



RANCH MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

THE CATTLE CALL
Newsletter for Alumni of the
TCU Ranch Management Program
Spring 2023

From the President, Matt McLelland '12

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I hope this finds you all coming out of winter with good moisture in the ground, or at least a good chance on the way! I want to start by saying how great it was seeing so many of you in Fort Worth at the Winter Gathering. The change in venue was very nice and the business meetings went well. The best part of the entire weekend was the alumni getting together to reconnect, rekindle, and make new friendships. Our network is still above and beyond any other alumni group, and that is something to be proud of. After seeing the strength of this alumni base, I truly am honored that you put your trust in me to take on this role as your Alumni President.

The Alumni Association Executive Committee and Board of Directors have been hard at it making sure we can serve our alumni, our current students, and our faculty/staff. I want to thank those that rotated out of their positions for the countless hours and commitment that they put into investing in this great program - Executive Committee members: Amanda Dyer, Jeff Mitchell, and Patrick Murray and Board of Directors members: Paul Hicks, Chad McCormick, and Bryan Morris. They were all very instrumental in everything that we have accomplished and I am thankful to have been alongside them these past two years. I want to welcome to the Executive Committee: Trevor Caviness, Jessica Cowden, Nadine McCadoo, and Zac Pogue and to the Board of Directors: Skyler Flake, Jeff Mitchell, and Robert Buchholz Jr., and thank them for their willingness to serve going forward.

This year's class is coming to an end quickly whether the students are ready or not! With Management Plans turned in and the last couple of field trips scheduled, they are finally seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. On May 11, our Alumni Association will gain a new group of alumni. I am confident they will go out and make us proud by representing the TCU Ranch Management Program in a manner we all expect them to. Congratulations to all of the men and women of the Class of 2023 for your hard work and dedication.

I want to finish by challenging you all with a few tasks: 1. As you all know, the headhunting firm along with the Director Search Committee have been diligently working on finding the right Director for our Program. This takes time and patience, so I ask that we all trust the process and offer our support, however they may need it. 2. The instructors are currently conducting interviews with prospective students for next years class and have met with some great candidates who they believe will be assets to the Ranch Management Program, as well as our industry. However, there are still spots available. I think we can all agree its not the number of "rear-ends in the seats," but the quality of the students accepted to the program that will bring TCU Ranch Management to even higher heights and prestige than it is already. That means it is our duty to RECRUIT!!

Thank you all again and hope to see you at the TCU alumni gathering at the TSCRA convention coming up!

Go Frogs!



Chris Farley
Assistant Director
Southwestern E & L S Professorship
j.farley@tcu.edu

Change is a Great Thing

Change is an inevitable part of everyday life. Some people reject it and some people embrace it. Change is something that is a part of ranching whether we visualize it or not. One of the greatest benefits of working at TCU Ranch Management is taking the five-week long field trips across five different regions of the country and numerous day trips. On each of these trips we get to see and hear new ideas the ranchers are utilizing. Some ranches are on the cutting edge of change and implementing technologies and some seem to be stuck in their ways. Fewer and fewer ranches are being passed on to their next generation without embracing these newer practices.

Are soils changing? Many ranchers and industry leaders are talking about *carbon sequestration* and *regenerative ranching*. Why? Because our soils show signs of degradation from the last 100 years of overgrazing. Current ranchers have inherited these soils and the question is, “How do we rebuild them or regenerate them to store more carbon?” In introduced forages, we can use cover crops to keep live roots in the soil year-round, keep the soils covered year-round, increase plant diversity, and increase organic matter in the soil. In native pasture, it is stock density, keeping soil covered, reducing invasive brush species with multi species grazing, and protecting your pollinators which help increase plant diversity.

The carbon credit contracts that we are hearing about in the country are paying the producers for their new regenerative practices, not for ranchers doing the same old practices. Are you using the same rotational grazing system on native grass that you learned in this program twenty years ago? If so, you would probably have multiple herds with fewer pastures. It is amazing to hear many of the ranchers explain their one herd multiple pasture rotational grazing plan with longer rest periods which reduces many other inputs. Labor and rising input costs are reduced by only having to check one herd, one pasture water, one mineral, and travel for supplementation. The pasture with longer rest is receiving more proper use with more time to recover from the grazing pressure. Higher successional plants thrive in this buffalo herd mimicking grazing plan.

