

Ranch Update



Shad Cox
CRLRC Superintendent

I hope that this writing finds everyone in great spirits after Christmas and New Year's, with safe family travels behind us and the new year providing an abundance of opportunity. I realize that not everyone was as fortunate as others in the sporadic and limited rainfall this summer, but hope that everyone at least gained a little footing as we prepare to see if the drought has broken. I know that my mind is more at ease and my family and I just returned from our first ten day vacation that the boys say was our first "real" family vacation that did not include a stock show of some sort. I have to admit they are right and it only took 16 years since the last one (three months after our oldest was born). I also admit that spending a few days with people not in agriculture was quite an experience, the sights we saw, both scenery and people was extraordinary.

It has been quite the year! The contrast has been amazing for us here at the ranch from periodically shipping cows throughout the last 18 months, no forage in sight in June, preparing to feed hay for the first time in the twenty-five years since we purchased the Corona ranch, to walking knee high in grass on the west end and plenty of short-grass on the east end, and now not having to start the feed truck for cows until January, and finally planning on bringing in some female stockers for the first time in twelve years.

In perspective, it has been a wonderful year for us. The education from mother nature was quite humbling and has made us think of our resources from a different perspective. The experience has really brought me to a better understanding of what I have discussed with the "old timers" over the years and has given me more insight to the perspective they have told that I just did not understand until now.

Because of the winter moisture and our weed crop, we did not reduce any sheep numbers over the past year (they had been reduced previously) and we weaned our heaviest lambs (96 lbs.) since introducing the flock to Corona in 1989. We did have to reduce our cow inventory from 282 to 156, but were able to hold on to all 58 heifers this year to hopefully build up inventory if moisture will continue near normal this year.

The SWCRS Rancher's Roundtables were a great success with an average of a little over 36 people in attendance for each of our events. This year we will shake it up again and hold all our roundtables between March and July, then plan on having two "after the roundtable" symposiums in the fall to delve deeper into the educational aspects of two subjects to be decided later. If you have any ideas on subjects, please give me a call or shoot me a message.

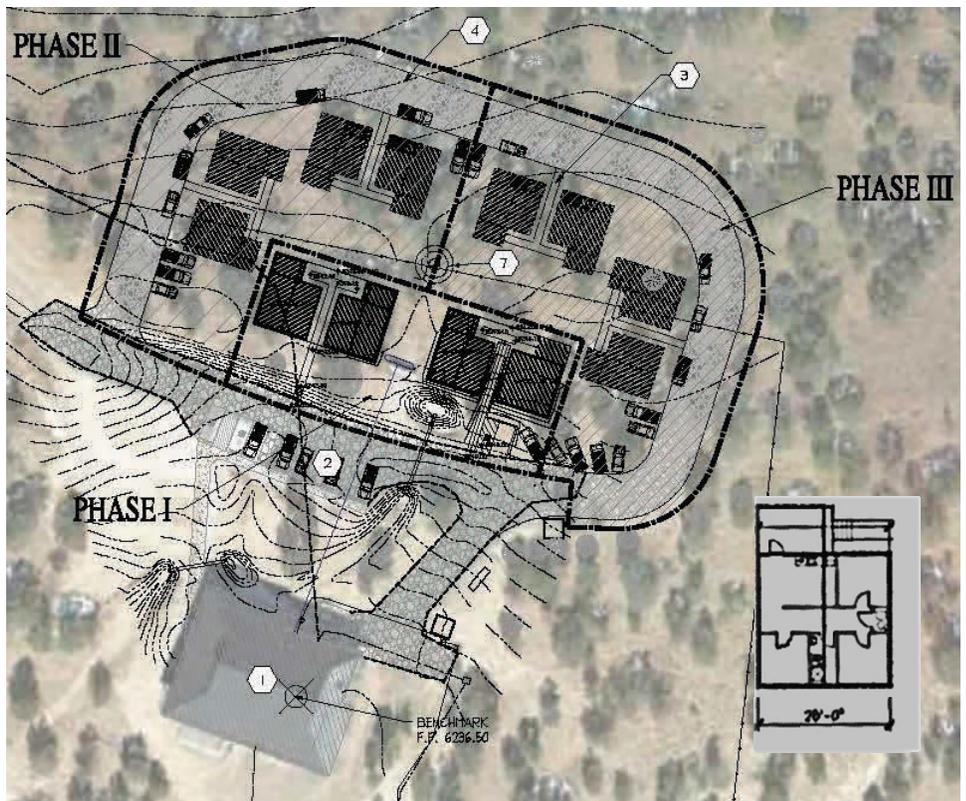
In closing, I hope to see you soon at one of our Rancher's Roundtable discussions or somewhere across the state. Don't forget to check out the Rancher's Series held throughout the northeast part of NM and some other offerings that have been planned across the state this year. If you would like further information about the CRLRC or SWCRS, please feel free to contact me at (505)849-1015 or shadcox@nmsu.edu.

