

Educating the Next Generation of Range Managers

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Abstract: In order to overcome the challenges of the past, we must educate our next generations of range managers, who will decide the future of Range Management. In present days we have concerns such as: over-grazing, exposed soil, and diminishing plant species, but as progressive range managers we are always implementing new methods, such as the various rotational grazing systems which allow greater recovery time for pastures resulting in a return of various plant species. Someone will have to be responsible for continuing these methods, and modifying them in order to become more efficient. The process of educating our next generation starts early, and there are many organizations that have already done quite well at appealing to the next generation such as 4-H, FFA, and NRCS just to name a few with each organization offering its own various camps, competitions, and workshops in order to teach students how to evaluate rangeland. The students who take full advantage of these opportunities are most likely to become involved in Range Management in the future. In August of 2010 I organized and hosted a Range Evaluation Clinic with those interested FFA members from my district. All seven chapters were invited, and over sixty students were in attendance. The event was hosted on my family's ranch, and by the end of the day we had educated both FFA members and advisors alike. I mostly saw this as a window of opportunity to do something beneficial to the FFA members, but I never realized that by doing this we were doing the rangeland a large favor itself. Many of the FFA members present were yet to become ranchers, farmers, Ag Advisors, maybe even Range Management specialists themselves, and the skills they acquired that day will help them gain a better understanding, and also give them some clue as to how they can better their grazing management techniques. The clinic encouraged more students to pursue this in the future, and with what they learned that day, those students just may have a part in preventing the next Dust Bowl, or any other tragic event as they go on to raise their own cattle, or even protect our rangeland.

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By Kyle Hartshorn

My Story



- I invited **FFA members** from all **7 chapters** in my district.

- 60** students and FFA advisers were in attendance.

- Ben Berlinger**, Rangeland Specialist from La Junta, CO directed the event.

- The event was hosted on **my family's ranch**.

- That day we **educated** members and advisers alike.

