An invitation to participate in an information and planning session on

Rangelands Self Shepherding

Rangelands NRM
Western Australia

Potential benefits of Rangelands Self Shepherding (RSS):

- ease of mustering by coordinating the movement of animals to parts of the property where you want them
- separating groups of animals, e.g. to take advantage of market opportunities if and when they arise
- increasing mating success by concentrating animals in an area
- resting parts of the landscape, but influencing a 'migration' pattern of movement

RSS is aimed at moving animals through the landscape to change distribution patterns. It is based on these principles:

- to capitalise on behaviour-based livestock management
- to reduce costs and improve logistics
- to divert forage utilisation across a broader range of plants and parts of the landscape
- to improve landscape function
- to leave decision-making in the hands of the local managers

The information and planning sessions are designed to cover the *necessary background information*, and to allow each participant to work on an *action plan for their particular situation*. You'll leave with some ***specific ideas and actions***, ready to implement when it suits you.

We'll provide additional support as your action plans are reviewed and modified. The sessions cover 1.5 days, ideally in one block, but we can discuss other ways to split the timing of the sessions to best suit a particular group.
The information and planning sessions will be run as semi-structured discussions, not stand-and-deliver classroom teaching.

The framework:	What each part provides:	Why it's helpful:	Proportion of time in the workshop:
Principles	Key concepts that explain why certain behaviours of plants and animals occur	To guide our thinking	
Processes	How things work; i.e. the mechanisms underlying the principles	To provide an explanation of the principles & to help understand likely outcomes	
Practices	What we can do to capitalise on the principles & processes	To identify practical options	
Tools	A particular approach, or method	To define the action/s to be undertaken	
Tactics	Detailed, 'take-home' tactics to make a difference	To influence the strength of the animal behaviour we are aiming to modify	

To help give you a feel for the content of the information and planning sessions, below are examples of some of the options we'll discuss. In the information sessions, we provide evidence of successful approaches (in Australia and overseas) and will combine this information with our own experiences:

	Example 1	**Example 2**	**Example 3**	**Example 4**
Principle	Animals seek diversity	Past experiences govern behaviours	Plants & animals are constantly changing	Less stress means better decisions
Processes	Cells of the body communicate with the brain to 'inform' the animal of their needs	Feedback mechanisms in the body influence foraging behaviour	Adaptation involves changes in how genes are expressed	Stress hormones interfere with others signals in the body & reduce learning
Practices	Use feed attractants to modify diet and grazing habitat	Influence the experiences of your animals (for the better)	Modify experiences of young animals when adaptability & learning opportunities are strong	Modify improve human-animal interactions
Tools	Choose a suitable attractant - e.g. salt, lick block, molasses etc.	Make diversity familiar	Expose young animals for particular plants or locations they may encounter later in life	Stress-free stockmanship
Tactics	• Form (loose or blocks?) • location • prior exposure • maintaining motivation of animals • notifying animals of the location of attractant	• short, repeated exposures • pre-natal 'programming' • learning with mum • establish grazing circuits • use experienced animals as mentors	• *in utero* 'programming' • Exploit cow-calf interactions before weaning	• Frequency • moving • placing • interactions with other learning
Potential cost savings & benefits	• Changed grazing; • Increased palatability of particular plants; • Congregating animals ahead of mustering	• Broadening of the range of plants consumed, reducing over-utilisation of vulnerable plants; • Animals more prepared for future situations	• Animals more rapidly adapting to change when it occurs	• Less labour inputs in the longer term; • Livestock more readily forming new grazing cultures that suit your business

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