part of the next two decades until the Hamilton ranch was sold to Swift River Investments LLC in 2010. The ranch mostly surrounds the town of Twin Bridges, though most of its land lies to the northwest of town.

I worked as an intern at the ranch from May to August 2021 and will be going back for a second summer this coming spring. My main duties included: rotational pasture and grazing management, moving, handling, branding, vaccinating, and artificial inseminations of the ranch's cowherds. I also helped handle the mitigation of cattle health issues, distribution of salt and mineral, and maintenance of the ranch's fences. All of these duties provided constant learning experiences, from proper and effective stockmanship while handling cattle to correct paddock set up for rotational grazing. Even with these daily learning experiences, I think my three biggest takeaways from the summer were one, as a ranch manager just how often and far in advance you have to anticipate and recognize situations, projects, and potential problems so that no steps are wasted. Two, what it takes and looks like to be a good manager of people, and three, what it takes to successfully manage a ranch's recourses in times of crisis like the drought that we experienced this summer.

My experience this summer has only strengthened my resolve to become a ranch manager after college. I look forward to continuing my internship next summer and furthering my knowledge and experience. I also look forward to the start of my ranch project where I will create a cost analysis spreadsheet to analyze the difference between retaining yearlings or selling calves at weaning and the return on those two commodities. This will be a useful skill to learn and develop as it is a skill I have to master and utilize for the rest of my career.

The DSRMP internships are an unbelievably valuable resource for students in the program. Not only will students attain the on-hand experience required for a ranch management position, but it also allows the student to develop relationships and contacts throughout the ranching industry. In an industry that is constantly changing and evolving the contacts and relationships made through this program will be a vital part of the student's future success. ~ Cayden Rose



Opportunity Rises from Adversity

“If we are not able to seize opportunity, we cannot effectively or successfully manage a productive and sustainable operation.”

Picture it: Montana is in a drought; fires igniting statewide; cattle filling the sale rings; and grasshopper infestations are inevitable. Well, you probably do not have to picture it because we all lived it. Some, though, more extreme than others. Located in Choteau, Montana, Sevens Livestock is a registered and commercial cattle operation with extensive improved pasture and irrigated hay ground. The drought still had its effects on the operation, but the ranch was still able to function as it would on a normal year. This is due to the extensive amount of pasture improvement and intensive management that Ben and Karli Johnson have worked so hard to implement into their operation.

With duties consisting of extensive cattle handling and management, grazing management, flood irrigation, and haying activities, I experienced a well-rounded livestock and forage internship for the summer of 2021; my first summer internship within the Dan Scott Ranch Management Program. During my time with Sevens Livestock, not only was I working directly with the ranch managers every day, but I was also given the opportunity to work very closely with the landlords of the leased place, Jay and Linda Rice. This was an incredible experience as I got to visit with them about the history of the ground, their experiences running their own cattle on the operation, and so many stories of the good and bad times over the years (that, regardless of the operation, are inevitable). I am incredibly fortunate and grateful for that opportunity and I am so excited to go back and be a part of those stories and the history of the ranch.

One of the biggest principles that I learned from Ben, Karli, and Jay while working for the ranch is that our industry is constantly changing and, as a manager, you have to be willing to take advantage of that. This also goes hand-in-hand with another idea that with untimely misfortune (this year’s drought for example) an opportunity will always arise. We have to be flexible with our management decisions, especially from a financial standpoint. If we are not able to seize opportunity, we cannot effectively or successfully manage a productive and sustainable operation. These two, simple concepts have increased my thought processes regarding my own operation, exploring some possible lease and land decisions of my own. ~ Georgia Wortman



The Power of Encouragement

“Encourage people endlessly. Management isn’t just about telling people what to do and when to do it. It’s being the kind of leader that makes your people want to be better and the kind of leader whose presence and attitude give them confidence to try, even if they mess it up. “

When I began my internship at Lone Star Land and Cattle this past summer, I had very little idea what to expect. I had goals, a good share of nerves, plenty of excitement, and two good horses. I knew I wanted raising good cattle to be my future, always have known it. I grew up in it and have never once wanted to leave it. I was looking forward to my first summer in the Dan Scott Ranch Management Program and whatever Lone Star would throw at me

The morning of the third branding I headed west at a long trot to check a brushy draw, but by the time we made it my mare wasn’t feeling right. I could feel her traveling wrong and knew she was tying up badly. She made it a few hundred yards from the trap and really tied up. She wouldn’t go another step. I pulled off her saddle and bridle and stood there a moment. I hate to admit it, but I was about in tears.

