

Lesson Plan 7.

Ranch Goals

Goals/Overview:

Know the importance of setting short- and long-term ranch goals that help guide ranch operations, develop priorities, and identify ranch management practices that can meet multiple ranch goals. Ranch goals create a foundation on which to build your RWQP. These goals should be broader than water quality and should capture factors such as production capacity, conservation, profitability, sustainability, quality of life, ranch succession, land use changes, and so on. Although some goals may not be directly related to water quality, the process of identifying ranch goals will help identify possible connections between water quality goals and other ranch goals.

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand types of goals common to California ranches and how goals motivate actions on a ranch.
2. Gain ability to discuss and decide upon priority goals with pertinent family members or other stakeholders.

Introduction/Hook:

- Discuss stories when goals were not realistic for various ranch projects or conservation practices.
- Water quality goals are often already part of the broad set of goals that motivate actions on a ranch, although such goals may not be commonly acknowledged as ranch goals.

Materials/Speakers:

- Invited speaker could be a UCCE Livestock Advisor or other speaker familiar with ranching operations and goals that motivate ranchers.
- Instructional video: “Ranch Goals—Worksheet 2” (5 minutes).
- Have printed copies of [Ranch Goals—Worksheet 2](#) from RWQP Template available.
- Provide attendees handouts of pertinent resources.

Time Allocated:

Allow 30 to 40 minutes (20 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for question/answer).

Procedures/Activities/Strategies/Questions:

- Open with a brief story or anecdote, welcome newcomers, and ask for outstanding questions or concerns.
- Present video: “[Ranch Goals—Worksheet 2.](#)”
- Introduce goal-setting practices, such as SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely) goals. (See the SMART goals guide in this lesson plan’s resources section.)
- Discuss “shoot-for-the-moon” goals that are difficult to achieve or unrealistic for their situation, but create long-term motivation.
- Brainstorm pertinent goals for individual ranches in small-group discussion and share with larger group once completed (15 minutes).
- Complete the Session Evaluation Form (appendix A).

Conclusion/Self-assessment:

- Ask participants to reflect upon unusual or surprising goals from individual ranches or family members.
- Have participants share stories of the process used to develop their goals.

Resources:

- Roche, L. M., T. K. Schohr, J. D. Derner, M. N. Lubell, B. B. Cutts, E. Kachergis, V. T. Eviner, and K. W. Tate. 2015. Sustaining working rangelands: Insights from rancher decision making. *Rangeland Ecology & Management* 68(5):383–389. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rama.2015.07.006>
- University of California. n.d. SMART goals: A how-to guide. https://www.ucop.edu/local-human-resources/_files/performance-appraisal/How%20to%20write%20SMART%20Goals%20v2.pdf

Next Steps/Future Lessons:

- Provide participants with copies of or access to the publications “[Guidelines for Residual Dry Matter on Coastal and Foothill Rangelands in California \(#8092\)](#)” and the [SoilWeb](#) in order to become familiar with these resources prior to Lesson Plan 8.