



LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT

Founded in 1990, CCF is a Namibian non-profit incorporated association dedicated to the long-term survival of the cheetah and its ecosystems.

CCF VISION

To see a world in which cheetah live and flourish in co-existence with people and the environment.

CCF MISSION

To be an international centre of excellence concerning cheetah conservation, and multi-disciplinary research and education programmes; working with all stakeholders to achieve best practice in conservation and management.

CCF's activities include conducting international research, conservation and education programmes to ensure the survival of the cheetah for future generations.



Predator conflict resulting from livestock loss is one of the greatest threats facing the survival of predators throughout much of the world today. Namibian farmers have demonstrated a willingness to adapt farming practices that incorporate the existence of predators on farmlands. Approximately 75% of Namibia's wildlife and 95% of the country's cheetah share the farmlands with farmers. The survival of much of Namibia's wildlife, including the cheetah, therefore lies in the hands of farmers.

All predators are opportunistic and will take advantage of an easy catch. Sound livestock and wildlife management is therefore key in reducing conflict with predators. Ultimately, every farmer that puts livestock on the African veld is responsible for the survival of that livestock.

HOW CAN I REDUCE LIVESTOCK LOSSES?

The CCF staff works with farmers to discuss livestock management techniques that help reduce livestock losses and protect predators. Some techniques include:

CALVING KRAALS:

Young livestock (ie: lambs, kids and calves) are the most vulnerable to predation. If these young livestock can be protected, losses will decrease and weaning rates will be improved. For calves, protection for the first, second and third months is the most important. For goats and sheep, it is recommended to kraal the young until they are able to travel with the flock.

HERDERS:

Herders protect smallstock by being a deterrent for predators. Herders also can keep herds together and can guide the herd to grasses. A full-time herder, together with a livestock guarding animal, is the best team for protecting livestock.

GUARDING ANIMALS:

Using livestock guarding animals is a key livestock management tool. In Namibia, both dogs and donkeys are used as livestock guardians. One or two donkeys placed in a herd have proved themselves efficient at chasing away predators. The concept to use dogs to protect livestock is not new. However, a farmer must consider how to select the proper guard dog for his/her herd. What predators will the dog need to defend against? What function has the breed been developed for? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the breeds and their sizes? Can proper care be provided? (i.e. Is there commercial dog food available and is there access to a veterinarian?)



“ Farmers hold the cheetah's future in their hands. Together we must find viable predator-friendly farming solutions. ”

**-DR. LAURIE MARKER,
CCF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**





BREEDING SEASONS:

Where breeding seasons are uncontrolled, young livestock will be difficult to monitor and protect. It is preferable to have reproduction controlled to assist in easier monitoring and record keeping and to increase livestock health and population. Controlling breeding seasons means that many females will give birth at the same time and hence a large portion of the herd will be alert to predators and most of the young will be ready to join the herd at the same time.

WILDLIFE SPECIES:

A healthy population of game on a farm can help alleviate predator problems by providing the predator with a more natural prey. Predators, however, are opportunistic and, without proper management, livestock can still be lost due to predation.



KRAAL STRUCTURES:

Kraals can be vital in creating a barrier against predators. The height and material of the kraal are important. Can predators slip under kraal strands? Can they easily climb over? Having a poorly constructed kraal, or a kraal that isn't regularly repaired, is like leaving your house unlocked for thieves

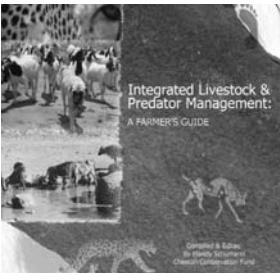
SUSTAINABLE RANGE MANAGEMENT:

If grazing is over-utilised, farming, in all likelihood, will fail. A lack of proper grazing is, in many cases, the most important reason for low fertility in cows. Efforts to manage and conserve grazing should be a priority of every farmer.



PREDATOR IDENTIFICATION:

Solutions for livestock losses will only be effective if the correct problem is targeted. The collection of accurate information when the livestock loss occurs is critical if an informed decision is to be made and the correct steps implemented. For example, a cheetah typically bites on the throat and a leopard on the back of the neck. When a farmer knows and understands the predators in his/her area, he/she can better protect their livestock. Do farmers know the different predators and their habits or behaviours? Are the farmers skilled at identifying tracks? This information, coupled with livestock management techniques, can greatly reduce livestock losses due to predation.



PUBLICATION DISTRIBUTION

Extension visits to farming associations and conservancy meetings indicated the need for a concise and practical information guide that could be given to farmers in need of livestock and predator management information. In response to this demand, CCF compiled the book "Integrated Livestock and Predator Management: A Farmer's Guide." The book is distributed free to farmers around the country. The CCF also published the book "Cheetah Survival on Namibian Farmlands" and distributes both the English and Afrikaans version of this book to farmers across Namibia. Both books are also distributed and used in other cheetah range countries.

COURSES AND INFORMATION

The CCF staff visits farms, agricultural shows, conservancies and events year round to help farmers reduce predator conflict and teach predator identification and livestock management techniques that enable farmers to reduce losses and live side by side with predators. The CCF also hosts courses at the CCF Centre every year and encourages farmers from around the country to attend.



For more information on CCF farm talks and presentations, contact the CCF office.



CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND

PO BOX 1755 PHONE +264 (0)67 306225
 OTJIWARONGO FAX +264 (0)67 306247
 NAMIBIA E-MAIL CHEETA@IAFRICA.COM.NA

WWW.CHEETAH.ORG