

Conservation Stewardship Program

Producer Spotlight



Kaitlyn Dupris

Maynard Dupris Ranch
Cherry Creek, South Dakota



Operation size:
5,000 acres



Livestock:
150 cow-calf pairs



Years in CSP:
8 years

Conservation Stewardship Program at-a-glance

Administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) provides financial and technical assistance to producers seeking a holistic approach to conservation, while maintaining production on their farms or ranches.

The five-year contracts require producers to expand on their existing conservation efforts through practice enhancements that help them implement methods of farming and ranching that provide an even greater benefit to natural resources, including air, water, and soil.

Conservation practices

Kaitlyn and her brother began ranching in 2014. They manage 5,000 acres and understand the importance of conservation. Now in their eighth year of CSP, conservation is a staple of their ranching practices.



Prescribed grazing

Producers manage the harvest of rangeland with animals in a manner that reduces erosion and improves the composition and vigor of native plant communities.



Wildlife friendly fencing

Producers construct or retrofit fencing that keeps livestock contained and allows native wildlife to move freely.



Herbaceous weed control

Producers control invasive, noxious, or other undesirable plants using methods that enhance the quality of native forage and wildlife habitat.

“ That money benefited our farm and allowed us to make everything work. I don't think we could have made it without it.

-Kaitlyn Dupris



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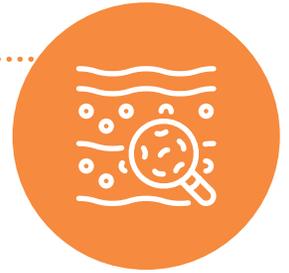
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Positive impacts

Improved cattle and pasture health

In an effort to better understand her herd's health, Kaitlyn gathers manure samples and has them analyzed by a laboratory. The resulting report empowers her to implement changes in their feeding and grazing. Along with plant growth measurements, the data help her understand what nutrients are available in the pasture and help her make informed management decisions that are good for her ranch and the environment.



Protected native habitats and wildlife

With the help of CSP, Kaitlyn was able to install one mile of wildlife-friendly fencing along her pastures. The fencing has no barbed wire and is designed to allow deer and other native animals to follow their natural migration patterns unencumbered. Protecting wildlife helps Kaitlyn manage a balanced ecosystem.



Reduced the growth and impact of noxious weeds without herbicides

Canadian thistle is a noxious weed in South Dakota. As an invasive species, it can easily take over major areas of land, destroying the native plant life and reducing forage for cattle. To address this problem, Kaitlyn has been introducing predator insect species as biological control agents. Throughout the year, she releases the eggs of the insects into pastures affected by Canadian thistle. The insects then feast on the plants to reduce their emergence. This approach does not require any herbicides and keeps the pasture safe for livestock grazing.



“ I'm thankful for every penny the program has provided. We're on our second term now, and every bit has helped.

-Kaitlyn Dupris ”



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