



## Up Front

You talk. We listen.  
By C.J. Hadley

**R**ANGE is not an ag magazine. It is not a news magazine. I am not a journalist. My best subject in school was mathematics. RANGE was, however, founded as an advocate for food producers in 1989, with help from five ranchers and scientists.

RANGE celebrates ranchers and farmers and the work they do for the world, but it also includes serious issues that affect all resource providers. Our writers are journalists, scientists, academics, feds, ranchers, loggers, enviros, and people who make fun of the pain.

Rancher Don Coops was chairman of the RANGE board for years. He thinks he's retired but he continues to spin cowboy logic.

"There are a hell of a lot of people with their mouths open but their brains are paralyzed," he says. "It's not the same with ranchers. People who are ranching have faith. They believe in what nature hands them and they know how to put up with it and they tough it out. They know that things will change—that there will be drought years and it will eventually rain. It always has."

Coops complains: "People today are talking about things they know nothing about. They are dreaming about what's 'natural.' But their imaginations have taken over. It's B.S. It is nice to listen to the people whose lives depend on the land and who know what they are talking about."

Our summer issue included a survey; to find out who you are and what you like and dislike about RANGE. I apologize for worrying some of you. No, I am not going to send your address to bad guys or offer you up for sacrifice. No, I am not trying to delve into your most secret lives and I didn't lift fingerprints from the forms, but I do want to know something about you to plan for future issues. It's impossible to share all 2,354 comments with you, but here are a few, pro and con:

"RANGE should be required reading in all public schools" (Montana); "Unfortunately, those of us who most appreciate the land can no longer afford to own it!" (Texas); "You're too pro-rancher" (Idaho); "Success stories encourage us. Occasional negative comments reinforce the fact you are being heard" (North Dakota);

"Good to know you are not alone in the struggle" (Oregon); "A no-nonsense approach to the junk science that the agencies dish out to the public. RANGE is masterful at uncovering these things" (California); "Too many antigovernment articles. It's time to discuss how to adapt to government" (Minnesota);

"I love your objectivity and lack of political correctness" (California); "After reading some 'takeover articles,' I have to put it down until the anger passes" (Washington); "Since you lean toward 'green' issues, I'll not renew" (Montana); "Honesty, integrity, no fear" (Nebraska); "RANGE covers the tough issues no one else will" (South Dakota);

"RANGE often has a condescending tone to anyone who is not a red meat militant. Invite environmental organizations to write their views and publish them alongside republican views" (New Jersey); "Keep at them but with a gloved fist, not a sledgehammer" (Georgia); "RANGE counterbalances the propaganda fed to us by the national media" (North Dakota); "RANGE fights for the right to farm or ranch" (Massachusetts); "I get a view of the West that I cannot get from any other source" (Indiana); "Courageous" (Texas);

"Have you ever considered a sister publication to deal with issues on the East Coast?" (Maine); "I would like to see more on the Midwest" (Kansas); "more coverage of North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska" (Idaho); "more about lands east of the Mississippi" (New York); "more about Florida" (Florida);

"We need your information in the mainstream media so the general public might get back to the understanding that food does not grow on a grocery-store shelf" (Texas); "Provides an honest picture of people and life that most ignore or take for granted. Superb reality check for city/suburban dwellers and a boost for rural folks" (California); "It's a straight shooter in a time of deception" (Colorado);

"You're getting the word out, and some good-thinking folks are listening. Hopefully we can keep this country FREE" (Nebraska); "Thanks for defending our nation's food and fiber industry. We would be hungry, naked, and homeless without agriculture!" (Utah); "You keep 'hope' alive" (Oregon); "Please don't weaken, you speak for all of us!" (California); "Findley needs a bodyguard. Editor has guts; I'd kiss her --- any day" (Arizona).

Coops understands RANGE. He says, "The satisfaction you get is directly related to the size of the struggle. It's all going to turn out the way it's supposed to, and there ain't a damn thing you can do about it."

Me? I'm waiting for the rain. ■

## RANGE

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RANGE is an award-winning quarterly devoted to the issues that threaten the West, its people, lifestyles, lands and wildlife. No stranger to controversy, RANGE is a leading forum for opposing viewpoints in the search for solutions that will halt the depletion of a national resource—the American cowboy.

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