

Cattle Handling with Dogs

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Babcock Ranch - 90,000 acres = 20,000 acres improved pasture, 70,000 acres rough.

Why we use dogs

- We always have control of the cattle.
- Reduces labor; we can gather big pastures with less men.
- Reduces capital costs; fewer fences, penning lanes, and wings.
- Reduces stress in cattle.
 1. We can walk cattle to the pens.
 2. We can ride out pairs in the pasture; this saves miles of traveling.

What kind of dogs do we use?

- Florida cur dog – We want dogs that go up to the head of the bunch and stop cattle.
- No Healers – Healers and shepherds go to the back and push cattle.
- No Australian shepherds.

What are dog broke cattle?

- Cattle that bunch up when they see dogs (Gregarious instinct).
- Cattle that will be lead around with a man in front with dogs.

How to expose cattle to dogs

- Start on weaned heifers.
- Start on cows when they are dry. Use smaller pastures away from cow pens.
- Best advice: Hire someone reputable to get started.

Weaning heifers

- Replacement heifers learn while on their mothers.
- Give weaned heifers plenty of time to bawl out before exposing to dogs.
- Go slow; don't try to do too much at once.
- Always end on a good note when the cattle are calm and standing still.

How to start dogs

- Always start a puppy with older dogs, only one young dog at a time.
- Don't start young dogs on young unbroken heifers.
- Start young dogs on dry cows instead of pairs. Less fight and dogs circle better.

General rules!!

- Dogs can never bark going ahead, from time they leave your horse until they get to the bunch.
- No catch dogs.
- No hog hunting during cow gathering.
- Not everyone on crew brings a dog; too many dogs won't work.
- Don't tell another man's dog what to do.

Notes: