



How Can We Test Management at the Ranch Scale?

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Evaluating the economic impacts of grazing management at the ranch level requires the development of a ranch model. In order to accurately model the impacts on the ranch from changes in management requires a multi-year model in order to capture herd dynamics and forage and price variability. Such a model requires knowing the effects of different management practices on cattle and vegetation production by season. Impacts of a management change can be mitigated depending on the options available to the ranch. Important management variables that affect the economics of the ranch can be evaluated. The ranch model determines the profit maximizing choices available to the rancher and can incorporate different sources of uncertainty. While we know that not all actual decisions are made to maximize profit, it does provide a good indicator of which choice can be best. Managers can then use that information in deciding which choice best fits with their other business and personal goals.

2009. 62nd Society for Range Management Annual Meeting. Paper No. 21-5.