Virtual fencing? We have all heard about these invisible boundaries you can put up in your yard to keep your dogs in and now this same technology is being used on livestock. Whether in big open range pastures of Wyoming or wheat fields of Texas, this virtual fence can be drawn from the comfort of your office on your laptop and changed daily. The livestock wear collars that communicate with GPS and reception towers. When the livestock reach the limit of the virtual fence, auditory stimuli emit from the collar. If livestock pass the fence limit, they receive a benign shock. I have seen the research on this technology with cost and it looks to be very promising. I also met a young man doing some of this research that said everything he uses to build these fences, he can currently buy at your local Tractor Supply.

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Change is a Great Thing cont'd

Water level sensing technologies...There are float valves now that can send signals to your phone if the water levels drop a certain percentage. Cameras can be placed on water troughs or water storage systems to monitor water levels. Yes, they have minimum monthly fees, but how many times do we drive to a pasture just to check water?

We saw some new style biodegradable protein tubs for supplemental feeding. What a savings in labor! Your labor force has changed, if you still have some.

MONDAY.com is a program more ranches are using with many employees and or absentee owners. It serves as a digital “to do list” for employers to keep track of tasks that need to get done. Managers can change the priority of tasks on a daily basis and verify that the job was completed correctly before moving on to the next task. All of this shows up on their phone. Does the next generation of employees respond to this form of communication better? You will have to ask your employees. We were told by a rancher, “If you are selling your cattle to the same buyer every year and think you’re getting a ‘premium,’ you are probably missing something.” That statement has served as a great food-for-thought for students.

How do you determine the best place to market your calves? We hear more and more producers every year joining these alliance programs. Has that become the norm now? LRP has been around for a while, but more and more producers are using this support program to protect their calve crop.

Change is a GREAT thing only if you accept that it is a reality of your business. How do you learn more about these changes if you don’t get to take the RM field trips every year? You spend more time in the trade show at TSCRA asking questions to the people that promote these products. You join the Texas Society of Range Management and listen to research. Find blogs that discuss ranching and all the topics listed above. Just networking with your neighboring ranches takes some effort but can return big benefits.

All of the above questions and statements warrant further consideration. Does every new idea fit every rancher? Probably not. But, if you are the person that reads this article and says *none* of this will work for me, the term “Sustainable Rancher” probably does not describe you.



TCU RM Alumni Roundup 2023 dinner, dance, and auction



Matt McLennan

Associate Professor

Houston L S & R Professorship

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Associations

It's spring and that brings a number of activities to us all. It's the time of year to be branding calves, turning out on graze-out, fertilizing small grains and very soon some Bermuda grass. Some may be turning out bulls and/or testing and preparing for bull turn-out. Hopefully some of you in the West and Northwest have received some rain or will soon. I am in East Texas with the class and over here we have been seeing some folks waiting on a dry enough day to be able to get around and do anything! In either case, the list of tasks we are faced with in this business goes on and on. We pride ourselves in our work ethic and determination, so we meet them head on and get them done! That all said, it is easy to get caught up in our work and forget that as a part of agriculture, we have an obligation and an absolute need to be involved in and support our industry organizations. I know some might say its hard to find the time, and it is. Some will say its not affordable and it is indeed a line-item expense that is not to be scoffed at; however, if you study all sides of the matter I think you'll find you need to make the time and that you can't afford not being involved.

