



INTRODUCTION

Farming alongside wildlife can be challenging for many farmers. However, protecting one's livestock can greatly reduce livestock losses to carnivores and can be a valuable long-term solution to conflict with wildlife. One very effective tool for this purpose is livestock guarding dogs (LGDs). This booklet explains what a LGD is, how they work, and how to care for them so that your LGD can protect your livestock effectively.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD LGD?

- Over 15kg
- Healthy
- Well fed
- Local, mixed breeds (e.g. Tswana dogs)
- Sterilised
- Good bond with livestock
- Well monitored

ON AVERAGE
BOTSWANA FARMERS
save P15,800
WORTH OF LIVESTOCK EVERY YEAR
AFTER GETTING A LGD

Information from CCB's national LGD study (Horgan, 2015)

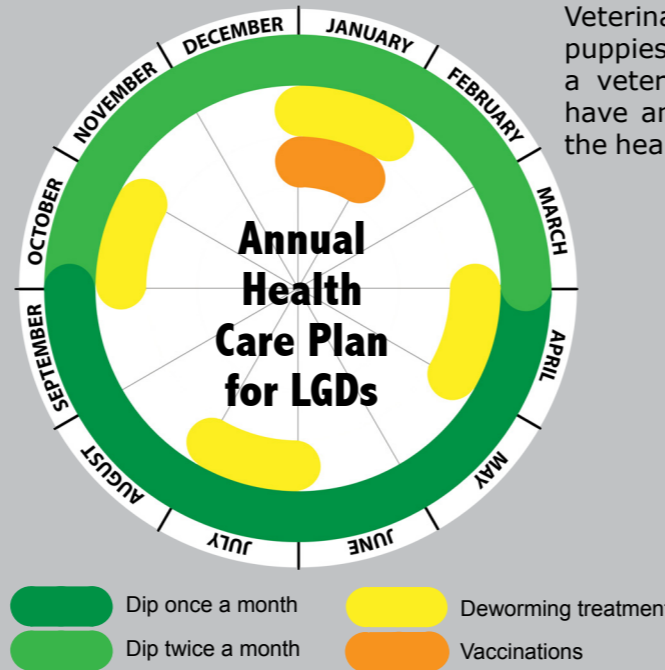
HOW DO LGDs WORK?

LGDs are dogs that live with livestock herds permanently and protect them from carnivores. Dogs help protect a herd by patrolling, barking, scent-marking and even chasing carnivores that may be threatening livestock. LGDs are most effective guarding goats and sheep, however, some farmers have used them to protect cattle and game animals as well. LGDs are most effective against medium to small carnivores such as cheetahs, jackals, caracals and leopards.

HEALTH CARE

Keeping your dog healthy is the most important part of owning a LGD. Dogs must be checked daily for any signs of illness or injury and the full array of veterinary medicine is recommended for all working dogs as they run a higher risk of injury, catching diseases and parasites.

Veterinary care differs between puppies and adults. Consult a veterinarian or CCB if you have any questions regarding the health or care of your LGD.



ONGOING TRAINING

Regular monitoring and ongoing training of a LGD is needed to ensure that problems do not develop. Additionally, the introduction of new animals and people to the LGD must be done carefully as LGDs can sometimes react aggressively to unfamiliar people and animals.

UNWANTED BEHAVIOURS

LGDs need to be monitored regularly for unwanted behaviours. Undesirable behaviours should be rectified as quickly as possible. Verbal reprimands are enough to show the dog they have done something wrong. Do not hit the LGD or use unnecessary force as this can cause aggression in a dog or damage the bond between the dog and its owner.

Undesirable Behaviours



“I no longer worry about losing my goats to predators. With pleasure I tell you that this dog is doing well.”