Shad

The Southwest Center for Rangeland Sustainability to Add Cabins for Overnight Accommodations

With the support of last year's legislature we are currently in the design phase of adding multi-room cabins for overnight accommodations at the SWCRS. We will go out to bid for Phase 1 of the project on February 1st with construction to start at the end of March. Phase 1 (the closest four cabins to the SWCRS classroom) will likely have to be scaled down to only three cabins, however this will provide eight double occupancy rooms for 16 people, or if all goes right, we may be able to add the fourth cabin, bringing occupancy to 11 rooms or 22 people. Over the next few year's it is our goal to add an additional 8 cabins that will ultimately provide accommodations for 35 single occupancy or up to 70 double occupancy guests to fit the needs of a variety of internal and external educational, training, and associational events and meetings.

The vision of New Mexico State University, the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, the Agricultural Experiment Station, Cooperative Extension Service, and the Animal and Range Sciences Department for the SWCRS to provide state central venue for rangeland oriented research and education is coming to fruition because of your support and the support of state associations, agencies, local and county governments and the Leg-

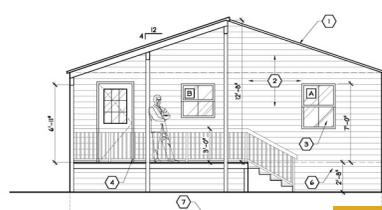
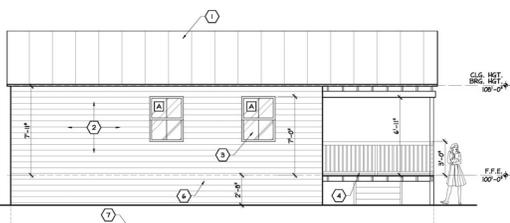


islative Finance Committee, in addition to the support provided by past and current local and statewide legislators and current and past Governors and Lt. Governors.

Local business and regional/national industry support has been instrumental in providing sponsorship to provide the events thus far held at the SWCRS and we

hope to continue to provide excellent events that are relevant to your interests throughout the future. Our future growth and commitment to education will depend on future support of all of these great people and organizations mentioned above. Opportunities will be available in the future for individuals and businesses to become a part of the success to the SWCRS as we develop funding opportunities for Phase II and III of the cabin implementation.

For more information on the SWCRS or renting the facility for your next event contact Shad at (575)849-1015 or email: shadcox@nmsu.edu.



Corona Calf Feedlot Performance



James Graves
Graduate Student
Ruminant Nutrition

This past year we had the opportunity for the steer calves from Corona to participate in a couple research trials at the Clayton Livestock Research Center (CLRC). In the last newsletter we presented some of the calf health work. After that project was completed, the Corona steers were utilized in another project at CLRC where they were intermixed with South Texas Sale barn cattle and cattle from other New Mexico ranches and fed to finish. Steers were sent to Clayton in early November weighing an average of 495 lbs. During the first 56 day receiving period the calves gained 2.8 lbs a day and did so with a feed to gain of 5.8 pounds. Their contemporaries in the same study from other New Mexico

ranches gained 2.9 lbs per day and converted at 5.1. Because Corona calves were then mixed with other cattle we cannot provide feed efficiency data for the rest of the feeding period but calves averaged 3.46 lbs per



day through the finishing period with a final body weight of 1,325 lb. This was likely a bit higher than required, but because they were intermixed with South Texas Sale barn cattle, animals were shipped when the average of the pen was considered finished. Hot carcass weights averaged 834 and were 89%

Choice, 8% Prime, with 5% Select. Of the choice cattle, 62% were premium choice. Calculated yield grade averaged 3.4. Non-corona cattle finished at 1,298 lb with a hot carcass weight of 817 lb. These calves graded 0% prime, 52% choice, and 47% select with a calculated yield grade of 2.54. The weekly averages of all cattle harvested in Texas that same week were 0.8% Prime, 50.8% Choice and 43.6% Select. Overall, we were pleased with how the carcass data turned out as most of our bull selection has been focused on maternal traits and it had been awhile since we were able to assess how this was influencing carcass merit.

For more information contact your county extension office or James Graves directly at (575)646-1750 or email: jrgraves@nmsu.edu.

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Event Reminders

Research Updates

Plants of the Week

Recent Photos

For more information or directions to the CRLRC contact:

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Directions to SWCRS: Two miles north of Corona on Hwy 54 turn east (bottom of overpass) on University Road (CO20) and travel 8 miles to ranch entrance. Then follow signs to SWCRS.

SWCRS Rancher's Roundtable

We provide a panel of experts, you provide the questions to get the answers that are important to your management decisions.

March 19th

Herd Health

Cow/Calf, Ewe/Lamb, Herd Sires and Horses

10:00 am to 3:00 pm, Lunch Provided

No Prior Registration or Fee

More information at www.corona.nmsu.edu

P.O. Box 392

934 County Line Road

Corona, NM 88318

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