We can become so involved in our day-to-day that we forget someone needs to represent us and "fight our fight" in our state's and nation's capitols. Agricultural producers account for less than 2% of our country's population. I know we are producing the food the other 98% eat, but if we don't take our story and our voice to our state and national legislators, they won't hear it! Our industry associations can use their collective membership through the support of all of us to do just that. They have the expertise and the knowledge of how to navigate the political rivers to get that done. For example, in the last month Texas Cattle Feeders Association and Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers were in Austin meeting with legislators about issues such as food labeling, cell cultured meats, and issues around producer's rights to operate. The NCBA or National Cattlemen's Beef Association has been in Washington recently defending another attempt at ending the Beef Checkoff; they have also been in conversation and involved in communication with legislators concerning the rejection of the most recent WOTUS Rule. These are just some examples of our industry associations at work. There are other organizations such as Texas Sheep and Goat Raisers, Texas Wheat Producers, Kansas Livestock Association, and Nebraska Cattlemen's Association just to name a few. They are all working to protect their members way of life in agriculture. It's imperative they have our support through membership and involvement. I don't intend to engage you in one side or the other of the issues I have listed above. You may disagree with me or even the stance of these organizations on the politics of these issues and that's ok! I'm just encouraging you to find and be involved with whatever industry association is supporting you and what's important to you. There are usually numerous benefits to being a part of these organizations. Many of them leverage their numbers to be able to offer more competitive health insurance or workman's comp insurance to their membership. Often times these associations will provide educational platforms and provide employee training for its producer members. Up-to-date market information is available through many of them, as well. I am only scratching the surface here of what our industry associations are doing for us. There is so much more and they need our support!

Lastly, I mentioned that I was not encouraging you to join any one association or pick one side or the other of any particular issue. Well, that's only partly true. If you received this issue of the Cattle Call and are reading this, you are most likely an alumni of TCU Ranch Management. I am absolutely encouraging you to get involved in our association! Come to Roundup! Call your classmates! Be involved and support the program. We have a fine association and we are educating and preparing the young people that have our future in their hands! Many thanks to all the alumni and everyone for reading this and listening to my rant! I look forward to seeing many of you at Cattle Raiser's in Fort Worth and again at Summer Gathering!

Announcements cont'd

Congratulations to **Tucker Brown '17** on receiving the 2022 Advocate of the Year from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

The award recognizes Brown for his creative use of storytelling across social media platforms, along with continuing his family's legacy as a sixth-generation cattle rancher.

<https://www.drovers.com/news/industry/texas-cattle-rancher-recognized-2022-advocate-year-cattle-industry-convention>



INSP has green-lit a fourth season of its cowboy competition series *Ultimate Cowboy Showdown*.

The new season of the series will feature the return of original series judge Trace Adkins along with top contestants from the first three seasons. Over the course of the season cowboy contestants will participate in individual and team challenges that put their skills to the test.

Quatro Houston, son of **Reagan Houston, III '84**, is a contestant.

<https://www.insp.com/shows/ultimate-cowboy-showdown/>

Message from Interim Director: Dr. Tim Barth

It is a great honor to be serving in the role of Interim Director at the TCU Ranch Management Program. As you may have heard, the search firm Kincannon and Reed (K&R) has been retained by TCU to recruit a leader to serve as the next Ranch Management Program Director. K&R started with a group of leaders in the field that numbered well over a hundred possibilities. This included many possible candidates recommended by TCU Ranch Management Alumni and members of the search committee. K&R has contacted over 50 individuals and have conducted preliminary and advanced interviews with a smaller group of highly qualified candidates. This group included applicants from both within and outside of Texas. The search committee has narrowed the applicant pool down to very small group of excellent candidates who will receive video interviews over the next couple of weeks. Based on these interviews we will then bring 3 or 4 candidates to the TCU campus for in-person interviews. We anticipate completion of the search by the end of April or early May with an announcement planned for shortly thereafter. This is an exciting time for the program as we look for the next leader who will both acknowledge the historical strengths of TCU Ranch Management and identify new opportunities for growth and strengthening the program in the future.

Sponsor Spotlight: AgriWebb



This edition's "Sponsor Spotlight" is [AgriWebb](#). As most of you know, in order to be a successful livestock business manager, you must look at all the different aspects of the business. AgriWebb is a wonderful tool used by businessmen and women across the world. When asked a variety of questions, this is what our friend Matt Shoup had to say about his employer, AgriWebb.

What is AgriWebb? AgriWebb is a holistic livestock management solution built to help ranchers run more productive operations by bringing everything into one platform. They allow ranchers to manage their livestock, grazing, and team in one place, making communication, data collection, and decision making easier than ever.

How does AgriWebb help specifically? AgriWebb makes digital record keeping approachable and easy. By starting with an interactive digital ranch map, ranchers can begin tracking their livestock, their forage rates, and even assign tasks to their team. As ranchers get more comfortable, they can begin to add an array of records including; feed, treatment, weights, sales, purchases, and breeding records. As customers add more data to their account, AgriWebb will begin building reports and insight dashboards to help them analyze their data. These insights show livestock feed efficiency, grazing and forage histories, and even a breakdown of on-ranch activities.

How did AgriWebb come about? Here's a great synopsis of our origin story:

<https://www.agriwebb.com/our-team/> AgriWebb was born out of empathy for just how hard it can be to be a farmer in today's world. Justin Webb, our original founder, experienced this pain first-hand during a generational shift in the management of "Eddington," his family's 150-year-old sheep and cattle farm, in 2014. Eddington, like 90 percent of sheep and cattle farms across the world, was primarily managed from experience and "trial and error" – pen and paper being the go-to record-keeping tool on the farm. Time-consuming double entry of records and "sifting through paper mountains" to meet compliance standards was the norm, and so was the practice of making critical business decisions based on the best guess available, not the best data-driven insights available.

What departments are utilized within your organization that we could expound on so that the reader knows a little bit more about the company? We have an array of departments that make-up a traditional SaaS (Software as a Service) company, but what's unique is that each department has representation with an agricultural background, whether they were farm kids, still run a cattle, sheep or mixed operation, or even went to school for agriculture. These departments include sales, marketing, ranch success, product management and engineering, and people & culture. We hang our hat on the customer service we provide. Many of our customers comment on the responsiveness of our team and the insight and guidance they can provide due to their backgrounds in agriculture. The coolest thing about AgriWebb, that is more company-wide, is the global aspect of our organization. We have team members in Australia, the United Kingdom, South Africa, and here in the United States. What's even cooler is we have customer representation in even more countries including Central and South America and the Oceania region.

Why partner with TCU Ranch Management? AgriWebb's mission is to equip ranchers with a solution that works as a team member on the ranch, providing guidance and support for better business decision-making. Our goal is to help ranchers run more productive businesses, leading to greater profits, increased operational efficiency, and improved sustainability, both environmentally and economically. We see the TCU Ranch Management program as a crucial organization within the industry that's producing the next generation of high-quality agricultural leaders. Our values align with the TCU Ranch Management organization in that we want to equip the next generation to succeed and drive our industry

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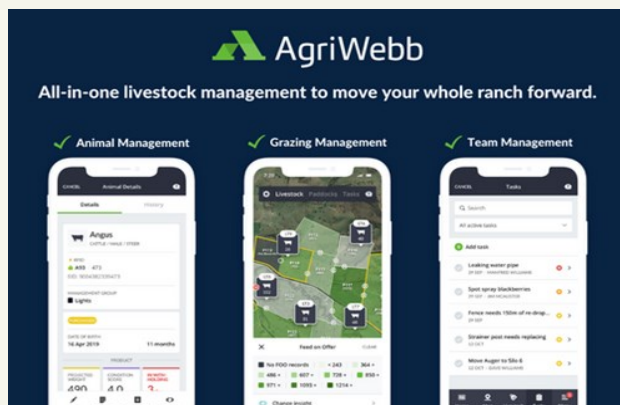
Sponsor Spotlight cont'd

What's the most important feature you offer that is crucial to a producer's bottom line? Or, what AgriWebb turns profit the most for the producer? Transparency. AgriWebb sheds light on which animals are driving a profit and which livestock ranchers are sinking dollars into. With feed and treatment inventories, customers can add feed and treatment items, allocate costs to each item, and then when applying a feed or treatment record to an animal, that cost will be allocated to an individual animal or herd of animals. While the animal is on-ranch or after it has been sold, customers can see a holistic breakdown of what was invested in the animal and how much they made on it. One of the biggest ways AgriWebb can make an impact is through some of its easiest functionality - keeping daily records. I was talking to a rancher the other day and he said the most impactful feature was the ability to build a feed and treatment inventory with costs associated with each item. As he feeds and treats his cattle, he makes records within AgriWebb that assign those costs to each individual animal. The different reports in AgriWebb have opened up his eyes to better understanding his business decisions, specifically in places where he can improve.

