



"I love the land, and I love our life on the land. Cattle and sheep are amazing animals - they can take grass and convert it into meat, clothes, leather and a number of other commodities that people take for granted."

-Dave Eliason
Box Elder County, Utah

RanchingTruth.com

About Us

We at Ranching Truth are a collection of ranchers, cowboys and agriculture professionals who have turned our passions into livelihoods to earn a living for our families and feed the world.

Contact Us

Phone: 575-415-8929

Email: info@ranchingtruth.org

There are many regions in the United States where authentic cowboys live off the land, care for their animals. These pockets of the true country life can be found from Florida to California and throughout the rich heartland in states like Nebraska. So next time you are looking for a reason to get back to your roots, look outside the big city life. You might be surprised what you find nearby.

'The working rancher today is caught between two worlds, the world they want to maintain and the lifestyle they want to maintain and the fact that they're dealing with a real product that is manipulated...by all kinds of external influences that they have no control over.'



The traditional working cattle ranch faces a number of pressures: the shifting of families and matriarchs/children taking over, cattle prices, water rights, land use and competition from larger cattle operations. Profitability is a major reason that smaller cattle ranches are struggling to make ends meet. In 1980, the rancher received an average of 63 cents of every dollar spent on beef but by 2009 that number had dropped 20 percent, to 43 cents of every dollar.

Many of the U.S.'s family-owned working cattle ranches are disappearing or struggling to survive. Centered around Texas, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, New Mexico, Hawaii and Arizona, half a million ranching operations have been eliminated from the U.S. since 1980, a decline of 41 percent. The loss of ranches in the U.S. accelerated in 1996 and an average of 12,000 ranching operations are lost each year.



The Lifestyle Behind the Business

The Lifestyle Behind the Business

www.ranchingtruth.org



Throughout the 20th century, from Teddy Roosevelt to Larry McMurty, writers have lamented the passing of the American Cowboy. Yet cowboys are still out there, tending to daily ranch chores, coming together with neighbors to brand calves, throwing a loop at weekend roping, or exercising a cutting horse. Those looking for a mythical figure need to leave the urban world and view the West anew. They will find a ranching lifestyle in which tradition and innovation blend as men and women sustain a deeply rooted heritage of raising cattle and horses. The ranch life is more than an occupation, but a love and custom ranchers have, for not only preserving, but also conserving their land for generations to come.

A New Mexican rancher, shares his insight into ranching and what the life means for him. <http://nationalcowboymuseum.org/explore/the-ranching-tradition/>

The cowboy is the symbolic icon of American western culture and dates back more than two centuries. Today, being a cowboy means living the ranching lifestyle. Cattle operations are the largest single segment of American agriculture. More than 1 million beef producers in the U.S. are responsible for more than 94 million head of beef cattle. There is a vast number of sheep, goats and horses that are raised in rural America. With all of that livestock to manage, the cowboy way of life is still essential to American society. While most of us only see cowboys in the movies, there are regions in the US where cowboy culture is still alive and well.

Living the cowboy life starts at an early age for most. Working cattle, goats or sheep builds responsibility and character in children. Many cowboys in the west raise their animals on the open range, where constant checking and nurturing is a necessity. While raising and selling livestock is a business for all cowboys, the memories and enthusiasm for animal husbandry isn't for sale. Not all cowboys ride horses. While you find most images and stories about cowboys working cattle from horseback, there are many ranches that work cattle daily and do not own a single horse. By using a sorting stick, these cowboys work through the cattle and pen only those that need attention. Like ranchers everywhere, cowboys care about the state's natural resources. It is not uncommon for these men and women to spend a week or more herding cattle from mountain range to mountain range to prevent them from causing damage to fragile ecosystems by staying in a single area too long.



In a career field where the average person performing the job is 3rd, 4th or more generation, and started working beside their parents about the time they could walk, there are a lot of ways you can describe the customs cultures and life styles of the Rancher and Cowboy. I think “honorable” sums up what we mean by the term cowboy and its appeal in this modern world. There are still real working cowboys making their living horseback, tending the land and cattle. Doesn't mean they are always perfect, but as a group, they are fiercely independent, have real goals and do meaningful work. In America, where 90% of the population live in urban areas, we find cowboys hard to see from the road. However, that does not lessen the appeal of the cowboy mystique and the cowboy way. People are looking for something real. They look for heroes. The cowboy lifestyle is real and people understand the difference between work that matters, people who are honorable and the imposters of everyday life.

“Our Farmers and Ranchers deserve praise not condemnation; and their efficiency should be cause for gratitude, not something for which they are penalized” President John F. Kennedy