We got to the second branding trap for the day and unloaded to gather, but I didn’t have a horse to ride anymore. One of the other ranch hands, Austin, unsaddled his ranch horse, without hesitation, and tossed his saddle on his colt. I saddled up quick and the routine of gathering began again. Later, as Taylor called up the second group of ropers, he asked me to get in the pen. I quietly declined. “It’s alright”, I said. I didn’t want to go in that branding pen with my busy stressed mind and my lack of focus and my shaky hands and my new job I’m-just-an-intern nerves and miss every single shot. I just wanted the work done and the day over.

“Are you sure? Going once..”

“Yeah, it’s fine. Really. Not today.”

“Going twice. Last chance...”

“I’m sure.”

Then Sophi spoke up. “Here ride Happy. He’s all warmed up. No pressure. Just get in there.” Happy is one of her best horses so it sure meant something to me that she offered him so easily.

I was still on edge from the morning and my hands were shaky when I went to rope. We still have another pasture to gather and move, what if I slow things down? What if I don’t bring out a single calf? What if I make a fool of myself? Well... so what. I finally got in the saddle, built a loop, rode in the pen, and dragged out a calf. Taylor quietly coached me on my heel shot a bit.

I learned a few very important things that day: Make a fool of yourself if that’s what it takes! Just learn something. Be brave. I wanted to rope. I mean who doesn’t?! I just didn’t want it to go wrong. And I almost let the worry take away something I really wanted. That would have been a waste and I would have regretted it. I’m better for stepping up. At the end of that day I remembered why I was there, what I wanted out of life and how hard I was willing to work to get it. The thing to do, no matter the kind of day, is be humble enough to learn. Encourage the people around you and welcome encouragement from them in return. Take helpful criticism, no matter how tough it may be to hear, and let it make you grow. ~ Julia Hudson



More than 70 ranchers and students gathered on October 7th for the First Annual Production Symposium hosted by the MSU Dan Scott Ranch Management Program. The symposium topic was “Calving Season: When is Optimal for Your Ranch?”. A former manager of the Deseret Ranches and a consummate systems thinker, Teichert spent the morning discussing metrics for profitability and how calving at different seasons affected supplementation needs and marketing options for calves.



Burke Teichert discusses the importance of calving in sync with nature.



Noah Davis, Red Bluff Research Ranch Foreman expounds on the new management calendar of the ranch

The group traveled to the MSU Red Bluff Research Ranch, Dr. Tim DelCurto and Dr. Sara McCoski gave updates on how MSU faculty are working to answer practical questions for cow-calf producers. A brief tour of the ranch followed with staff pointing out the challenges and opportunities of running cattle and sheep in that terrain. The ranch recently changed their calving season from March to May to gain flexibility in grazing management and reduce the amount of hay fed to the cow herd.

“With a carefully designed supplementation program, cows can be maintained on range for most of the winter. This also means there is a much smaller need to be made, buy and feed hay.” Says Noah Davis, Red Bluff Research Ranch Foreman.

Back in Bozeman, a panel of 3 producers shared their journey from February and March calving to other seasons of the year. Eric Wickens, Wickens Salt Creek Ranch near Winifred; Merrill Beyeler, Beyeler Ranches LLC from near Leadore, ID; and Cooper Hibbard of Sieben Land and Livestock outside of Cascade, MT spent nearly 2 hours discussing the challenges including a reduction in breed back rates for cows and public lands grazing challenges. The group also highlighted the benefits that ranged from increased grazing opportunities, less hay fed, and even increased time with family of calving at different times of the year.