Tell us a little about yourself Matt. I'm a raised pig farmer turned cattle marketer who has found himself in the world of agricultural technology. My family runs a farrow-to-finish swine and cropping operation in northeastern Ohio. It's a family business that started with my grandfather and his brother, later expanding to include my dad, uncles and their children. We now produce over 70,000 hogs each year. On the side, I showed market cattle and swine projects at our county fair through 4-H. After graduating from college with a degree in Communications and Marketing, I worked for the *Certified Angus Beef*® brand for six years which included managing the brand's public relations efforts, trade advertising, partnerships and brand management for our distributor, retail and restaurant partners across the Caribbean. In my current role at AgriWebb, I find myself running AgriWebb's marketing efforts across the United States, engaging and collaborating with ranchers, industry partners and universities, telling the story of AgriWebb and the work we're doing with the industry to provide easy access to data.

What advice do you have for someone reading this interview? The only way we can continue to drive our industry forward is through experimentation and change. I think some of the most impactful people within the agriculture industry have embraced uncertainty and wore the hat of "early adopter." Whether it's adopting your first tech solution onto your operation or seeking out new handling techniques or grazing practices, the best way to get better is by identifying an area for improvement, coming up with a plan or test, implementing your plan, evaluating to see if it worked, and then making decisions on whether or not it worked and what are your next steps.

Matt Shoup
AgriWebb, US Marketing Manager
(330)465-0551



Alumni Spotlight

Name: Dr. Jeremy Echols '98

Current Employer: Vaquero Animal Health

Job Position/Title: Veterinary Practice Owner

Job Duties/Responsibilities: Equine lameness, sports medicine and dentistry, beef cattle consulting medicine and herd health, mixed animal medicine.

Prior Experience/Education: Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine: DVM, Tarleton State University: BS in Agricultural Engineering, TCU RM program. JS Echols LLC: ranching, welding, wild-cow catching and rock-n-roll band leader.

Involvement in Organizations/Clubs: Competitive shooting sports

TCU RM Reflection: TCU RM taught me a process for the analysis of a business and it's resources as well as the importance of networking, and what an incredible network we have access to as alumni. I'm very proud to be a member of the most influential fraternity in the beef industry.



Name: Jason Lane Harlow '98

Current Employer: Harlow Cattle Co.

Job Position/Title: Owner

Job Duties/Responsibilities: We trade feeder cattle for stocker and cow calf operators that are mostly based in Texas, Oklahoma, and the Southeast to feedyards based in the Texas panhandle, Kansas, Colorado and Nebraska. We also graze stocker on wheat and grass. We own a feed-yard called HHH Feeders in Kansas as well that specializes in all natural feeding.

Prior Experience/Education: TCU

Involvement in Organizations/Clubs: TSCRA board
TCU RM Reflection: One of the best decisions I ever made. I felt like I learned more in 9 months about business and return on investment than I did in my previous 4 years of undergrad. The friendships, the network were (and are) so much fun and valuable. The program also directed me in business ethics and the importance of the Western Code.

