

Predator Identification; detailed information to help in the correct identification of predators and to determine the accurate causes of livestock deaths.

'Spot the Difference'; a colour leaflet which distinguishes the many differences between the cheetah and leopard. Available in English or Setswana.



'Spirit of the Kalahari' DVD; a 30 minute drama/documentary featuring two farmers who use very different methods to control predators on their land. Setswana dialogue, with English or Setswana narration.



PREDATOR-SAFE LIVESTOCK FARMING

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT
TO DETER PREDATORS
& PROTECT LIVESTOCK

Not only is the indiscriminate killing of predators (by shooting, trapping or poisoning) a threat to endangered species and the environment, it is only a very short term remedy for the farmer - rather than a long-term cure. The removal of predators simply creates an empty territory for others (possibly problem predators) to move into, prolonging the costly cycle of predator/livestock conflict. The gradual loss of predators can result in disruption to entire natural processes. Wild game population expansions can lead to greater competition for limited grazing and higher instances of spreading disease. Poisons can also contaminate soil and ground water. This wholesale deterioration of land, eventually no longer able to support crops nor livestock, can be avoided.

Contact us to obtain any of the resources for farmers advertised in this leaflet, or if you wish to receive a consultation about introducing livestock management practices into your farm.

All these services are available to farmers free of charge.

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Why have Livestock Management Plans?

Livestock management can greatly reduce losses to predators. At the same time, farmers can improve livestock health and quality, thereby increasing value and profits. Unlike wild game, domestic animals such as sheep, goats and cattle are slow and less alert. This can make them easy prey for opportunistic or scavenging predators and if it becomes too easy, some predators can turn into habitual livestock killers. Livestock therefore needs to be protected and well managed.



By making it difficult for predators in the area to take livestock and by becoming good managers, farmers can reduce livestock losses, save time and money, and enjoy greater success. This leaflet points to some of the best methods available to deter predators and protect livestock.

What are the components of Livestock Management?

The key elements of a good livestock management plan include the use and awareness of:

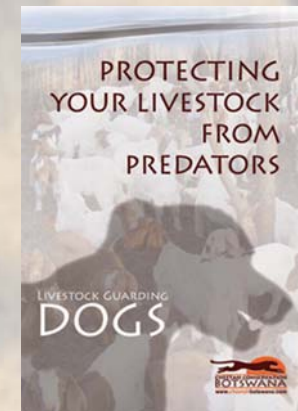
- **kraals**, which play a vital role in protecting livestock. There are several designs and they can be constructed in various ways. When constructed properly, they keep predators out and are most effective when located close to human habitation.

- **visual barriers and fencing**, which together create an obstacle and remove the opportunity for predators to see livestock, blocking some of the stimulus that triggers predator hunting behaviour. Swing gates can be used to reduce the number of holes dug under fence lines, through which predators often gain access to farms. Hinged at the top, they allow access for digging animals such as warthogs, porcupines and armadillos, but deny access to predators, which are unable to recognize the gates.

- **trained herders**, that go out with livestock into the veld, are extremely effective at reducing livestock losses. Monthly incentives to reward good herding practices will ensure reliable performance.

- **livestock guarding animals** are a good first line of defence and as a supplement to other methods of non-lethal predator control. The proper introduction of a puppy into a goat or sheep farm is critical to success, but the results can be worth waiting for! Guard dogs protect a herd by patrolling, barking, scent-marking and will even pursue a predator that might be close by. CCB runs a Livestock Guarding Dog Programme and farmers who use dogs can receive regular information or support if they are introducing them. Farmers can also enter an annual competition, to find the Best Livestock Guarding Dog in Botswana.

Donkeys have also seen increasing use in recent years to deter predators from approaching cattle and small stock. In Botswana, donkeys have a relatively low cost value and fit in with other predator control methods.



- **a knowledge of animal and range management issues**, which includes awareness of:

- control of breeding seasons;
- the local game populations;
- herding;
- disease prevention & management;
- range management, and;
- record keeping.



- **predator knowledge**, because knowing something about local predators and about which kind are in your area will help you to introduce the measures best suited to your own circumstances. This, with knowledge about wildlife not harmful to livestock, will give you the edge in deterring predators as well as confidence in protecting livestock.

Resources to Help

Detailed information for members of the farming community who wish to find out more about introducing these livestock management practices, is available from CCB. These include:

The Predator-Safe Livestock Guide, a fifty-eight page book which provides details about all the management practices mentioned in this leaflet.