Students came away from the day with an increased knowledge of the complex interactions of managing a cattle operation, as well as new ideas for how management changes can provide new opportunities to better fit the livestock to the land and their lifestyle.



Panel members share their experiences, both good and bad, with students and other producers about their management changes.

A special THANK YOU to our generous sponsors:

Events and Educational Opportunities

Webinars:

Re-stocking after a Drought – Join the Ranchers Stewardship Alliance for a timely webinar on the economics of re-stocking after a drought featuring ShayLe Stewart – DTN Livestock Market Analyst.
<https://ranchstewards.org/educationoutreach/upcoming-events-workshops/>

Beef Quality Assurance Webinar Series – Join BQA on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month in October and November for management practices to help your operation be more successful.
<https://www.billpelton.com/beef-quality-assurance-resources-bqa/>

In Person Events

Montana Soil Health Symposium – February 9-10, 2022 – Billings, MT
<https://mtsoilhealth.org/>

King Ranch Institute for Ranch Management releases 2022 Outreach Schedule – view the varied offerings from the KRIRM for 2022. Most are offered in-person and online for the same price.
<https://krirm.tamuk.edu/outreach/#schedule2022>

Northwest Farm Credit Services Upcoming events
<https://www.northwestfcs.com/resources/eventsregistration>

MT NRCS Upcoming workshops and trainings:
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/mt/newsroom/events/>

Online Resources

Montana State University Extension has created an online **Ag Producer Stress Resource Clearinghouse**.

https://msuextension.org/wellness/stressmanagement/mt_farm_stress_clearing_house/

Farming and ranching is stressful, especially in years like 2021 when nature throws every possible challenge your way. Find healthy ways to identify the circumstances that cause stress in your daily life (sometimes called “stressors”), measure your stress, learn more about how to manage your stress, and get connected with resources if you are in need of individualized assistance.

Host a student intern through the Ranching Systems Degree

The Dan Scott Ranch Management Program is seeking ranches that are dedicated to the education of the next generation and are interested in hosting interns through the program.

When are students available for work?

- Students serve 2 consecutive summers with the host ranch, but are encouraged to maintain the relationship year-round to maximize learning and to participate in significant ranch events throughout the year.

How are interns and host ranches matched?

- The initial pairing is done by the DSRMP Program Lead based on student experience and interests and ranch opportunities. Ranches interview prospective students and can choose to extend a job offer or decline the intern.

Are the internships paid positions?

- Students are employees of the ranch with salary and living arrangements determined by the ranch. The DSRMP does not set a minimum wage, but encourages ranches to compensate students fairly in accordance with their experience and skills.
- Students are expected to work as a regular ranch hand, but we also ask the ranch to involve the student in as many different day-to-day tasks as possible along with the planning and decision making activities of the ranch.

How will hosting an intern benefit my ranch?

- Students will work closely with the ranch to identify areas where the student and MSU can assist the ranch on a specific topic or project of importance to the ranch.
- Expand the relationship between your ranch and Montana State University and associated resources.
- Student interns are prospective future employees.

How do I apply to host an intern?

- Go to https://animalrange.montana.edu/danscott/danscott_mentor_ranches_application.html and fill out the application to become an internship host. Or, contact:

Rachel Frost, Program Lead, frost@montana.edu, 406-994-3724 office, 406-223-7262 cell

“By turning young people’s passion for ranching into a profitable profession, the Dan Scott Ranch Management Program at Montana State University is ensuring the legacy of MT ranching does not just continue, it thrives.”

-Rachel Frost, Program Lead DSRMP



Not interested in hosting an intern? – You can support the program by becoming a Partner.

Learn more at: http://animalrange.montana.edu/danscottranchmanagementpartners_program.html

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*To join the Dan Scott Ranch Management partner program call Jesse Tufte at the MSU Alumni Foundation. 406-994-4207
Or at jesse.tufte@msuaf.org*