TCU
Ranch Management

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE

ALUMNI RECEPTION

Cocktail Hour

SATURDAY, MARCH 25TH
5:00 - 6:30 PM

Heavy Hors d'oeuvres and Cash Bar

CAST IRON RESTAURANT
OMNI FORT WORTH HOTEL
1300 HOUSTON STREET
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102

TCU
Ranch Management

SPONSOR EVENTS

FRIDAY, MARCH 24TH
5:00 PM - OPEN BAR
MERCK BOOTH 813

SATURDAY, MARCH 25TH
9:00 AM - MERCK BOOTH 813
BLOODY MARY & MIMOSA BAR

10:00 AM - ROOM 201
THE CARBON CONVERSATION
NICOLE BUCKLEY BIGGS, PHD, AGRIWEBB

5:00 PM - OMNI FORT WORTH HOTEL,
CAST IRON RESTAURANT
TCU RANCH MANAGEMENT ALUMNI RECEPTION

Thank you to our loyal sponsors

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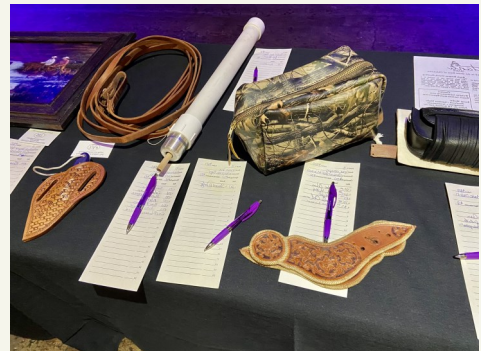
*Cowboy: Ag Texas, AgriWebb, Big Bend Trailers,
Boehringer Ingelheim, Elanco, Land O'Lakes Purina,
Livestock Nutrition Center,
RanchBot Monitoring Solutions*

Alumni Reception RSVP link <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/tcu-ranch-management-alumni-reception-cattle-raisers-convention-expo-tickets-526788718237?utm-campaign=social&utm-content=attendeeshare&utm-medium=discovery&utm-term=listing&utm-source=cp&aff=escb>



TCU RM Alumni Roundup 2023 morning session

TCU RM Alumni Roundup 2023





- **March 24-26: TSCRA Cattle Raiser's Convention & Expo**, Fort Worth, TX
- **March 25: TCU RM Alumni Reception**, Omni Hotel/Cast Iron Restaurant, Fort Worth, TX, 5:00p.m-6:30p.m.
- **April 10-14: KS/OK field trip**
- **April 25-26: Hemphill Co. Beef Conference**, Canadian, TX
- **May 11: TCU RM Graduation**, Fort Worth, TX
- **June 20-22: FCA Convention & Trade Show**, Marco Island, FL
- **July 10-14: Texas FFA Convention**, Dallas, TX
- **July 21-22: Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association Convention & Trade Show**, Norman, OK

TCU Ranch Management Alumni Association, Inc. Executive Committee and Board of Directors

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Treasurer Elect: Zac Pogue '07

(580)467-6025 zac@orangeconnection.org

TCU RM Alumni and Family Summer Gathering 2023



Details coming soon!!

Contact John Haley '15 haleyjph@gmail.com (806)255-0574



TCU RM Alumni Association Generously Supported By:

Capital Farm Credit, Compass Ag Solutions,
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Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association

Ag Texas, Big Bend Trailers, Boehringer Ingelheim, Elanco,
Land O'Lakes Purina, Livestock Nutrition Center, RanchBot

For sponsorship opportunities, please contact **Jessen Tucker Cowen '13**
jtcowen89@gmail.com (940)203-1893

WHO DID WHAT:

- mail: TCU Box 297420, Fort Worth, TX 76129 OR
- call: (817)257-7145 OR
- email: ranching@tcu.edu

Grad Year _____

Name _____

NEW ADDRESS/PHONE/EMAIL

Address _____

City _____ State/Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

E-Mail _____

JOB CHANGE

Company _____

Position _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Zip _____

Work Phone _____

Work E-Mail _____

WEDDING

Spouse's Name _____

Date Married _____

BIRTH

Baby's Name _____

Date Born _____



Thank You!!!

We are pleased that so many of you take advantage of this form to indicate change of address, marriage, birth, or job.

You are helping us keep up with you and that's what we want to do!



As a reminder, due to the rising cost of postage, printing, and budget cuts, **Cattle Call will ONLY be sent via email.**

You are able to view past issues on the TCU RM website [https://cse.tcu.edu/ranch-management/alumni/cattle-call-](https://cse.tcu.edu/ranch-management/alumni/cattle-call-newsletter.php)

[newsletter.php](https://cse.tcu.edu/ranch-management/alumni/cattle-call-newsletter.php) or <https://www.facebook.com/TCU-Ranch-Management-269381929485>

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