

Livestock and Natural Resources



Program Highlights 2021-22:

- More than 740 producers, land managers, and agency staff attended 27 virtual and in-person workshops, gaining hands-on skills in using prescribed fire, improving livestock management and welfare practices, and increasing economic sustainability.
- More than 120 foothill ranchers were trained in wildfire safety, emergency management systems, and disaster planning. 74 ranchers received Livestock Disaster Pass certification through a collaboration between UCCE, county agricultural departments, local law enforcement, and CALFIRE.
- Working with land managers, fire planners, and targeted grazing companies, UCCE helped expand 10 locally-owned targeted grazing businesses and increase fuel reduction activities on public and private land in Placer and Nevada Counties.
- The New Foothill Rancher newsletter, the Ranching in the Sierra Foothills blog and YouTube Channel, the Placer-Nevada-Sutter-Yuba Livestock and Natural resources website, and our weekly podcast provided locally relevant production and land management information to a total audience of more than 10,000 individuals.

Most commercial livestock production in Placer and Nevada Counties is rangeland-based. These beef cattle, sheep, and goat operations generate significant economic activity while managing extensive landscapes. In addition to serving these commercial livestock producers, UCCE provides research-based information to local, state, federal, tribal, and nongovernmental land and resource managers with a focus on rangelands. Our research and extension programs emphasize ongoing and emerging issues impacting rangelands and livestock producers, including climate change adaptation, livestock production systems, and livestock-predator conflict.

Our hands-on training for both new and experienced livestock producers includes practical information on protecting livestock from predators, managing pasture and rangeland forages, adopting new production technologies, planning for wildfire and other emergencies, and using prescribed fire to protect resources and communities. We also develop resources to help ranchers cope with the economic and ecological impacts of California's ongoing drought, and to incorporate targeted grazing into their business models.

Our locally-focused research efforts are providing both short-term benefits and long-term opportunities. We completed a 2-year study of the costs and benefits of ranch-level drought mitigation strategies. Collaborating with advisors and specialists from across the University of California, we expanded our understanding of the interactions between livestock protection tools and predator and nonpredator wildlife. We initiated a survey of agricultural water use across the Sierra Foothills and are pioneering several efforts to help land managers assess the value of grazing for fuel-reduction and invasive weed management. Finally, we are part of a statewide network of advisors and specialists who are developing new drought and forage production forecasting tools.



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