

# Tips for more profitable ranching

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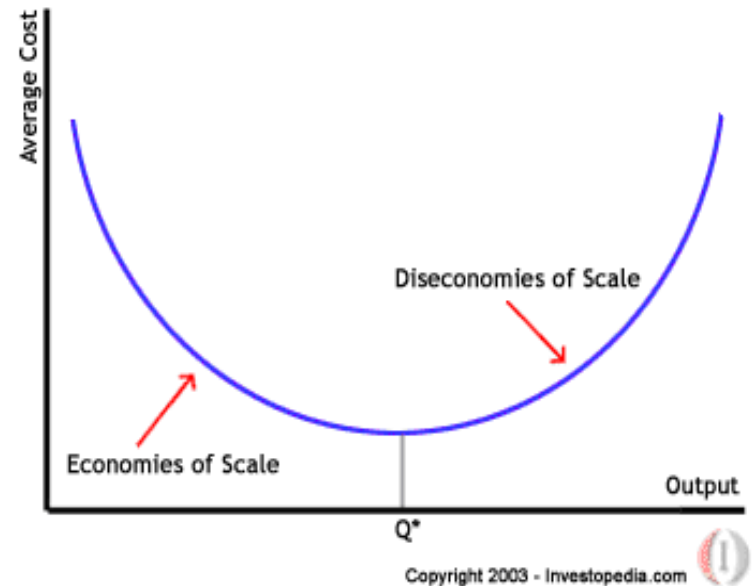
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# Challenges

- Weeds
- Laws and regulations
- Livestock and wildlife conflict
- Drought
- Grazing management strategies to enhance productivity
- Animal Health
- Public perception
- Rangeland conversion to other land uses
- Profitability

# Economies of scale

- Size matters
- Larger more sustainable.
- Larger herds are more cost effective
- Until optimal size is reached
- Cost increase beyond optimal sizes
- Unless there are other sources of income
- Monitoring is important



# Labor costs

- Reduce cost of labor
- Eg >600 cows, or cow and yearling, per worker.
- That reduces labor, housing, equipment and horse cost per cow.

# Improve gross margin.

- Total revenue – direct costs.
- Revenue depends on
  - Number of items sold
  - Price per unit item
  - Marketing is key
- Maximize return from each individual or a group of animals
- Direct cost depend on production efficiency
  - \$1.50 return rate for each \$ spend on direct cost e.g. feeds, supplements and healthcare products.

# Hay or grass

Grazing is cheaper than feeding hay

Grass bank

RDM

High plant diversity

Except in times where feeding hay  
a necessity



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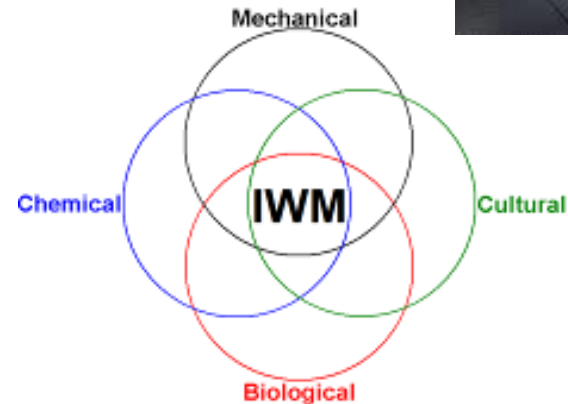
# Increasing carrying capacity

- Good grazing management – *Timing, Stocking rates; Grazing period; Type of animal grazed*
- Reduces need to feed hay.
- Match forage quality, availability with herd nutritional requirements
- Protein supplementation when grazing low quality forage
- Well distributed water point
- Pasture size
- Improve soil health
- Legumes



# Weed management

- Timing of weed management
  - Cost
  - Potential for success
  - Minimize reduction in carrying capacity
- Integrated Weed Management (IWM)
  - More effective
  - Cost effective





# Genetics

Bull selection is critical –

- Make sure it helps you reach your goal
- Quality of future replacement heifers
  - Calving ease
- A good culling program
  - Enhance uniformity among calves
  - Adapted herd to ranch conditions

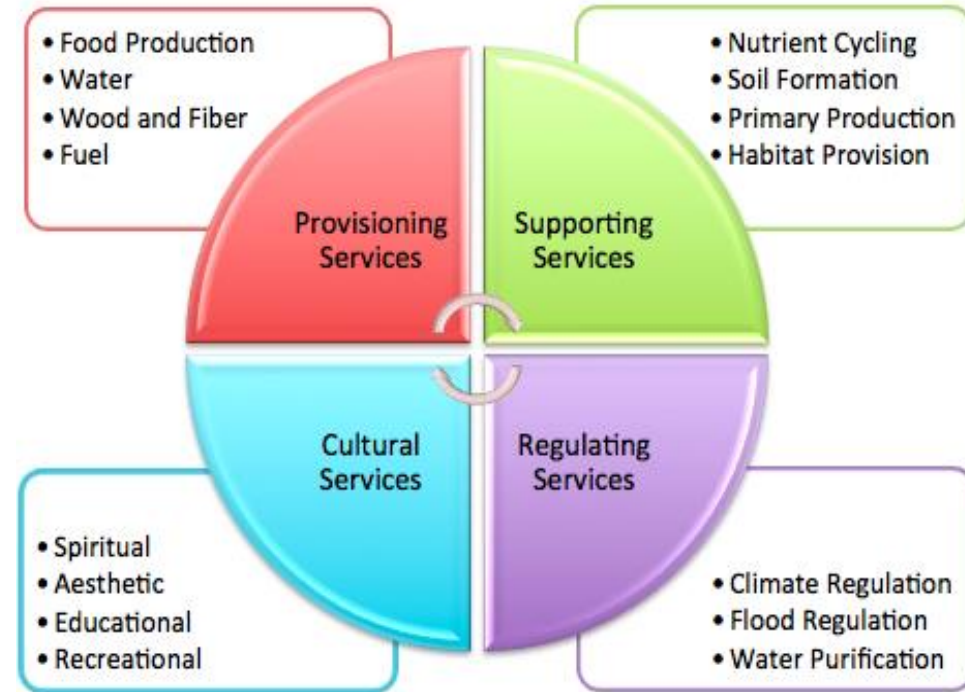
# Diversify enterprises

- Livestock crop mix
- Livestock and wildlife mix e.g. bees
- Different types of livestock
  - Cows, poultry, goats
- Agro-tourism
  - Nature-based tourism
  - Organized farm tours
  - Ranch stays
  - Public education opportunities (create allies?)



# Ecosystem Services Payments

- Ecosystem Services
  - *food,*
  - *water,*
  - *open space,*
  - *carbon sequestration,*
  - *recreational opportunities,*
  - *wildlife habitat*
- Ecosystem Service Payments
  - Interest
  - Caution too



Source: Millenium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005.

- Questions