



# Fall Feed or Fuel Load

*What's a prudent sheep rancher to do?!*

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# Road Map



Production Systems



Conserve forage for  
fall/winter grazing?

Or graze it before it  
burns?



Our Approach





# Fall Lambing vs. Spring Lambing

*Why production systems matter...*

Fall Lambing



Spring Lambing



# Nutritional Demand and Production Systems

- Breeding ewes have two peaks in nutritional demand:
  - At flushing (2~4 weeks before breeding) and breeding.
  - At late gestation and lactation
- Breed selection is driven by many factors (markets, climate, etc.)
- Unlike the Central Valley, we get too much precipitation to raise fine wool sheep (which means we can't lamb in the fall).

Production System	Flushing & Breeding Forage	Lambing Forage
Fall Lambing	Springtime Rangeland Forage	Alfalfa Stubble
Spring Lambing	Irrigated Pasture & Supplemental Grain	Springtime Rangeland Forage



# Nutritional Demand and Production Systems

Production System	Post Weaning (Dry Ewes)	Early Gestation (Dry Ewes)
Fall Lambing	Available for Targeted Grazing: Spring/Summer	
Spring Lambing	Available for Targeted Grazing: Mid-Summer	

- Post-weaning and early gestation nutritional demands are much lower.
- Dry ewes can be pushed nutritionally – we can use them to graze dry forage (aka, fuel load).





# What does this mean for FMSC?

- We use a conservative stocking rate to make sure we have enough forage in the late fall (even if it doesn't rain).
- We have a very short window (75~80 days) in the summer when our sheep are available for fuel reduction grazing.
- Without targeted grazing as a revenue stream, we have to optimize reproduction.






# Putting this into practice...



- We trade winter/early spring forage for strategic summer fuel load reduction.
- Our landowner partners own ~300 acres of annual rangeland west of Auburn.
- We collaboratively plan our summer grazing to modify fine fuels in critical locations:
  - Roadsides
  - Downhill from structures
  - N/NE of structures
  - Between the community and potential ignition sources



Legend

 BOR

Hidden Falls  
Regional Park

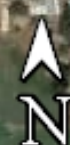
## Blue Oak Ranch

Auburn, CA

Grazed Parcels

Google Earth

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3000 ft

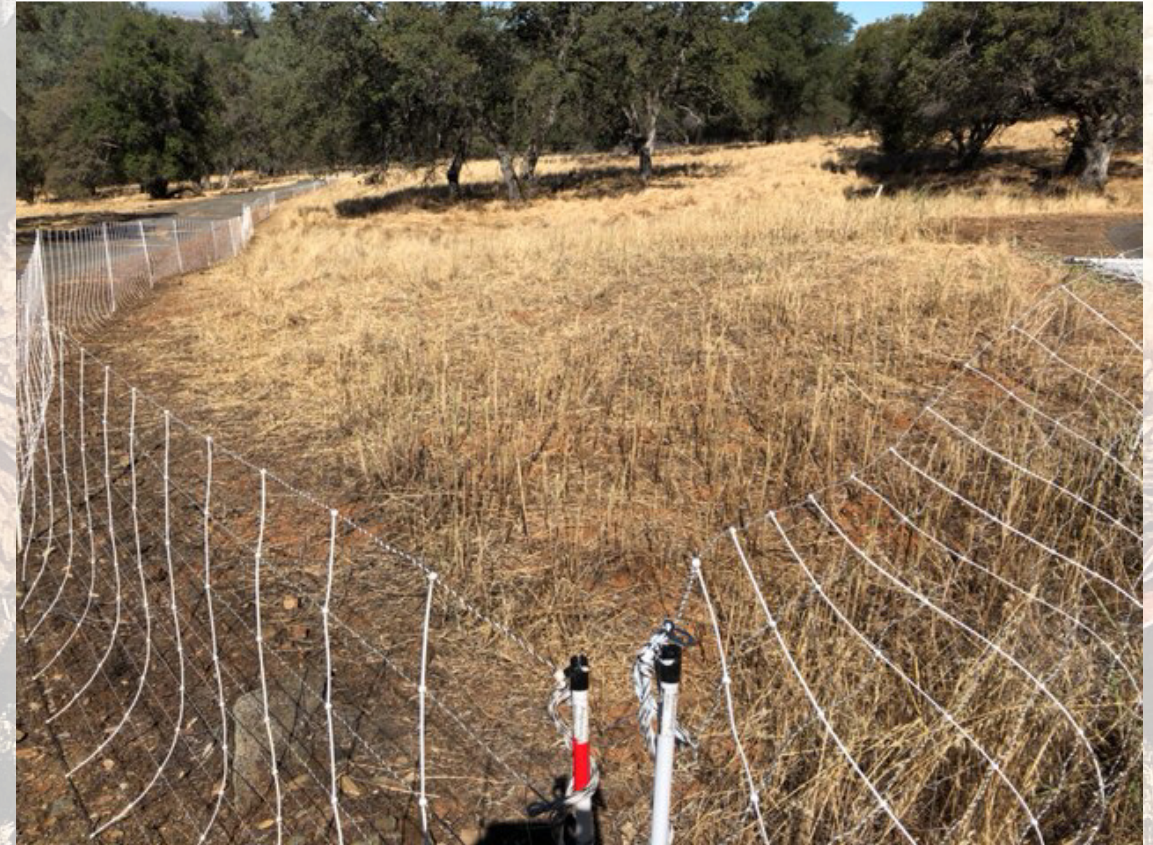


# Before and After...

Image Name: heredia culdesac-2018-Jun-18 point  
GPS co-ordinates: 38.956231,-121.183065  
Date: Jun 18, 2018 at 9:36:11 AM PDT  
Direction: 275 N



Image Name: heredia culdesac-2018-Jun-23 plot 2  
GPS co-ordinates: 38.956230,-121.183067  
Date: Jun 23, 2018 at 9:57:56 AM PDT  
Direction: 275 N





# Before and After...

Image Name: claude lower corral-2018-Jul-24 plot 2

GPS co-ordinates: 38.959788,-121.180117

Date: Jul 24, 2018 at 8:56:05 AM PDT

Direction: 85 N



Image Name: claude lower corral-2018-Jul-30 point

GPS co-ordinates: 38.959846,-121.179970

Date: Jul 30, 2018 at 8:39:23 AM PDT

Direction: 46 N





# Questions?

