



A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

Using Instagram for Science and Extension Communication

Dan Macon, Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor
Placer, Nevada, Sutter, and Yuba Counties

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How I Got Started...

- Initially a personal/farm account
Took off with #sheep365
 - Serial multi-media blog
 - Multiple benefits/audiences
 - Public education and awareness
 - Community of shepherds
 - Photo exhibit
- Experimented with Video Blogging (#52weeksofsheep)
- Now a hybrid account (personal and UCCE)



Nuts and Bolts

- @flyingmule
- My Instagram account is linked to Twitter and Facebook.
- Spontaneous posts from my phone (I don't use a scheduling app).
- ~13 minutes per day on the platform
- Hashtags - #sheep365 #rangelands365 #sierrafoothills #livestockguardiandog #ranchingwithwildlife #ucce #extension
- Follow other interesting accounts (reciprocation is one way to build followers)





Why not 2 accounts?

“There is no use in trying to eliminate all that is personal in order to be scientific.”

- Norman Maclean
Young Men and Fire



My Basic Approach...



- A picture IS worth a thousand words, but the words matter, too! I try to tell a story.
- Tagging other users increases my reach.
- Hashtags also help! Be creative!
- I use Instagram to post to my other social media accounts (Twitter and Facebook) – this drives traffic to other formats. And it saves time!
- I try to be creative and humorous!
- Short videos can be very effective.
- I try to give credit if I use someone else's photo!
- Instagram doesn't work well as a link to websites, blog posts, etc.

Extension Activities

4:32 PM 64% AT&T Photo

4:36 PM 63% AT&T Post

4:36 PM 63% AT&T Post

Liked by **californiasheepprancher** and 77 others

flyingmule Thinking of getting into sheep production?! Still time to register for our Sheep Production Basics class on January 17! <http://ceplacer.ucanr.edu/?calitem=432478&q=36980>

Liked by **californiasheepprancher** and 64 others

flyingmule 2 #cooperativeextension meetings - nearly 70 years apart. Still learning by doing! @ucanr #landgrantuniversity #sheep365

View all 4 comments

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Advertise workshops

Real-time posts

Link to blogs and other materials

Research Projects

The image displays three screenshots of Instagram posts from the account 'flyingmule'. The first post shows three sheepdogs in a field with a large tree and a bright sun. The second post shows a GPS tracking device on a post with a yellow sign that reads: 'Livestock-Wildlife Coexistence Research Project. UC Cooperative Extension is conducting research on non-lethal livestock protection tools like livestock guardian dogs and electric fencing. These cameras are being used to document wildlife presence - please do not disturb or move them! For more information on this project, contact: Dan Macari, UCCE Livestock/Natural Resources Advisor (530) 885-7385 • danmacari@ucdavis.edu https://coexistence.ucdavis.edu/livestock-guardian-dogs/'. The third post shows a man in a plaid shirt and cap interacting with a dog. Each post includes engagement icons (heart, comment, share, bookmark) and a caption.

Post 1: flyingmule Morning staff meeting. #sheepdog #sierrafoothills #sheep365 #livestockguardiandog #bestofficeintheworld

Post 2: flyingmule Bodie's enjoying being part of the research team! #sheep365 #livestockguardiandog #sierrafoothills #doasofinstaaram

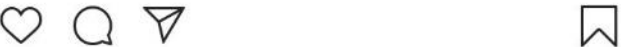
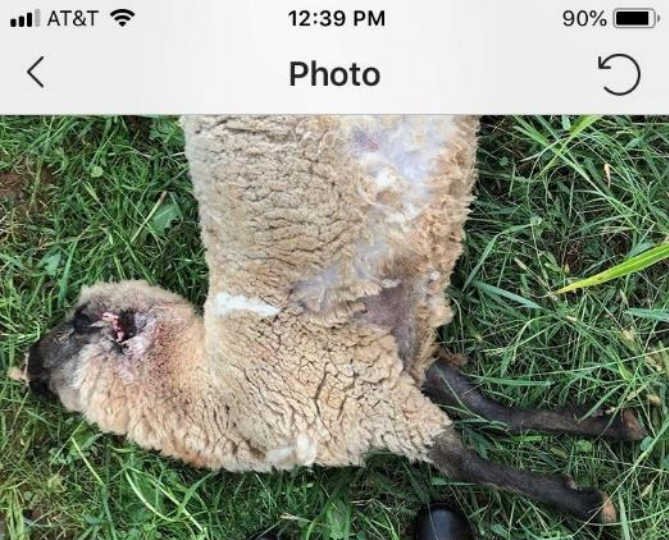
Post 3: flyingmule Bodie is pretty #doggone excited to be collaborating in my #livestockguardiandog research project! #gps #dogsofinstagram #sheep365

Share progress

Pose questions

Link to other researchers

The Good and the Bad...



Liked by **californiasheepprancher** and 96 others

flyingmule I'm sorry if this gruesome photo offends anyone, but I think it's important to share that raising sheep isn't all pastoral bliss.

We found this ewe dead this morning. This group of sheep is grazing a berry vineyard at a local farm. They are in electro-net (as always) and protected by a livestock guardian dog (as always). Roger found a section of fence torn up and leaning over this morning - and then this ewe. Another ewe was out.



Liked by **californiasheepprancher** and 129 others

flyingmule Tough morning. Had to bring a set of twins and a set of triplets into the trailer - lambs got chilled. Twins are headed home; trips will hopefully make it. Then had to deliver 2 HUGE lambs by c-section - looks like 1 will make it. Lots of good forage in December and January is making things challenging.



TROPHY CAM 42°F 5°C 11-01-2018



Liked by **laraismaconbacon** and 88 others

flyingmule So apparently sheep grazing doesn't displace the deer in our environment! Cool to see so many big blacktails on the trail cams at the ranch! [#sierrafoothills](#) [#ranchingwithwildlife](#) [#sheep365](#) [#rangelands365](#)

Sharing difficult issues can generate discussion and learning





Building Community

- Engaging posts encourage questions and information sharing.
- Peer-to-peer networks facilitate learning.
- The story of the lamb raincoats...