Batshedi Tsae
 - Ghanzi Farmer



TROUBLESHOOTING

Monitoring and controlling behavioural problems in your dog is the only way to ensure your LGD will remain effective and trustworthy throughout its life. If unwanted behaviours cannot be corrected with training, LGDs need to be removed from the herd and replaced, however most problems are easily rectified with training. With guidance and monitoring, LGDs will become a trusted and valued part of your farming practice.

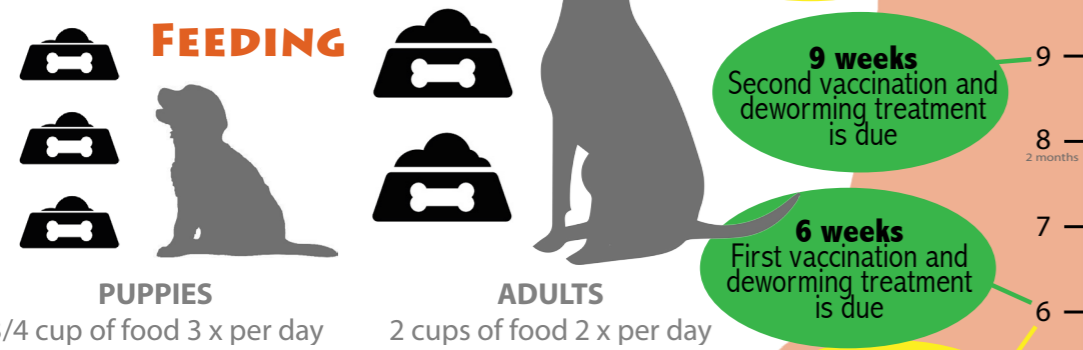
The Three Basic Rules of LGD Training

- LGDs are not pets**
 LGDs should not be patted and should always be with the livestock. Always feed LGDs in the kraal
- Praise a good dog**
 Use verbal praise or check them for ticks as positive rewards for when the LGD is doing a good job
- Keep an eye on them**
 LGDs must be monitored and reprimanded immediately if they are misbehaving

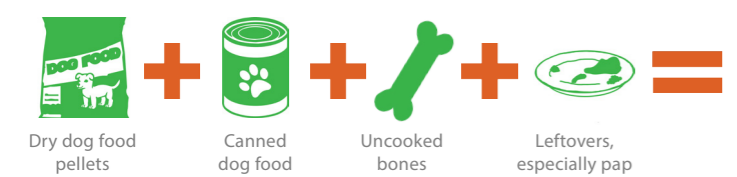


PUPPY PLACEMENT AND TRAINING

The first few months of a LGDs life are crucial to their development. When choosing a LGD, be sure to select healthy puppies, preferably local, mixed breeds with smooth short coats and avoid those that are overly shy or aggressive. In the kraal, puppies need access to clean drinking water and a shelter where they can escape if the livestock become too aggressive. LGDs need to be with livestock at all times to develop the LGD-livestock bond which is crucial to success. Once the puppy is 10 weeks old it can start going out with the livestock (supervised) for an hour or two in the afternoons. As the dog gets larger and stronger and can keep up with the herd better, it can go out for longer periods until around 4 months of age when it should be going out with the livestock for most of the day.



A balanced diet is best Combine any of these



CHEETAH CONSERVATION BOTSWANA

Established in 2004, Cheetah Conservation Botswana (CCB) is a local non-government organisation addressing threats to the long term survival of the national cheetah population. Using scientific research to inform its community outreach initiatives, CCB works with affected communities to promote coexistence with carnivores.

For more information about CCB's LGD Programme including more detailed training booklets or information about our placement programme, please contact us.

CCB's livestock guarding dog programme has helped hundreds of farmers from all across the country grow their farming enterprises by reducing their livestock losses. As part of our programme, CCB provides trained LGD puppies to farmers experiencing conflict with cheetahs in the Ghanzi District, as well as providing support services to farmers with LGDs, including free veterinary care.



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LIVESTOCK GUARDING DOGS

AN INTRODUCTION TO PLACEMENT, TRAINING AND CARE



PROMOTING COEXISTENCE